STATEMENT

by the Heads of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

on International Information Security

(Shanghai, June 15, 2006)

The Heads of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (hereinafter referred to as the SCO or the Organization) - the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan – having met on June 15, 2006 in Shanghai, state the following.

One of the most important features of modern times is rapid development and widespread introduction of new information and communication technologies (ICT). Penetrating all areas of human activity, ICT shapes the global information environment which directly affects political, economic, defense, socio-cultural and other components of national security and common system of international security and stability. The information environment is turning into the backbone factor of the society livelihood, while information is becoming one of the most valuable elements of the national heritage and one of the most important political and economic resources.

The heads of state recognize that ICTs have created a significant potential for the development of human capabilities and full realization of human rights and freedoms. They open up additional opportunities, facilitate emergence of additional instruments for efficient functioning of society and the state, and shape the global partnership for sustainable development, security and prosperity.

Along with this, the heads of state have expressed their concern over emerging real threat of ICT use for purposes that could cause serious damage to the security of an individual, society and the state, in violation of the fundamental principles of equality and mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states, peaceful settlement of conflicts, non-use of force, and respect for human rights. At the same time, the threat of the ICT use for criminal, terrorist and military and political purposes incompatible with maintenance of international security can be realized both within the civilian and military fields and cause serious political and socio-economic impacts on individual countries, regions and the world as a whole, and destabilization of public life within a state.

The heads of state have noted the valuable work being carried out in their countries in order to strengthen information security at the national level. At the same time, they realize that the negative consequences of the destructive use of ICT by criminals, terrorists and their groups and organizations as well as by individual states to address military and political problems, may be most widespread and affect third country and sometimes become truly global. The use of ICT for these purposes may cause global catastrophes comparable, in term of their devastating effects, to the use of weapons of mass destruction.

The heads of state have emphasized that ICT should not only serve as a guide in the world of information, but also facilitate rapprochement and interpenetration of cultures and civilizations with due respect for religious feelings and traditions of nations, *inter alia*, within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization region.

The heads of state have stressed that the cross-border nature of ICT and modern challenges and threats dictate the need to complement national efforts of ensuring information security with joint actions at bilateral, regional and international level. Only by coordinated and complementary actions, the states will be able to provide an adequate response to modern challenges and threats to information security.

In this context, the heads of state have supported the United Nations' review of existing and potential threats in the field of information security and possible joint measures to address them, as well as the study of relevant international concepts aimed at strengthening the security of global information and telecommunication systems, and they considered it important to continue this work.

The heads of state welcomed the adoption, on December 8, 2005, by the commemorative 60th session the UN General Assembly of Resolution 60/45 "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security" and expressed willingness to facilitate implementation of the recommendations contained therein.

The heads of state declare the proximity of their countries' positions on key issues related to International Information Security (IIS), and intend to join forces within the SCO in order to counter new information challenges and threats in compliance with the principles and norms of international law, including the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of human rights. In this regard, the heads of state have decided to establish a group of experts of the SCO member – states on IIS, including representatives of the Organization's Secretariat and the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure entrusted with the development of an action plan for ensuring international information security and identifying possible ways and means of addressing, in the SCO framework, all aspects of IIS problems.