

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

The Fourteenth Meeting of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The fourteenth meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of the members states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (hereinafter referred to as the SCO or the Organization) was held on December 14 and 15, 2015 in the city of Zhengzhou (Henan Province). The meeting was attended by Prime Minister K. Massimov of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Premier of the State Council Li Keqiang of the People's Republic of China, Prime Minister T. Sariiev of the Kyrgyz Republic, Prime Minister D. Medvedev of the Russian Federation, Prime Minister K. Rasulzoda of the Republic of Tajikistan and First Deputy Prime Minister R. Asimov of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The meeting was chaired by Premier of the State Council Li Keqiang of the People's Republic of China.

The SCO Secretary General D. Mezentsev, Director of the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure Executive Committee Sinfen Zhang, Chairman of the Board of the SCO Business Council C. Katyrin, and authorized representative of the Council of SCO Interbank Association V. Dmitriyev participated in the meeting.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of the SCO observer states: Chief Executive Officer of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan A. Abdullah, Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Belarus N. Snopkov, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of India V. Kumar Singh, Minister of Communications and Information Technologies of the Islamic Republic of Iran M. Vaezi, Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia Ts. Oyuunbaatar, Prime Minister M. Nawaz Sharif of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as well as UN Under-Secretary-General - Executive Secretary of UN ESCAP Sh. Akhtar, and Executive Director of the Secretariat of the Conference on interaction and confidence-building measures in Asia Gong Jianwei.

In a constructive and businesslike atmosphere, the heads of delegations exchanged views on a wide range of issues of the international and regional economic development, discussed the prospects and measures aimed at promoting economic and cultural cooperation in the interests of further enhancement of mutual understanding and traditional friendship between the peoples of the SCO member states, and agreed as follows:

1. The heads of government have noted that the world economy is still undergoing a stage of recovery from the global crisis and this process has not yet become sustainable and long-term in nature. With the reduction in global demand, international trade and investment growth has slowed down. An additional negative impact on the world economy has been generated by the threats related to terrorism, natural disasters, environmental degradation, and spread of serious communicable diseases.

In this regard, the SCO member states will actively implement the agreements reached by the meeting of the Council of Heads of member states held on July 10, 2015 in Ufa, promote regional cooperation, jointly create favorable conditions for investment and business, make efforts to promote peaceful development, prosperity and stability of all member states and the region as a whole, and contribute to the acceleration of global economic recovery.

The heads of government have reiterated the importance of maintaining the process of establishing an open, non-discriminatory and inclusive multilateral system of trade based on the principles of equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit that promotes economic growth, sustainable development and job creation.

2. The heads of government noted certain progress in the development of cooperation within the Organization in the economic, humanitarian and other areas following the meeting of the SCO CHG held on December 15, 2014, in Astana.

In line with the outcome of the SCO Ufa Summit, the heads of government emphasized the need for practical implementation of the SCO Development Strategy until 2025, the Program of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation among the SCO member states and the Action Plan for its implementation, and the List of Measures for further development of project activities within the SCO in 2012 -2016. They also stressed the potential for continued expansion of cooperation in economic, trade, financial, investment, transport, telecommunications, customs, agriculture and energy sectors, improvement of favorable conditions for trade and investment, promotion of economic development based on innovation, modernization of the industrial sector through joint creation of high-tech industries that will contribute to sustainable socio-economic development of the SCO member states and improve the welfare of their peoples.

3. Having confirmed their support of the Chinese initiative on the Silk Road Economic Belt, the heads of government made a Statement on the regional economic cooperation. They are convinced that the joint work of the SCO Member States, in close cooperation with the SCO observer states and dialogue partners, *inter alia*, in the framework of the Silk Road Economic Belt initiative, will contribute to sustained and sustainable economic growth in order to preserve and maintain peace and stability in the region.

