



ECI NEWSLETTER

ECO CULTURAL INSTITUTE

NO: 05 **SEPTEMBER 2026**

CULRURE COOPERATION CREATIVITY



Message from the President



Amb. Muhammad Hassan, President, ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)

Dear Readers,

September was an eventful month at the ECO Cultural Institute. It will be remembered for discussions on a number of shared cultural heritages, new institutional contacts, and many opportunities to bring the peoples of our region closer through culture.

From Turkiye and Uzbekistan to Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Pakistan, our activities

reminded us of how much connects us-our literature, art, traditions, spirituality, memories and shared history-while each country retains its own distinctive cultural character. These connections are not only part of our past; they continue to shape the way our societies understand one another today.

During the month, I had the opportunity to visit Uzbekistan and Pakistan and to meet with universities, cultural institutions, scholars and representatives of the cultural community. I represented ECI in the KAYFOR29 Conference. I was particularly encouraged by the growing interest in working with ECI, including the signing of an MoU with the Uzbekistan State University of World Languages. Such contacts are important because they turn our shared cultural aspirations into opportunities for practical cooperation.

Back in Tehran, our cultural meetings on Turkiye and Uzbekistan, the exhibition on Tajikistan, the tribute to Sadequain, and ECO Film Week brought together diplomats, scholars, artists, students and members of the public.



Each programme offered a different window into the region, but together they showed how culture can create understanding in ways that formal dialogue alone sometimes cannot. The month concluded with a gathering dedicated to Shams of Tabriz and Mawlana. It was a fitting way to end September, reminding us that the words and ideas of great figures of our shared cultural heritage continue to cross borders and speak to new generations. For me, this is at the heart of the ECO Cultural Institute's work: creating opportunities for people to meet, discover one another, and recognise both the richness we share and the diversity that makes our region so remarkable. I hope that the contacts and conversations begun in September will grow into lasting friendships and meaningful cooperation across the ECO region.

Ambassador Muhammad Hassan
President ECO Cultural Institute

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Photography Exhibition Presents Tajikistan's Heritage and Development

TEHRAN – September 7, 2026



Opening of the photography exhibition "Tajikistan on the Path of Growth and Prosperity" at the ECO Cultural Institute.

The photography exhibition "Tajikistan on the Path of Growth and Prosperity" opened at the ECO Cultural Institute on Monday, 7 September 2026. Dr. Nizamuddin Zahedi, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to Tehran, joined diplomatic representatives, scholars, artists and cultural figures at the ceremony.

Welcoming the guests, Ambassador Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, presented the exhibition as a photographic account of Tajikistan's people, identity, cultural heritage and landscapes, as well as its progress in development. He highlighted its contribution to introducing contemporary Tajikistan and strengthening cultural relations within the ECO region. Ambassador Hassan drew attention to the relationship between cultural preservation

and development. The photographs, he noted, brought historical monuments into view alongside contemporary architecture, and traditional dress and customs alongside modern life. He also referred to Rudaki, Persian poetry and the region's shared heritage as foundations of Tajikistan's longstanding cultural connections with neighbouring peoples.

In his address, Ambassador Zahedi discussed the country's historical journey and achievements ahead of the thirty-fifth anniversary of its independence on 9 September 2026. He explained that the exhibition's thematic sections covered customs and traditions, architecture, nature and tourism, allowing visitors to undertake a visual journey across Tajikistan.

The exhibition comprised 40 photographs

featuring scenic attractions, historical monuments, residential buildings, recreational and sports complexes, parks and other sights. Most of the buildings shown dated from the years following independence.

The speeches were followed by the formal opening and a tour of the exhibits. Public viewing continued until Wednesday, 9 September. Timed to coincide with Tajikistan's independence anniversary, the exhibition offered an opportunity to introduce the country's cultural and natural assets and deepen familiarity among the peoples of the ECO region.

Highlight: Forty photographs presented Tajikistan's landscapes, heritage and development ahead of the thirty-fifth anniversary of its independence.

