

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ
on the results of the seventeenth meeting
of the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers)
of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The seventeenth meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (hereinafter referred to as SCO or the Organization) was held in Dushanbe (Republic of Tajikistan), on 11-12 October 2018, with the participation of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of India S. Swaraj, Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan B. Sagintayev, Premier of the State Council of the people's Republic of China Li Keqiang, Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic M. Abulgaziev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan S.M. Qureshi, the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation D. Medvedev, Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan K. Rasulzoda and Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan A. Aripov.

The meeting was chaired by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan Kokhir Rasulzoda.

SCO Secretary-General R. Alimov, Director of the Executive Committee of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure E. Sysoev, Chairman of the Board of SCO Business Council Chen Zhou and representative of the Chairman of the Council of the SCO Interbank Association – Vice-President of China Development Bank Liu Jin participated in the meeting.

The meeting was also attended by the representatives of SCO Observer States - the Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Abdullah Abdullah, Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus S. Rumas, Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia U. Enkhvuvshin, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran M. Sarmadi, as well as Deputy Chairman of the Executive Committee – Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States A. Smagulov, Executive Director of the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia H. Mirzoev, and Head of the Sub-regional Office for North and Central Asia of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific H. Toda.

President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon received the Heads of delegation of the SCO Member States.

During the meeting, the Heads of delegation exchanged views on a wide range of issues of international and regional economic development in a constructive atmosphere, discussed the prospects and measures for the deepening of economic and humanitarian cooperation within SCO to further strengthen mutual understanding and traditional friendship between the peoples of the Member States of the Organization.

The Heads of delegation noted the importance of active implementation of the agreements reached during the Meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO Member States (Qingdao, 10 June 2018) and taking into account the expansion

of the Organization, stressed the need to further explore its significant potential in all areas of activity.

It was noted that the situation in the world economy, despite some improvement, remained fragile, the process of economic globalization was facing an increase in unilateral and protectionist measures, a continuing decline in the pace of development, volatility of financial markets, as well as other challenges in international trade.

The additional negative impact on global economic prospects entails risks associated with international terrorism, the aggravation of conflict situations in a number of regions, as well as epidemics, climate change, and natural disasters.

The Heads of delegation stressed the importance of the continued commitment of the Member States to the goals and objectives enshrined in the SCO Charter, the further implementation of the SCO Development Strategy until 2025 in order to deepen and expand cooperation in the field of politics, security and trade, promoting the construction of a new type of international relations based on mutual respect, justice, equality and mutually beneficial cooperation, as well as the formation of a common vision of the idea of creating a community of a common destiny of mankind.

The Heads of delegation reaffirmed their commitment to the central role of the United Nations in promoting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. They called upon the developed countries to provide financial and technical support, in accordance with their earlier commitments, to the developing countries and assist them in capacity-building.

The Heads of delegation consider the joint efforts of the SCO Member States to create favorable conditions for the expansion of trade, economic and investment activities, development of high-tech sectors of the economy, modernization of various industries, implementation of projects for the development of transit, transport and logistics, energy, agricultural, information and communication, and other infrastructure, and improving the economic competitiveness of the Member States, including bridging the technological gap between the countries, improving the level and quality of life of the population of the Member States of the Organization.

They affirmed the need for the SCO to adopt joint effective measures in the field of economic cooperation, which is an important part of ensuring socio-economic development and stability in the SCO space.

The Heads of delegation advocate stepping up efforts to improve the architecture of global economic governance, the development of trade and economic and investment cooperation. It was noted that the World Trade Organization (WTO) remains a key platform for the discussion of the Agenda of international trade and adoption of authoritative, effective rules of the multilateral trading system. They stressed the importance of further deepening cooperation in order to meet the challenges of jointly building an open world economy, consistently strengthening an open, inclusive, transparent, non-

discriminatory and rule-based multilateral trading system, as well as preventing any unilateral protectionist measures in trade.

The Heads of delegation advocate facilitating the creation of an enabling environment for trade and investment with a view to the progressive realization of the free movement of goods, capital, services and technology, as envisaged by the SCO Charter.

In this regard, they consider it important to ensure implementation of the Joint Statement of the heads of SCO Member States on trade facilitation (Qingdao, 10 June 2018), continuing to discuss approaches to solving the problem of trade facilitation in the region, taking into account the importance of joining efforts in supporting and strengthening the multilateral trading system, based on the norms and principles of the WTO.

The Heads of delegation stressed the need for a consistent implementation of the Program of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation of the SCO Member States, practical implementation of specific joint projects in accordance with the Program of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation of the SCO Member States, the plan of activities for its implementation, the Action Plan for 2016-2020 on implementation of the SCO Development Strategy until 2025 and the List of Actions for Further Development of Project Activities within SCO for the period 2017-2021, as well as the development of a new version of the Program of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation of the SCO Member States in order to ensure sustainable and stable development in the SCO Region.