4. The heads of government support mutually beneficial regional and international cooperation in line with the interests of all SCO member states in the development of industrial capacity and capacity utilization, noting their importance in terms of the optimal allocation of financial resources, technology and resources, achieving supply and demand balance, unveiling market potential, solving problems of industrial development, as well as industry modernization and transformation.

5. The heads of government endorsed the outcome of the fourteenth meeting of ministers of the SCO member states in charge of external economic and trade relations held on September 16, 2015 in Xian, including an agreement to establish an *ad hoc* working group on trade facilitation.

The heads of government consider necessary to continue working on the creation of favorable conditions for trade and investment with priority given to joint projects and cooperation activities within the SCO.

Ministries and agencies of the SCO member states, in cooperation with the SCO Secretariat and the SCO Business Council and SCO Interbank Association, have been instructed to continue the preparation of a draft List of Measures aimed at further development of project activities within SCO in 2017-2021 to be approved by the next meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of the SCO member states.

6. The heads of government appreciated the practical measures taken by the SCO to advance regional economic cooperation, including business conferences and the meeting of the Board of the SCO Business Council as part of the St. Petersburg Economic Forum held on June 18 and 19, 2015, the meeting of the Board of the Interbank Association held on July 9, 2015 in Bratislava and the exhibition of the SCO countries' commodities held on September 24-26, 2015 in Xi'an.

7. In order to create favorable conditions for the development of trade and investment cooperation, the heads of government called for deepened cooperation in the field of macroeconomic and financial policies of the member states. They consider important to make full use of the potential of interbank cooperation and of the existing and new financial mechanisms created in the SCO region.

Having noted the importance of the continued work on the establishment of the SCO

Development Bank and SCO Development Fund (Special Account) aiming to stimulate trade and investment links in the region, the heads of government instructed the heads of relevant ministries and agencies of the SCO member states to consider this issue at the third meeting of finance ministers and chairmen of central (national) banks of the SCO member states to be held in 2016 in the Kyrgyz Republic.

8. The heads of government stressed the need for an early entry into force of the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on favorable conditions for international road transport (September 12, 2014, Dushanbe). The implementation of this Agreement will contribute to the development of multimodal transport, creation of favorable transport infrastructure network and realization of the transit potential of the SCO member states.

The heads of government noted the need to implement the agreements reached in the framework of the seventh meeting of transport ministers of SCO member states held on May 15, 2015 in Ufa.

9. The heads of government note the importance of the interactions between relevant agencies, organizations and companies of the SCO member states in the field of information and communication technologies, in particular as regards the exchange of experience on the implementation and use of the automation technology for government management (e-government).

10. The heads of government highly appreciated the implementation progress of the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on cooperation and mutual assistance in customs matters (November 2, 2007, Tashkent) and other documents on cooperation in customs. They noted that the signing of the Program of cooperation between the customs services of the SCO member states for 2016-2021 will give a new impetus to the development of customs cooperation.

11. The heads of government stressed the need to intensify practical cooperation in the agricultural sector through the implementation of bilateral and multilateral projects in the field of animal husbandry, crop production and agricultural processing, land reclamation, agricultural irrigation, development and introduction of innovative agricultural technology, training and skills development for agriculture, cooperation in matters of veterinary medicine and plant quarantine, as well as participation in seminars, forums and exhibitions held in the SCO member states.

12. The heads of government noted the importance of continued mutually beneficial multifaceted cooperation in the energy sector, including renewable and alternative energy.

The heads of government supported strengthened cooperation in environmental protection, exchange of experience in building energy-efficient economy, promoting the transition to a low-carbon development, *inter alia*, with a view to further decrease or limit harmful emissions, including greenhouse gases, as well as reduce energy consumption.

13. The heads of government welcomed the contribution by the SCO Business Council and SCO Interbank Association to the enhanced cooperation and trade and economic relations within the Organization, and called for strengthened focus of these bodies on the development of ties between the business and financial community and the economy's real sector.

The heads of government positively rated the Business Council's work on the establishment of specialized platforms for cooperation and interaction between business organizations of the member countries, observer states and dialogue partners of the Organization and considered necessary to continue this work.