Highlight Box



Forty photographs presented Tajikistan's landscapes, heritage and development ahead of the thirty-fifth anniversary of its independence.





ecieco.org

TAJIKISTAN: نمایشگاه عکس: تاجیکستان در مسیر رشد و بالندگی
ON THE PATH TO GROWTH AND PROSPERITY
PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



Amb. Muhammad Hassan
President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)
آقای سفیر محمد حسن
رئیس مؤسسه فرهنگی اِکُو



Dr. Nizomiddin Zohidi
Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan in Tehran
دکتر نظام الدین زاهدی
سفیر جمهوری تاجیکستان در تهران





دوشنبه، ۱۶ شهریور ۱۴۰۵، ساعت ۱۱:۰۰ تا ۱۲:۳۰
 آقدسیه، خیابان موجد دانش، کوچه باقراندر، پلاک ۱۰
 مؤسسه فرهنگی اِکُو، تهران.

Monday, September 7, 2026 at 11:00- 12:30
 10, Baqer Al-Nemer (ex. Naz) St, Movahed
 Danesh Ave., Aqdasiyeh, Tehran.

Cultural Meeting Explores Türkiye's Heritage and Regional Connections

TEHRAN – September 1, 2026



The cultural meeting introducing Türkiye at the ECO Cultural Institute on 1 September 2026.

The ECO Cultural Institute held its cultural meeting introducing Türkiye on Tuesday, 1 September 2026, as part of the "Cultural Meetings Series: Introducing ECO Member States". The programme examined the country's cultural diversity, historical heritage and connections with other societies in the region.

Participants included Ambassador Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute; Prof. Dr. Hicabi Kırlangıç, Ambassador of Türkiye to Iran; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeki Eraslan, Head of the Atatürk Culture Center; Dr. Gökhan Çetinkaya, Counsellor for Cultural and Information Affairs at the Embassy of Türkiye in Tehran; Prof. Dr. Adnan Karaismailoğlu, Professor of Persian Language and Literature in Türkiye; Prof. Dr. Güler Doğan Averbek of Marmara University; and Anvar Yusupov, an independent researcher and writer from Uzbekistan.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Hassan explained that the series seeks to extend familiarity among ECO Member States beyond established historical and diplomatic relations. Its purpose, he said, is to examine their cultures as diverse and evolving expressions of contemporary life and to develop closer connections among their peoples.

He described Anatolia as a crossroads shaped by successive civilisations, including the Hittites, Phrygians, Lydians, Greek and Hellenistic societies, Rome, Byzantium, the Seljuks and the Ottoman Empire. Their traditions interacted over centuries, contributing to new cultural forms. He emphasised that the Institute's work concerns identifying and preserving cultural connections while respecting diversity, rather than producing cultural uniformity.

Ambassador Kırlangıç discussed the importance of preserving and presenting national cultures. He identified cultural

commonalities as a means of encouraging better understanding and closer relations among the societies of the region. Dr. Çetinkaya examined Türkiye's cultural memory as the product of a long history, multiple civilisational layers and cultural diversity. Drawing on Yahya Kemal Beyatlı's understanding of a future nourished by the past, he explained how inherited traditions continue to inform contemporary identity. He illustrated continuity and change through cities, architecture, music, literature, traditional arts and cuisine. In his presentation, he cited 22 Turkish properties on the UNESCO World Heritage List and 30 elements on the Intangible Cultural Heritage List, noting that part of this heritage is shared with ECO Member States. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eraslan outlined the Atatürk Culture Center's activities, including congresses, specialised meetings and research projects. He introduced the masal.gov.tr database and the "Masal, Masal, Türkiye" mobile project, which presents Turkish folktales. The stories have been translated into eight languages, and the application has been downloaded in more than 150 countries. He also discussed projects concerning clothing identity, art history, mythology and culinary culture. Prof. Dr. Averbek addressed manuscripts as repositories of shared intellectual memory. She traced the development of Islamic manuscript production and described the TÜYATOK cataloguing initiative and the establishment of Türkiye's manuscripts institution in 2010. Alongside digitisation and improved public access, she advocated a central portal linking national databases and stressed the need to protect manuscripts in their original locations and prevent their unlawful removal. Anvar Yusupov used Mullah Nasreddin to illustrate the region's shared heritage. Known as Nasreddin Hodja in Türkiye, Molla Nasreddin in Azerbaijan and Nasreddin Afandi in parts of Central Asia, the figure remains associated with both Bukhara and Akşehir. Yusupov referred to the festivals held in these cities as expressions of a cultural inheritance connecting the region's peoples. Moderated by Dr. Ahmet Akalın, Assistant