The Heads of delegation stressed the importance of further regional economic development, including the implementation of multilateral initiatives of the SCO Member states, facilitating mutually beneficial partnership cooperation in the region, accelerating economic growth, expanding links in the fields of transport and energy, increasing investment, innovation and employment.

The Heads of delegation noted the important role of E-commerce in promoting economic and trade growth, as well as in improving industrial sectors. They expressed their readiness to deepen exchanges and cooperation in this area.

The Heads of delegation stressed that increased cooperation in the sphere of services and trade in services would be conducive to deepening trade and economic cooperation and identifying potential economic growth opportunities for the SCO Member States. They support the progress of work on the framework agreement on cooperation in the field of trade in services among SCO Member States aimed at establishing a working mechanism of SCO cooperation in the field of trade in services.

Reaffirming their support for the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of the People's Republic of China, the Heads of the delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, noted the efforts taken towards its joint implementation, including efforts to

interlink project of the Eurasian Economic Union and the BRI and advocate the use of the potential of the countries of the region, international organizations and multilateral associations to create a broad, open, mutually beneficial and equal partnership in the SCO space.

The Heads of delegation approved the outcome of the Seventeenth Session of the Ministers of the SCO Member States responsible for foreign economic and foreign trade activities held in Dushanbe on 19 September 2018, during which the issues related to further work on creating an enabling environment for participants in the economic activities of the SCO Member States, and preparation of relevant SCO documents on cooperation in the area of trade in services and E-commerce were discussed.

The Heads of delegation stressed the importance of further deepening of multilateral cooperation in transport sector, including by means of building new and modernization of existing international routes for road and rail transport, multimodal transport corridors and implementation of other joint infrastructure projects that ensure the effective use of the transit potential of the SCO Member States.

They believe that the development of a single effective transit system, including electronic document flow, guarantee mechanisms and the ability to monitor the movement of goods, can contribute to achieve this task.

The need for further practical implementation of the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on Creating Favorable Conditions for International Road Transport (Dushanbe, 12 September 2014), as well as the continuation of work on the Draft Road Development Program of the SCO Member States was also noted.

The Heads of delegation welcomed the decision of the Republic of Belarus to join the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on Creating Favorable Conditions for International Road Transport.

The Heads of delegation noted the results of the first meeting of the heads of railway administrations of the SCO Member States (Tashkent, 19 September 2018), including the decision to establish a working group.

The Heads of delegation instructed the relevant ministries and agencies to further develop the draft Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on the formation and functioning of the Integrated Transport Management System and the draft Concept of interaction of railway administrations (Railways) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States.

The Heads of delegation welcomed the results of the International Conference “Central Asia in the system of international transport corridors: strategic prospects and unrealized opportunities” (Tashkent, 20-21 September 2018) as an important contribution to promote multilateral dialogue on the formation and development of transport corridors in the SCO Region.

The Heads of delegation emphasized the importance of continuing mutually beneficial and diverse cooperation in the field of energy, including the use of renewable and alternative sources of energy, and support the wider

use of various cost-effective and environmental friendly forms of energy that reduce the negative impact on the environment and contribute to the transition to an energy-efficient economy.

They underlined the importance of existing and under construction energy infrastructure facilities in the region, including hydropower facilities to achieve sustainable development goals, and expressed their readiness to increase cooperation in this area.

The Heads of delegation advocate further strengthening of practical cooperation in the financial sphere in order to create an enabling environment for the development of trade and investment cooperation. The search for common approaches to the establishment of financial arrangements for the SCO project activities will continue, including consideration of the establishment of the SCO Development Bank and SCO Development Fund (Special Account).

The Heads of delegation supported to expand the practice of applying national currencies in mutual settlements between the SCO Member States.

The Heads of delegation noted the significant role of SCO Business Council and SCO Interbank Consortium in the interaction of business and financial circles of the SCO Member States for the development of business, trade and investment cooperation in the SCO space, including by attracting the potential of Observer States and Dialog Partners.

A positive assessment was also given to the accession of “Habib Bank Ltd.” of Pakistan to the SCO Interbank Consortium and continuation of the process of increasing number of the participants of the Consortium.

The Heads of delegation support further active cooperation in the field of agriculture, in such areas as processing and trade of agricultural products, scientific research in the field of agriculture, implementation of joint projects in various areas of the agricultural sector.

The importance of the results of the Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of the SCO Member States (Bishkek, 19 September 2018) and effective implementation of the Action Plan for 2018-2019 to implement the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on cooperation in the field of agriculture was also noted.

