

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 (SCO CMFA) was held on July 9, 2007 in Bishkek, the capital of the Kyrgyz Republic. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan M. Tazhin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic E. Karabaev, 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.

The SCO Secretary-General B. Nurgaliev reported on the work of the Secretariat over the past year. The Director of the Executive Committee of the Regional Antiterrorist Structure (RATS) M. Subanov participated in the meeting.

The meeting was chaired by the Kyrgyz side.

In view of the forthcoming meeting of the Council of Heads of States (CHS) of the SCO members scheduled to be held on August 16, 2007 in Bishkek, the ministers reviewed the implementation of the instructions and decisions of the commemorative summit of the Organization of June 15, 2006 in Shanghai. They have noted with satisfaction the fruitful work done over the past year on deepening and expanding multifaceted cooperation in the field of security, as well as in political, trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian areas. Decisions have been taken on some the issues related to the forthcoming CHS meeting in Bishkek.

The ministers exchanged views on the current international situation. They have noted the similarity and identity of the SCO member states' approaches to modern global and regional problems, which creates opportunities for partnership in international affairs. The meeting has confirmed the common intent to consistently intensify cooperation and coordination between the foreign ministries.

Noting continued expansion of the SCO international relations and increased overall authority of the Organization in the world, the ministers have stressed the importance of further enhancement of cooperation with the SCO observer states, as well as with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in the framework of the Liaison Group SCO - Afghanistan. The meeting has accentuated the relevance of further development of cooperation with the CIS, EurAsEC and ASEAN on the basis of memoranda of understanding between the secretariats of these organizations, as well as of effectively use of the SCO's status of observer to the UN General Assembly.

The ministers have reaffirmed that, guided by the open nature of the Organization, the member states are resolved to constructively cooperate with all interested multilateral associations and states based on the principles of equality and universally recognized norms of international law. The meeting stressed the importance of the SCO's work on the establishment of the SCO's mechanisms of cooperation with international partners, *inter alia*, by RATS.

The meeting approved the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Secretariat over the past year. It has been recognized that the reorganization of the Secretariat structure contributed to the increased efficiency of its operations.

The ministers appreciated the ongoing preparatory work for the SCO summit scheduled to be held on August 16, 2007 in Bishkek.

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