Director of the ECO Cultural Institute, the meeting concluded by emphasising heritage preservation, recognition of shared cultural elements and continued dialogue among ECO Member States.

Highlight Box



: The meeting explored Türkiye's cultural memory through history, folktales, manuscripts and heritage shared with the ECO region.

Cultural Meetings Series:
Introducing ECO Member Countries

سلسله نشست های معرفی کشورهای عضو اکو

Türkiye **ترکیه**

Speakers

H.E. Amb. Muhammad Hassan
The President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)

H.E. Ambassador Prof. Dr. Hicabi KIRLANGIÇ
Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey
to the Islamic Republic of Iran

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeki ERASLAN
Head of Presidency of Atatürk Culture Center, Türkiye

Dr. Gülşah ÇETINKAYA
Counselor for Cultural and Information Affairs, Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Tehran

Prof. Dr. Adnan KARAIŞMALIOĞLU
Persian Language and Literature, Türkiye

Prof. Dr. Güler DOĞAN AVERBEK
Marmara University, Türkiye

Mr. Anvar YUSUPOV
Independent Researcher and Writer, Uzbekistan

Dr. Ahmet AKALIN
Assistant Director (ECI), Moderator

Tuesday, 1st September, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
No. 10, Baqer Al-Nemer St. Movahed Danesh Ave., Aqdasia, ECI Headquarters

سه شنبه، ۱ شهریور ۱۴۰۶، از ساعت ۱۱:۰۰ تا ۱۲:۳۰
خیابان موحّد دانش، کوچه باقرالنمر، پلاک ۱۰
مؤسسه فرهنگی اکو

To attend the conference, please contact us by phone 02127673204

Six National Cinemas Come Together at ECO Film Week

TEHRAN – September 21-27, 2026



The opening ceremony of ECO Film Week at the ECO Cultural Institute on 21 September 2026.

ECO Film Week opened at the ECO Cultural Institute on Monday, 21 September 2026. The ceremony brought together Dr. Raed Faridzadeh, Head of the Cinema Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran; Dr. Mehrdad Rakhshandeh, Executive Director of the ECO Cultural Institute; diplomats and representatives of ECO Member States; cultural officials, filmmakers, artists, academics and students. The programme presented six films from Iran, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Türkiye and Kazakhstan. Screenings ran from 21 to 24 September, offering audiences different cinematic traditions and accounts of the region's cultural, historical and social experiences. An exhibition of selected film posters opened alongside the screenings. It presented the visual heritage and artistic diversity of cinema in ECO Member States and remained available

to visitors throughout the film week.

Programme moderator and coordinator Maryam Shayegan introduced the event as an occasion for cultural discovery and interaction. Dr. Rakhshandeh stressed the value of joint cultural programmes and described the screenings and poster exhibition as complementary ways to encounter regional cinema.

Delivering the main opening address, Dr. Faridzadeh explained how cinema enables audiences to recognise human experiences across linguistic and geographical boundaries. He linked the region's shared roots with its varied perspectives and discussed how individual grief can enter collective memory, referring to the children of Minab. He also expressed hope that exchanges among filmmakers could develop into wider cooperation and joint

productions.

The six selections were Ziba Sedayam Kon from Iran, Looking for Truth from Tajikistan, Nayab from Pakistan, Meryem from Azerbaijan, Once Upon a Time in Anatolia from Türkiye and The Dawn of the Great Steppe from Kazakhstan. Together with the poster exhibition, they offered a space for audiences, artists and filmmakers to engage with the region's cinematic diversity.