The Heads of delegation reaffirmed their readiness to intensify exchange and cooperation in the field of prevention and control of trans-boundary epizootics, access to quality agricultural products and sanitary quarantine in order to ensure food security. They welcomed the adoption of a Memorandum between the Authorized Agencies of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States on Technical Cooperation in the field of Joint Prevention and fight against Trans-boundary Epizootic Diseases and the SCO Programme of Cooperation on Food Security. In this context, the Heads of delegation spoke in favour of SCO cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The Heads of delegation reaffirmed the importance of supporting small and medium enterprises and in this regard stressed the need for additional

measures to implement the Memorandum of Understanding on Promoting Cooperation within the SCO in the field of micro, small and medium enterprises between the Ministries of the SCO Member States responsible for foreign economic and foreign trade activities (Qingdao, 10 June 2018). They also welcome the holding of the Fourth Forum of Small Business of the regions of participating countries of the SCO and BRICS (Ufa, 18-19 October 2018).

The Heads of delegation noted the importance of implementing the initiative of the Forum of Heads of regions of the SCO Member States and welcome holding of the first meeting of the heads of regions of the SCO Member States (Chelyabinsk, 4-6 December 2018).

They supported the proposal to prepare a Programme for the Development of Interregional Cooperation among the SCO Member States and expressed their support for early agreement and adoption of the document.

The Heads of delegation expressed their support for the continuation of active cooperation in the field of customs and the practical implementation of the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Affairs (Tashkent, 2 November 2007). They noted the importance of implementing the signed Memorandum between the Customs Services of the SCO Member States on the exchange of information on the trans-boundary movement of ozone-depleting substances, and the Regulation of information interaction of round-the-clock contact points, carried out using the channels of the operational platform CENcomm RILO-MOSCOW (Qingdao, 10 June 2018).

The Heads of the delegation have pointed the importance of further development of cooperation in culture, healthcare, education, science and technology, tourism, handicrafts, environment protection, youth exchange, mass media and sport in the interests and for the benefit of the peoples of the SCO Member States.

They confirm the need of continuing active implementation of the Agreement between the Governments of SCO Member States on Cooperation in the field of Education (Shanghai, 15 June 2006) in order to enhance scientific and academic exchange and implement joint training of highly qualified personnel. In this regard, they noted the importance of holding the Meeting of Ministers of education of the SCO Member States (Astana, 16-17 October 2018) and the SCO Week of Education (Dushanbe, 22-23 November 2018).

The Heads of delegation advocate further development of cultural ties, holding joint events and strengthening mutual understanding between the peoples of the SCO Member States, as well as the preservation of the cultural and natural heritage of the region, including the territory along the historical "Great Silk Road". They positively assessed the results of the meeting of the Ministers of culture of the SCO Member States (Sanya, 17 May 2018) aimed at practical implementation of the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on cooperation in the field of culture (Bishkek, 16 August 2007).

The Heads of delegation noted the importance of consistent implementation of the Joint Appeal of the Heads of the SCO Member States to the youth and the Programme of Action for implementing of its provisions (Qingdao, 10 June 2018). In this regard, they highly appreciated the organization of summer camps for students and school children of the SCO member States in China in 2018.

The Heads of delegation noted the active work on uniting the youth of the SCO Member States by developing the activities of the SCO Youth Council, as well as holding events at the initiative of the SCO Secretariat such as “Doors Open Days” for school children and students, the intellectual game-competitions “the SCO Model” and “Leader of the XXI century”.

They welcomed the proposal of the SCO Secretariat to hold the Assembly of youth representatives of the SCO countries under the name "SCO Youth against terrorism and extremism" (Dongfang, 8-12 November 2018).

The Heads of delegation noted the results of the SCO Women’s Forum (Beijing, 16-17 May 2018) and supported the proposal to hold the next meeting in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2019.

The Heads of delegation welcomed the establishment of the Silk Road University of Tourism in Samarkand and called for the establishment of cooperation between the University and interested higher education institutions as well as relevant structures of the SCO Member States.

They stressed the importance of the practical implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the SCO Secretariat and UNESCO (Qingdao, 10 June 2018).

The Heads of delegation highly appreciated the role of the Kyrgyz Republic as the founder of the World Nomad Games, contributing to the presentation and promotion of ancient nomadic culture and traditions. They noted the successful holding of the III World Nomad Games (Cholpon-Ata, 2-8 September 2018).

The Heads of delegation stressed the importance of using the tools of public diplomacy in strengthening mutual understanding and cultural and humanitarian ties between the SCO Member States and in this regard welcomed the establishment of “SCO Centre for Public Diplomacy in Uzbekistan” by the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Heads of delegation positively assessed the results of the Meeting of heads of ministries and departments of science and technology of the SCO Member States (Moscow, 17-18 April 2018) and approved the Plan of Practical Measures ("Roadmap") on cooperation of research institutions of the SCO Member States for 2019-2020 in order to increase scientific-technical and innovative cooperation between the SCO countries within the Framework of the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on Cooperation in the Scientific and technical Sphere (Bishkek, 13 September 2013).