The heads of government noted the progress made by the Interbank Association in establishing relations with financial institutions of the SCO observer states and dialogue partners over the ten years of its activity.

14. The heads of government has positively assessed the results of the cooperation among the SCO member states in cultural and humanitarian area and supported further development of multilateral and bilateral relations in the area of culture, education, science and technology, health, social welfare, environmental protection, tourism, emergency relief, justice, media that promote mutual understanding among peoples, rapprochement and mutual enrichment of cultures, promotion of traditions and customs of the peoples of the SCO region.

15. The heads of government appreciated the outcome of the meeting of culture ministers of the SCO member states (April 20, 2015, Moscow). They have noted that the practical implementation of the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on cooperation in culture (August 16, 2007, Bishkek) is of major importance.

16. The heads of government noted the need for the practical implementation of the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO member states on scientific and technological cooperation (September 13, 2013, Bishkek), an early launch of the Program of scientific and technical partnership of the SCO and strengthened practical cooperation between member states in science and art.

17. The heads of government appreciated the results of the second meeting of the SCO member states' health ministers (July 7 2015, Moscow) and the fourth meeting of the heads of services of the SCO member states in charge of sanitary and epidemiological welfare (April 17, 2015, Moscow), and favored high quality implementation of the agreements set forth in their final documents, as well as in the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on cooperation in health sector (June 15, 2011, Astana) and the Program of notification of epidemiological situations in the territory of SCO member states caused by communicable diseases (November 29, 2013, Tashkent).

18. The heads of government expressed their appreciation of the results of the first meeting of heads of national tourist administrations of the SCO member states (March 25, 2015, Moscow) and supported the initiative of the Russian side to develop and agree on a program for the development of the SCO member states' cooperation in the field of tourism.

The heads of government supported the development and expansion of equal and mutually beneficial bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the field of tourism with due regard of the prevailing cultural, historical and economic ties, creation of favorable conditions for communication between people, strengthened exchange of experiences in the field of tourism, intensified relations between the competent authorities and relevant organizations.

The heads of government consider important that the SCO member states take an active part in the First World Conference on Tourism Development (May 2016, China).

19. The heads of government expressed their high appreciation of the implementation progress of the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on cooperation in assistance in emergency situations (October 26, 2005, Moscow), and the results of the eighth meeting of the heads of the SCO member states' agencies in charge of emergency prevention and response (November 11-12, 2015, Chendu). They supported quality implementation of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on cooperation in assistance in emergency situations for 2016-2017, further development of a more practical and effective cooperation in emergency prevention and response in order to jointly mitigate the emergencies impacts.

20. The heads of government noted that the implementation of the Agreement on cooperation between the justice ministries of SCO member states signed at the third meeting of the SCO member states' ministers of justice (August 18, 2015, Dushanbe) contributes to continued strengthening of the legal cooperation. They supported the advisability of developing a unified electronic database of the SCO member states' legislation for entrepreneurs and investors, and

continued cooperation in forensic medicine through joint research programs and exchange of techniques and experiences.

21. The heads of government have noted that the involvement of the SCO observer states and dialogue partners in the SCO practical cooperation is positive factor relevant for the expansion of cooperation in the SCO region.

The heads of government noted the need to continue to involve observer states and dialogue partners, as well as partner international organizations in the practical cooperation in economic, humanitarian and other fields, including in the framework of the SCO Business Council and SCO Interbank Association.

22. The Heads of Government approved the report of the SCO Secretariat on the implementation of the Program of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation among the Organization's member states.

The meeting approved the budget of the Organization for 2016 and took decisions on the issues related to financial and organizational activities of the SCO permanent bodies.

The heads of government noted the high level of organization of the meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of the SCO member states and expressed gratitude to the Chinese side for the warm welcome.

The next meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of the SCO member states will be held in 2016 in the Kyrgyz Republic.