

PRESS RELEASE

Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

A regular meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (hereinafter referred to as the SCO or the Organization) was held on May 13 and 14, 2011 in Almaty. The meeting was attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan E. Kazyhanov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic R. Kazakbaev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation S. Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan H. Zarifi, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan B. Islamov.

The SCO Secretary General M. Imanaliev and Director of the Executive Committee of the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure D. Dzhumanbekov participated in the meeting.

Participants of the meeting were received by President N. Nazarbayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The meeting of foreign ministers of the SCO member states was chaired by the Kazakh side.

In the context of the preparations for the meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO member states commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Organization (June 15, 2011, Astana), the parties reviewed the issues of continued strengthening the role and place of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the global and regional architecture. The meeting noted convergence of views on the need to go ahead with the multidisciplinary cooperation within the SCO and consolidate its status as an influential international institution.

The meeting noted with satisfaction that during the period since the meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO member states held on June 10-11, 2010 in Tashkent, a major work had been done to strengthen practical cooperation within the Organization in such fields as politics, security, economy and humanitarian ties.

The sides exchanged views on relevant international issues, main trends in the situation in the world and in the SCO region. They have discussed the prospects of the SCO cooperation with other multilateral organizations.

The heads of delegations believe that, under current conditions, fundamental and long-term interests of the member states of the Organization and their sustainable development will be facilitated by strengthened cooperation for the sake of maintaining peace, security and stability in the region and increased capacity of the Organization to timely and adequately respond to emerging challenges and threats.

The meeting noted the role of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in assisting the Kyrgyz side in the normalization of the situation in the country and in the provision of considerable humanitarian and financial aid to Kyrgyzstan.

The heads of delegations underscored the leading role of the UN in advancing the process of peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan. They expressed support to the independent choice by the Afghan people of their own development path and gradual transfer to the Afghans of the responsibility for all key aspects of society, including security and socio-economic development of the IRA, and evolvment of friendly Afghanistan as an independent, peaceful and prosperous nation.

The meeting participants positively assessed the efforts of the SCO member states to assist in the revival of the economy of Afghanistan and called on the international community to continue to assist the Afghan government and people.

The heads of delegations reaffirmed their intention to expand cooperation in areas such as joint combating of terrorism, separatism and extremism, drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. Adoption of the Anti-Drug Strategy of the SCO member states for 2011-2016 and of the Program of Action in support of its implementation will be an important contribution to combating the illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors.

The participants called for continued deepening of regional economic cooperation, creation of favorable conditions for trade and investment, establishment of effective cooperation in innovations and elaboration of a mechanism for financing joint projects.

The meeting approved a draft model Memorandum of Commitment of a state applying for the SCO membership.

The heads of delegations welcomed the adoption by the UN General Assembly of Resolution A/RES/65/124 "On cooperation between the UN and the SCO" of December 13, 2010.

The parties confirmed the need for the full implementation of the potential of the cooperation with the SCO observer states and dialogue partners in various fields.

The SCO Secretary-General M. Imanaliev presented a report of the Secretariat on its work over the past year that was approved by the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SCO member states.

The meeting was held in the traditional spirit of friendship and mutual understanding.