

Statement of the Council of SCO Heads of State on Cooperation in Digital Transformation

The Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (hereinafter "SCO") declare the following:

Recognize that digital transformation is a driver of global, inclusive and sustainable growth and can contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. Digital technologies are defining new ways of working and thinking, opening up new possibilities and growth avenues. The effective and secure use of digital technologies can become a force multiplier in the decades-long global struggle against constant challenges to the global community. SCO Member States need to join forces in unlocking the full potential of digitalization across all sectors of the economy, including the digitalization of the real economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the development of digital ecosystems and the digital transformation of economies. The significance of developing, improving and ensuring the security and reliability of digital infrastructure and digital services, improving their quality with feedback from citizens and businesses and promoting digital literacy has come into focus.

The potential of digital technology to transform social, cultural and economic life has not been fully realized. Member States will continue efforts to ensure that the benefits of digital transformation are accessible and affordable for the full realization of human potential and will focus on people-centric development. The development and implementation of practical digital solutions, effective digital literacy and skills development measures for all citizens, play a decisive role in meeting their social and economic and achieve inclusive economic development.

Advocate for continued work on access to affordable digital infrastructure and in support of the digital economy, seeking digital connectivity and services to enhance digital opportunities and digital interoperability. Member States intend to provide public services to their citizens in a proactive, customized and predictable manner, with the prospect of moving to a paper-less format of interaction and to facilitate their participation through digital platforms, including for participatory governance, in state programmes and projects.

Strongly support the integration of digital solutions in priority sectors, such as the financial sector including in implementing digital payments and the sharing of

best practices among SCO Member States. We will strive to widely disseminate digital services in order to make them accessible to the citizens of SCO Member States, taking information security into account.

The introduction of digital technologies also contributes to the use of data for the development of economic, social and cultural aspects of people's lives. The growing number of Internet users and digital tools is creating significant amount of data that requires robust protection and analysis in terms of assessing the social and economic needs of populations. An approach to development based on the analysis of digital data has the transformative potential to address a wide range of issues in all areas, including the economics, health and education.

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