Highlight Box



Six films from ECO Member States and a film poster exhibition brought regional cinematic perspectives together in Tehran from 21 to 24 September.



ECO FILM WEEK

هفته فیلم اکو



Chief Guest
Dr. Raed Faridzadeh
Head of the Organization for Cinema, Audiovisual Affairs and Media
جناب آقای دکتر رائد فریدزاده
رئیس سازمان سینمایی، سمعی و بصری



Mr. Mehrdad Rakhshandeh
Executive Director of the ECO Cultural Institute
جناب آقای مهرداد رخشنده
مدیر اجرایی مؤسسه فرهنگی اکو

Opening Ceremony
Monday, September 21, 2026 at 17:00-18:00
10, Baqer Al-Nasr (ex. Naji) St, Movahed Danesh Ave., Aqdaslyeh, Tehran.
ecieco_org

Film Screening Calendar

Day	Date	16:00 - 17:30 PM	18:00 - 20:00 PM
Monday	Sep 21, 2026		 Ziba Sedayam Kon (1:40) Iran
Tuesday	Sep 22, 2026	 Looking for Truth (1:37) Tajikistan	 Nayab (2:33) Pakistan
Wednesday	Sep 23, 2026	 Meryem (2022) (2:33) Republic of Azerbaijan	 Once Upon a Time in Anatolia (2:38) Türkiye
Thursday	Sep 24, 2026	 Dawn of the Great Steppe (2:18) Kazakhstan	

ECI President Addresses KAYFOR Forum in Andijan

ANDIJAN, UZBEKISTAN – September 15, 2026



The twenty-ninth KAYFOR Forum at Kokand University's Andijan Campus, Uzbekistan

Ambassador Muhammad Hassan represented the ECO Cultural Institute at the twenty-ninth International Public Administration Forum, KAYFOR, held at the Andijan Campus of Kokand University on 15 September 2026. The forum examined public administration in the Turkic world through the themes of city, culture and identity. Organised in cooperation with Kokand University and Karamanoğlu Mehmet Bey University, it brought academics and policymakers together to discuss public administration and regional cooperation. In his address, Ambassador Hassan connected cultural diplomacy with the wider responsibilities of government. He stressed the role of public institutions in turning ideas

developed by cultural specialists into practical initiatives. He also emphasised the ECO region's shared historical connections and explained that closer cooperation should preserve the individual identities of its Member States.

Highlight Box



Ambassador Hassan discussed the relationship between cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy and government policy.

Uzbekistan Cultural Meeting Concludes with Meraj-e Ab Book Launch

TEHRAN – September 23, 2026



The Uzbekistan cultural meeting and launch of Meraj-e Ab at the ECO Cultural Institute on 23 September 2026

The third meeting in the series introducing ECO Member States focused on Uzbekistan and concluded with the launch of the poetry collection Meraj-e Ab, or The Ascent of Water. Held at the ECO Cultural Institute on Wednesday, 23 September 2026, the programme was organised in cooperation with the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Iran.

The gathering included the ambassadors of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, diplomats and senior officials from Tajikistan, regional diplomatic representatives, scholars, academics and representatives of scientific and artistic institutions.

Opening the programme, Ambassador Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO

Cultural Institute, highlighted Uzbekistan's historical and geographical importance as a cultural crossroads linking the Turkic world, Persian culture and South Asia. Referring to the journeys of Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur, he discussed exchanges between Central and South Asia and the intellectual contributions of Samarkand, Bukhara and Andijan.

Fariddin Nasriyev, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Iran, called for stronger cultural diplomacy and deeper relations among ECO Member States. He explained that the region's historical roots could support broader shared interests and renewed connections along the Silk Road, while opening further opportunities for multilateral cooperation.