The Heads of delegation emphasized the need to increase multilateral and bilateral cooperation in the field of health care in such areas as emergency

response, elimination of medical consequences in emergency situations, ensuring sanitary and epidemiological welfare of the population, pharmaceuticals and combating the circulation of counterfeit medical products, combating the spread of infectious diseases, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, medical education and exchange of specialists, scientific research, implementation of joint programs to promote international development, ensuring the safety and quality of food products for the joint protection of public health, promoting innovative cooperation.

It is considered necessary to expedite preparation of the Plan of Main Activities for Cooperation of the SCO Member States in the field of healthcare for the period 2019-2021 Years.

As part of the effort to achieve universal health coverage and the sustainable development Goals, they welcome the Global Conference on Primary Healthcare (Astana, 25-27 October 2018) to mark the 40th anniversary of the Almaty Declaration.

The Heads of delegation called for enhancing further cooperation in the field of building emergency response capabilities to large-scale outbreaks of infections and prevention of the spread of infectious diseases in the territory of the SCO Member States. In this regard, they noted the need to take practical measures to implement the Statement on Joint Counteraction against the Epidemic Threats in the SCO space (Qingdao, 10 June 2018).

The Heads of delegation consider it important to further develop contacts and exchanges through the media of the SCO Member States. It is considered necessary to continue work on preparation of the draft intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in this field.

The Heads of delegation supported the dynamic expansion of tourism exchanges and the consistent implementation of the Program for the Development of Cooperation between the SCO Member States in the field of Tourism (Tashkent, 24 June 2016). They noted the results of the meeting of the heads of national tourist administrations of the Member States (Wuhan, 9 May 2018) and stressed the importance of implementing the Joint Action Plan for realization of the Program for Development of Cooperation of the SCO Member States in the field of tourism for 2019-2020, as well as the establishment of cooperation between the SCO and the World Tourism Organization.

The Heads of delegation highly appreciated the accomplishment of work on harmonization and adoption of the Concept of Cooperation in the field of Environment Protection of the SCO Member States (Qingdao, 10 June 2018) and expressed their support for the implementation of its provisions. In this regard, they noted the need to hold the first Meeting of the heads of ministries and departments of the SCO Member States responsible for environment protection.

The Heads of delegation highly appreciated the results of the high-level International Conference on the Implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028" (Dushanbe, 20-22

June 2018) and expressed their support for continued efforts to ensure the adoption of the resolution of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly on the mid-term comprehensive review of the decade, designed to contribute to the achievement of the goals and objectives of sustainable development in the field of water resources.

The Heads of delegation stressed the importance of ensuring radiation safety in the territory of the SCO Member States and in this context welcomed the promotion of the draft resolution of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly "the role of the international community in the prevention of the radiation threat in Central Asia".

The Heads of delegation, emphasizing the importance of strengthening cooperation for the prevention and joint minimization of the consequences of disasters and emergencies, noted the need for further practical implementation of the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on Cooperation in Providing Assistance in Emergency Situations (Moscow, 26 October 2005), as well as the corresponding Action Plan for 2018-2019.

The Heads of the delegation welcomed the outcomes of the Meeting of the chairmen of the Supreme courts of the SCO Member States (Beijing, 25 May 2018) for further deepening of mutual exchange and cooperation of the SCO Member States in the judicial and legal sphere.

The Heads of the delegation underlined the importance of improving the legal framework of the SCO and noted the results of the meeting of Ministers of Justice of the SCO Member States (Cholpon-Ata, 24 August 2018), aimed at further development of multilateral cooperation in the field of forensic expertise and in the provision of legal services.

The Heads of the delegation welcomed the results of the meeting of the Prosecutor Generals of the SCO Member States (Dushanbe, 20 September 2018) as an important contribution to the efforts to ensure security and stability in the region, and countering terrorism and extremism.

The Heads of the delegation confirm their readiness to increase cooperation with the SCO Observer States and the SCO Dialogue Partners on a mutually beneficial basis, to expand contacts and interaction of the SCO with the UN and its relevant structures and other international and regional organizations.

The Heads of the delegation endorsed the report of the SCO Secretariat on implementation of the Programme of multilateral trade and economic cooperation of the Member States of the Organization.

The budget of the Organization for 2019 has been approved. Decisions have been made on a number of issues related to the financial and organizational activities of the SCO permanent bodies.

The Heads of the delegation expressed gratitude to the Tajik Side for the hospitality and high level of organization of the Meeting of the Council of the Heads of Governments (Prime-Ministers) of the SCO Member States.

The next Meeting of the Council of the Heads of Governments (Prime-Ministers) of the SCO Member States will be held in 2019 in the Republic of

Uzbekistan.