

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 22, 2010 in Tashkent. It was attended by Secretary of State - Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan K. Saudabaev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation S. Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan H. Zarifi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan V. Norov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic – SCO National coordinator for the Kyrgyz Republic T. Makeev.

The SCO Secretary General M. Imanaliev participated in the meeting.

The heads of delegations were received by President I. Karimov of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SCO member states was chaired by the Uzbek side.

In view of the preparations for the forthcoming meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO Member States (June 10-11, 2010, Tashkent), the meeting addressed a number of priorities for further expansion of cooperation in the framework of the Organization.

The sides exchanged views on important regional and global issues, main trends of developments in the world, as well as on enhancing stability and security in Central Asia, continued strengthening the SCO authority as an influential international organization and expanding its links with other multilateral organizations.

The heads of delegations expressed their solidarity with the people of Kyrgyzstan in the current difficult situation. Security and stability in the SCO region is inextricably linked to the security and stability in each of the individual member states, including the Kyrgyz Republic. The SCO member states, being committed to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Kyrgyz Republic, are ready to provide it with the necessary support and assistance.

The heads of delegations stated that over the period since the meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO member states held on June 15-16, 2009 in Yekaterinburg, a significant work had been done to further strengthen the Organization, expand the practical cooperation within SCO in political, economic and humanitarian fields and develop its external relations. The SCO truly contributes to solving social and economic problems and ensuring security and stability in the region.

It has been stressed that strengthening stability in Central Asia remains the top priority of the SCO member states in the field of security. The meeting has confirmed the intention to expand cooperation in areas such as joint counteraction to terrorism, separatism and extremism, drug trafficking and transnational organized crime.

The meeting participants have expressed serious concern over the complicated situation in Afghanistan, whose territory continues to pose a threat of terrorism, drug trafficking, and transnational organized crime. It has been stressed that security and stability in the Central Asian region is impossible without resolving the problems related to Afghanistan.

The member states reaffirm the UN's leading role in coordinating the efforts of the international community in resolving the situation in Afghanistan. They believe that the Afghan problem cannot be resolved solely by military means and they support continued negotiation process under UN auspices with the participation of the Afghans themselves in the interest of evolving the IRA as a peaceful and stable state.

It has been noted that ensuring stability and security in the region will be facilitated by further deepening of regional economic cooperation, creating favorable conditions for trade and investment, strengthening practical cooperation in the areas of trade, finance, energy, transport, communications, agriculture, science and technology.

The openness of the Organization to other states in the region that undertake to abide by the purposes and principles of the SCO Charter and the provisions of other international treaties and instruments adopted in its framework, has been confirmed by the approval by the ministers of the Regulation on admission of new members to the Organization. Adoption of this document by the meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO member states to be held in Tashkent will launch the mechanism of the Organization's membership expansion.

The heads of delegations welcomed the signing of the Joint Declaration on Cooperation between the SCO Secretariats and the UN (5 April 2010, Tashkent) initiated by the Republic of Uzbekistan, that laid down the basic principles and directions of cooperation between the two organizations, as set forth in Resolution A/64/183 of the UN General Assembly of December 18, 2009.

The SCO permanent bodies have been recommended to intensify cooperation with the UN, ASEAN and other international organizations and institutions on the issues of security and stability, economic, social and human development.

The participants of the meeting have expressed confidence that further dynamic development and strengthening of the Organization, improvement of the legal framework of the SCO permanent bodies and effective implementation of the decisions already taken, will be facilitated by the Rules of Procedure of the Organization to be approved by the forthcoming SCO Summit in Tashkent.

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

The SCO Secretary-General M. Imanaliev presented a report on the Secretariat work over the past year which was approved by the heads of delegations.

The meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SCO member states was held in the traditional spirit of friendship and mutual understanding.