Dr. Mahmoud Jafari Dehaghi, President of the Iranian Studies Association, examined Uzbekistan's social values, hospitality and urban architecture. His presentation addressed Shashmaqam music, Nowruz as a national occasion of friendship and the role of the family in maintaining identity and social cohesion. Prof. Dr. Komiljon Rahimov, Director of the Abu Rayhan Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies of Uzbekistan, traced the development of ascetic and Sufi traditions in Transoxiana. He discussed the Khwajagan-Naqshbandiyya order and recent Uzbek government initiatives to revive and research this spiritual heritage. Dr. Seyed Javad Jalali Kiasari, Cultural Expert at the Department of Iranian Studies and Persian Language of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, explored the longstanding cultural relationship between Iran and Uzbekistan. He identified Rudaki, Avicenna, Biruni and Alisher Navai as enduring foundations of friendship.

The meeting was moderated by Dr. Zahra Aslani. Prof. Dr. Jafar Muhammad Tirmizi, of the Department of Humanities and Natural Sciences at the Tashkent International University of Financial Technology and Sciences, presented the history of Persian literature in Uzbekistan and its contemporary developments.

The closing ceremony introduced his collection Meraj-e Ab. Published by Arian Zamin Publications in a -212page, full-colour edition, the book contains ghazals, Nimaic poems, free verse and blank verse.

Highlight Box



The Uzbekistan meeting combined presentations on cultural and literary heritage with the launch of Jafar Muhammad Tirmizi's poetry collection Meraj-e Ab.

Cultural Meetings Series:
Introducing ECO Member Countries
Featuring launching Ceremony of Book "Ascension of Water" (Meraj-e Ab)

سلسله نشست های معرفی کشورهای عضو اکو
همراه با آیین رونمایی و معرفی کتاب «معراج آب»

Speakers

Uzbekistan	ازبکستان
H.E. Amb. Muhammad Hassan The President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)	آقای سید محمد حسن رئیس هیئت مدیره فرهنگ اکو
H.E. Mr. Fariddin Nasriev Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan	آقای فریدالدین نصریوف سفير جمهوري ازبکستان در ایران
Dr. Mahmoud Jafari Dehaghi President of the Scientific Association of Iranian Studies (Iranology)	آقای دکتر محمود جعفری دهغی رئیس انجمن علمی ایران شناسی
Prof. Dr. Kamiljon Rahimov Director of the Abu Rayhan al-Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and Professor at Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies	آقای پروفیسور کامیلجان راحیموف رئیس مؤسسه علمی و تحقیقاتی ابوحنیفه بیرونی، آکادمی علوم جمهوری ازبکستان و استاد دانشکده زبان و ادبیات شرقی، دانشگاه تاشکنت
Dr. Seyed Javad Jalali Kiasari Cultural Expert of the Department of Iranian Studies and Persian Language, Islamic Culture and Communications Organization	آقای دکتر سید جواد جلالی کساری کارشناس فرهنگی اداره زبان و ادبیات فارسی و زبان و ادبیات اسلامی، سازمان فرهنگ و ارتباطات اسلامی
Prof. Dr. Jafar Mohammad Tirmizi Professor in the Department of Humanities and Natural Sciences at the International University of Financial Technology and Science (IIFT) - Tashkent, Uzbekistan	آقای پروفیسور دکتر جعفر محمد ترمیزی استاد گروه علوم انسانی و علوم طبیعی، دانشکده ادبیات، فرهنگ و علوم، دانشگاه بین المللی فناوری مالی و علوم (IIFT) - تاشکنت، ازبکستان
Dr. Zahra Aslani Moderator	خانم دکتر زهرا اسلانی میزبان

Meraj-e Ab
معراج آب

Wednesday, September 23, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
No. 10, Baqer Al-Nemer St. Moushad
Danesh Ave., Aqdasiya, ECI Headquarters

To attend the conference, please contact us by phone 02127673204

Tehran Tribute Revisits Sadequain's Artistic Legacy

TEHRAN – September 28, 2026



The Sadequain tribute and exhibition opening at the ECO Cultural Institute on 28 September 2026.

