

## **Joint Communiqué**

### **Meeting of the Council of Heads of the SCO Member States**

A regular meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO CHS) met on August 28, 2008 in Dushanbe. The meeting was attended by President N. Nazarbayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Chairman Hu Jintao of the People's Republic of China, President K. Bakiev of the Kyrgyz Republic, President D. Medvedev of the Russian Federation, President E. Rahmon of the Republic of Tajikistan, President I. Karimov of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The meeting was chaired by President E. Rahmon of the Republic of Tajikistan.

The SCO Secretary-General B. Nurgaliev and Director of the Executive Committee of the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure (RATS) M. Subanov participated in the meeting.

In attendance were also the heads of delegations of the SCO observer states – President M. Ahmadinejad of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Minister of Oil and Gas Resources of the Republic of India M. Deora, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia S. Oyun, Advisor to the Prime Minister with the rank of Federal Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan M.A. Durrani, and as guests of the host – President H. Karzai of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, as well as Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General M. Jenca, Chairman of the Executive Committee - Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States S. Lebedev, Deputy Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization T. Buzubaev.

The heads of state exchanged views on international issues and the situation in the region. The meeting has revealed broad convergence or similarity of positions on the issues discussed, as reflected in the Dushanbe Declaration.

The authorized representatives of the SCO member states signed the Agreement on Arranging and Conducting Joint Antiterrorist Exercises by Member States of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Agreement on Cooperation between the Governments of Member States of Shanghai Cooperation Organization on Combating Illicit Trafficking in Weapons, Ammunition and Explosives. In addition, the Memorandum on Partnership Relations was signed between the Interbank Association of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Eurasian Development Bank.

The meeting, held in the traditional atmosphere of friendship, mutual understanding and constructive spirit, has reviewed the outcomes of the Organization's operations since the Bishkek summit and identified priorities for its development during the period until the next CHS meeting and thereafter.

It has been stated that the tasks set by the CHS meeting held in Bishkek, as well as the agreements reached there are being successfully implemented.

The meeting heard and approved the report by the SCO Secretary General on the SCO activities over the past year and the report of the RATS Council on the work of the Regional Antiterrorist Structure in 2007.

The heads of state congratulated Chairman Hu Jintao of the Peoples Republic of China on the success of the Summer Olympic Games held in Beijing. The Chinese side expressed its appreciation to the SCO member states for their full support during the preparation and holding of the Games. The SCO cooperation in ensuring security at the Olympics has been highly appreciated.

The heads of delegations attended the opening of the Fourth Art Festival of the SCO member states.

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The heads of state have stressed the importance of the Treaty on Long-Term Good-Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation of the SCO Member States signed in August 2007 in Bishkek in terms of strengthening SCO cooperation in joint countering new challenges and threats, strengthening international peace and security and maintaining global and regional stability.

The practical implementation of the Treaty will also contribute to improved socio-economic conditions and deepened integration processes within the SCO.

In the area of response to new challenges and threats, the meeting has noted a steady intensification of the activities of the RATS, as an effective mechanism for coordinating cooperation between the competent authorities of the member states of the Organization and its information and analytical support. The practical implementation of the Program of Cooperation in Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism for 2007-2009 was rated positively. Enhancement of the SCO counterterrorism capacity was facilitated by joint exercise of the member states, including the anti-terrorist exercises "Peace Mission – 2007" conducted on the territory of Chelyabinsk oblast of the Russian Federation. The practice of joint exercises will continue. In the near future, the Parties will consider the possibility of holding, in early 2009, the first meeting of ministers of interior and public security.

The meeting has confirmed concerns over threats related to the use of modern information and communication technologies for purposes incompatible with objectives of maintaining international stability and security. In this regard, it has been noted that the Expert Group of the SCO Member States on international information security successfully worked on the implementation of the 2007 Plan of Action for ensuring IIS. At the same time, in order to create a legal framework for cooperation in this area it was considered advisable to develop in the SCO framework an intergovernmental agreement in the field of international information security.

In the course of the implementation of the Agreement between the SCO member states on Cooperation in Combating Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and their Precursors, the emphasis will be made on a comprehensive solution to the problem of detecting and eliminating illegal drug trafficking channels across the borders of the SCO member states, as well as on an early launch of practical cooperation in this field.

The heads of counternarcotics agencies of the member states have been directed to hold, in the first half of 2009, a special meeting to review the issue of establishing the SCO mechanism to combat drug trafficking, develop a strategy and program of combating trafficking of drugs from Afghanistan and precursors for their production in that country.

The meeting noted the need to intensify the work of the Liaison Group SCO - Afghanistan.

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The heads of state have called for further expansion of the Organization's international ties. The work with the SCO observer states - India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan - will be brought to a qualitatively new level and adjusted to take their views into consideration.

In order to create additional opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation with interested countries and international organizations, the heads of state approved the Regulation on the status of the SCO dialogue partner.

It has been decided to establish an *ad hoc* group of experts to review the entire range of issues related to the expansion of the Organization.

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The heads of state welcomed new positive trend in a number of areas of economic and trade cooperation of mutual interest - creation of favorable conditions for trade and investment, development of transportation and transit potential and of modern information and communication technologies. Attention has been drawn to the need to more active tap the potential of the SCO Business Council and the Interbank Association in order to strengthen favorable investment environment on the territory of the Organization's members and involve business community in the implementation of major joint economic projects. In the context of promoting business partnership within the Organization, the meeting stressed the importance of cooperation in customs.

The heads of state have expressed satisfaction with the launch of the SCO dialogue on agricultural issues.

The heads of state specifically emphasized the importance of cooperation in the humanitarian area as one of the key factors of the steady strengthening and expansion of the social basis for friendship, good neighborliness and mutual understanding between the nations of the SCO member states. The meeting has noted an intention to establish contacts between the legislative bodies of the interested member states of the Organization.

The heads of state have stressed the importance of establishing the SCO cooperation in the field of health, including combating communicable diseases, which is vital to ensuring conditions for sustainable economic development and improved welfare of the population of the countries in the region.

The heads of state have expressed their intention to continue cooperation in the area of education and science and development of cultural and youth exchanges to strengthen mutual understanding and friendship among the nations of the interested member states of the Organization.

The meeting noted the positive progress of cooperation in environment. It has stressed the importance of continued work on the preparation of the SCO environmental concept.

The meeting noted with satisfaction the successful cooperation of the agencies involved in emergency relief and prevention. The view has been stated regarding the desirability of accelerated work on the establishment of the SCO Center for prevention of natural and man-made disasters.

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The heads of state have highly appreciated the chairmanship of the Republic of Tajikistan in the SCO and expressed gratitude to the Tajik side for its hospitality during the Dushanbe summit.

The next meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO member states will be held in 2009 in Ekaterinburg. Pursuant to the SCO Charter, for the next period the chairmanship in the Organization is being taken over by the Russian Federation.