

STATEMENT

by the Heads of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Member States on Joint Efforts Against the Threat of Epidemics in the SCO space

We the heads of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Member States note with deep concern the persistent threat of epidemics in the SCO space due to the growing regional and global integration processes, the increased cross-border movement of people and trade liberalisation.

We take note of the risk of infectious diseases, including the flu, plagues, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), viral haemorrhagic fevers (VHF), cholera and other particularly dangerous infectious diseases, and the resulting need to enhance the sanitary and epidemiological safety and the protection of public health, which is vital for the sustainable development and prosperity of the regional countries.

We are firmly committed to the further improvement of cooperation mechanisms and implementation of comprehensive measures aimed at preventing the spread of infectious diseases and enhancing the Member States' readiness to deal with the threat of infectious diseases, identify their sources and react to sanitary and epidemiological emergencies in order to reduce the potentially negative effect of infectious diseases on public healthcare in the Member States and the economic, social and humanitarian situation in the region.

We note the importance of exchanging reliable information about infectious diseases in the SCO space and measures taken in accordance with the International Health Regulations (IHR).

We reaffirm the importance of enhancing the potential of the systems created to prevent emergencies and to respond to large-scale infectious disease outbreaks.

We believe that the Member States' anti-epidemic potential can be enhanced through mobile groups, the improvement of national laboratories, the development of research centres and joint research projects, and the creation of new methods for diagnosing and preventing infectious diseases.

We are convinced that the coordination of response measures during sanitary and epidemiological emergencies and the development of managerial decisions aimed at lowering the rate of infectious diseases will help consolidate our efforts against epidemics.

We reaffirm our common resolve to stimulate bilateral and international cooperation in the interests of combating the threat of epidemics in the SCO space.