The ECO Cultural Institute hosted a tribute to Sadequain and opened an exhibition of his works on Monday, 28 September 2026. Organised with the Sadequain Foundation and the Pakistan National Council of Arts, the programme examined the Pakistani artist's life, creative work and lasting contribution to regional art.

Under the theme "A Look at the Life, Art and Enduring Legacy of Sadequain", the event also explored artistic links between Iran and Pakistan and the place of calligraphy and literature in their cultural heritage.

Participants included Ambassador Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute; Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, Ambassador of

Pakistan to Iran; Dr. Mohammad Reza Moridi, Associate Professor at the University of Art, Iran; diplomats, academics, researchers and art enthusiasts. Dr. Salman Ahmad, Founder and Chairman of the Sadequain Foundation, contributed a video message.

Dr. Elaheh Sadat Mousavi-Nejad, the session moderator and an ECI cultural expert, welcomed participants and discussed the capacity of artistic programmes to encourage exchanges among artists, researchers and audiences. She situated the tribute within the cultural connections shared by the region's countries.

Ambassador Hassan described Sadequain's painting, calligraphy and poetry as an artistic

legacy reaching beyond Pakistan. He explained that revisiting this work could illuminate a cultural space linking Iran, Pakistan, Türkiye and Central Asia through literary and artistic traditions.

Ambassador Siddiqui presented Sadequain as an important figure in Pakistan's cultural identity. He welcomed the opportunity for Iranian audiences to become more familiar with the artist and emphasised the contribution of such programmes to mutual understanding between Iran and Pakistan.

In his video message, Dr. Salman Ahmad examined Sadequain's personality and artistic career. He discussed the artist's modest way of life, distance from material pursuits and reflections on art and human values. Information attributed to the Sadequain Foundation records more than 15,000 works, including paintings, drawings, calligraphic compositions and murals, and more than 45 murals produced in Pakistan, India, the Middle East, Europe and elsewhere.

Dr. Moridi's specialised presentation examined Sadequain's painterly calligraphy and the convergence of modern art in Pakistan and Iran during the 1970s. He explained how artists in both countries engaged with the question of reinterpreting local heritage through modern artistic forms.

The ceremony concluded with the inauguration of the exhibition at the Institute's gallery. The selection included painting, painterly calligraphy and calligraphy, introducing audiences to the visual character and breadth of Sadequain's work.

Highlight Box



The tribute and exhibition examined Sadequain's painting, calligraphy and poetry alongside artistic connections between Iran and Pakistan

A TRIBUTE TO SADEQUAIN
& Art Exhibition

نگاهی به زندگی، هنر و میراث ماندگار یکی از برجسته‌ترین هنرمندان معاصر پاکستان
بزرگداشت صادقین
و نمایشگاه آثار

Celebrating the Life, Art and Enduring Legacy of a Master of Pakistani Art

Monday, September 28, 2026 at 11:00- 12:30
10, Baqer Al-Nemer (ex. Naz) St, Movahed Danesh Ave., Agdasiyeh, Tehran.

دو شنبه، ۲۸ مهر ۱۴۰۵ ساعت ۱۱:۰۰ تا ۱۲:۳۰
آگدسیه، خیابان موحّد دانش، کوچه باقر ناصر، پلاک ۱۰
موسسه فرهنگی اکو، تهران

H.E. Amb. Muhammad Hassan
President of ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)

H.E. Inuran Ahmed Siddiqui
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Iran

Dr. Salman Ahmad
Founder & President, Sadequain Foundation

Dr. Muhammadreza Moridi
Assistant Professor and Faculty Member, Iran University of Art

Professor Zafar Baberi
Professor of Islamic art and Calligraphy, Pakistan

Dr. Elshad Mousavinejad
Cultural Expert of the ECI, Moderator

ECI and Uzbekistan Consider Cultural Tourism Initiatives

TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN – September 16, 2026



The ECI visit to the Tourism Products Department of Uzbekistan's Tourism Committee in Tashkent

Ambassador Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, visited the Tourism Products Department of Uzbekistan's Tourism Committee on 16 September 2026. Accompanied by ECI Assistant Director Dr. Ahmet Akalın, he met Mirtolib Mirzakhidov, Head of the Uzbekistan Convention Bureau. The discussions considered joint initiatives to introduce the ECO region's shared cultural and civilisational heritage through tourism. Participants explored projects concerning the historical legacy of figures such as Ali-Shir Nava'i and Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. They also discussed reaching international audiences through cultural tourism and the potential contribution of social media users

and influencers to increasing the visibility of the region's heritage. Both sides expressed interest in practical cooperation to promote these shared cultural assets.

Highlight Box



The meeting considered cultural tourism projects centred on shared heritage and its international promotion.

ECI Holds Cultural Cooperation Talks with Uzbekistan's Spirituality Centre

TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN – September 16, 2026



The ECI meeting with representatives of Uzbekistan's Center for Spirituality and Enlightenment in Tashkent

Ambassador Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, visited Uzbekistan's Center for Spirituality and Enlightenment in Tashkent on 16 September 2026 to explore cultural and spiritual cooperation.

He met Abbas Yunusov, Deputy Head of the Department for Social and Spiritual Affairs of Uzbekistan, and Bakhtiyor Khusanov, Chairman of the Association of Enlightenment of Uzbekistan. Dr. Ahmet Akalın, Assistant Director of ECI, accompanied him.

The discussions covered cultural relations, spiritual values and the ECO region's common civilisational heritage. The participants considered joint events and projects, exchanges of knowledge and experience, and

lasting arrangements for cooperation between the institutions.

Highlight Box



Joint programmes and exchanges of knowledge were among the areas considered for institutional cooperation.

Meetings and Institutional Cooperation

ECI and Uzbekistan State University of World Languages Sign MoU

TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN – September 17, 2026



The meeting between ECI and the Uzbekistan State University of World Languages that concluded with the signing of an MoU

The ECO Cultural Institute and the Uzbekistan State University of World Languages signed a Memorandum of Understanding following a visit by ECI President Ambassador Muhammad Hassan on 17 September 2026.

Ambassador Hassan met Prof. Dr. Ilkhomjon Tukhtasinov, Rector of UzSWLU, and Khusan Yuldashev, Head of International Relations. ECI Assistant Director Dr. Ahmet Akalin also attended.

The meeting explored cooperation in education, languages, literature, culture, research and academic exchange. Ambassador Hassan outlined ECI's work on regional languages and dialects, linguistic databases, translation and publication, media literacy and shared heritage.

The MoU provides a framework for academic and cultural cooperation, the promotion of the ECO region's linguistic and cultural diversity, and exchanges of knowledge and expertise.

Highlight Box



The MoU establishes a framework for academic and cultural cooperation between ECI and UzSWLU

ECI and Riphah Review Arrangements for Joint Conference on Media and Information Security

TEHRAN – September 20, 2026



Representatives of the ECO Cultural Institute and the City of Isfahan hold a coordination meeting in Tehran.

On 20 September 2026, the President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) held a meeting with Mr. Hassan Muhammad Khan, Chancellor of Riphah International University, Islamabad, to review and finalize the substantive and organizational arrangements for the forthcoming ECI-Riphah Joint Conference on Media and Information Security.

The Conference is scheduled to be held in Islamabad from 17–15 November 2026 under the joint auspices of ECI and Riphah International University. It will provide a regional platform for scholars, media and information-security experts, university professors, researchers and students from the ten ECO Member States to exchange knowledge and perspectives on emerging challenges in media and information security.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the proposed thematic framework, participation of experts and academic institutions from ECO Member States, arrangements for regional representation, and opportunities for sustained academic and institutional cooperation between ECI and Riphah International University. The Conference is envisaged as part of ECI's broader efforts to promote intellectual exchange, academic cooperation and regional dialogue on contemporary cultural and digital issues within the ECO region.

The meeting reaffirmed the commitment of both institutions to strengthening cooperation in areas of mutual interest and to developing the Conference as a meaningful regional platform for knowledge-sharing, professional engagement and youth participation.

ECI President Pays Tribute at Azerbaijan's Remembrance Day Ceremony

TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN – 27 September 2026

Ambassador Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, delivered an address at the Republic of Azerbaijan's Remembrance Day ceremony, held at its embassy in Tehran on 27 September 2026.

His remarks honoured those who lost their lives for their homeland and expressed respect and sympathy for their families and loved ones. He described remembrance as an expression of gratitude and a responsibility to preserve the dignity, values and aspirations associated with their sacrifice.

Drawing on verse 169 of Surah Al-Imran, Ambassador Hassan discussed the spiritual meaning of a life devoted to a noble cause. He noted that its significance continues through the memories and ideals it leaves behind.

He recalled the beginning of the -44day war on 27 September 2020 and the subsequent establishment of Remembrance Day to honour soldiers and officers who died in defence of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.

Ambassador Hassan reflected on the ways history is carried in individual lives: a soldier's courage, a mother's prayers, a family's endurance and the silence following bereavement. He emphasised that remembrance reaches beyond the present generation and entails a duty to transmit this legacy to those who follow.

Turning to Azerbaijan's cultural background and the wider ECO region, he identified shared values, memories and traditions as connections among peoples. He described a regional cultural space extending from Anatolia and the Caucasus to Iran, Central Asia and South Asia, and stressed culture's capacity to sustain relationships across borders.



The Remembrance Day ceremony at the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Tehran

He expressed hope that the lessons of history would support greater understanding, stability and peace. Concluding on behalf of the ECO Cultural Institute and in his own name, he paid tribute to Azerbaijan's martyrs and conveyed sympathy to their families, expressing the hope that their memory and sacrifices would continue to be honoured.

Highlight Box



Ambassador Hassan emphasised the responsibility to preserve remembrance and pass it on to future generations

Cultural Diplomacy Seminar Brings ECI into Dialogue with UzSWLU Students

TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN – 17 September 2026



The cultural diplomacy seminar for International Relations students at UzSWLU on 17 September 2026.

A seminar on cultural diplomacy was held on 17 September 2026 for International Relations students at the Faculty of International Journalism of the Uzbekistan State University of World Languages.

Hosted by the Dean, Prof. Dr. Alisher Matyakubov, the seminar involved ECI President Ambassador Muhammad Hassan and Assistant Director Dr. Ahmet Akalin. It took place within the framework of the MoU signed between ECI and UzSWLU.

The programme addressed culture's role in international relations, cultural connections between states and societies, and the international presentation of national heritage. Ambassador Hassan introduced ECI cooperation in language, literature and the

arts, while Dr. Akalin discussed the Institute's media literacy conferences.

Ambassador Hassan answered students' questions before a concluding exchange on diplomacy and intercultural communication.

Highlight Box



The seminar introduced students to ECI's cultural cooperation and media literacy initiatives

Shams and Mawlana Celebrated as Shared Heritage of the ECO Region

TEHRAN, September 29, 2026

A ceremony commemorating Shams of Tabriz and Mawlana Jalal al-Din Muhammad Balkhi was held on 29 September 2026 at the Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Iranian Cultural Heritage and Distinguished Figures. Scholars, academics, researchers, cultural figures and admirers of Persian literature attended.

Ambassador Muhammad Hassan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute, spoke about their place in the region's cultural and spiritual inheritance. He described their legacy as extending across national and geographical boundaries and connecting peoples through literature, thought and spirituality.

He emphasised the contemporary relevance of Mawlana's teachings on love, human dignity, tolerance, self-knowledge and truth. Shared heritage, he explained, can encourage dialogue and cooperation when brought into contemporary life through the arts, cinema, literature and engagement with younger generations.

Ambassador Hassan concluded by thanking the organisers and expressing hope that the legacy of Shams and Mawlana would continue to promote understanding, empathy and closer relations among the region's peoples.

Highlight Box



The commemoration presented Shams and Mawlana as a shared cultural and spiritual inheritance connecting the ECO region