

Joint Communiqué

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

A regular meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (hereinafter referred to as the SCO CHG) was held on October 30, 2008 in Astana.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister K. Massimov of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Premier of the State Council Wen Jiabao of the People's Republic of China, Prime Minister I. Chudinov of the Kyrgyz Republic, Chairman of the Government V. Putin of the Russian Federation, Prime Minister A. Akilov of the Republic of Tajikistan, and First Deputy Prime Minister R. Azimov of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister K.K. Massimov of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The meeting was attended and addressed by the representatives of the observer states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Minister of Energy of the Republic of India Sushilkumar Shinde, First Vice President of Islamic Republic of Iran Parviz Davoodi, Prime Minister of Mongolia Sanzhagiyn Bayar, Defence Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Chaudhry Ahmed Mukhtar, as well as, as the guest of the host, First Vice-President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Ahmad Zia Massoud.

The SCO Secretary General B. Nurgaliev, Director of the Executive Committee of the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure M. Subanov, Chairman of the Board of the SCO Business Council D. Mezentsev and Chairman of the Board of the SCO Interbank Association V. Dmitriyev participated in the meeting.

President N. Nazarbayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan met with the heads of delegations attending the meeting.

1. In a friendly and constructive atmosphere, the heads of government discussed the state of and prospects for practical cooperation in political, trade, economic, humanitarian and other areas.
2. In order to promote sustained and stable development of the SCO multilateral cooperation, the governments of the member states will work together on the practical implementation of the agreements reached during the Dushanbe Summit (2008) of the SCO.

The meeting has noted with satisfaction the progress of cooperation in trade, economic and humanitarian fields made after the 2007 meeting of the SCO CHG in Tashkent, as well as positive trend of high mutual trade growth.

3. The heads of government supported deepened multilateral cooperation based on the updated version of the Plan of Actions in support of the implementation of the Program of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation among the SCO member states approved by the meeting. It has been deemed advisable to more actively engage the SCO Business Council and the Interbank Association in this work.

4. The heads of government view it necessary to focus cooperation on the following areas:

- creating stable and predictable conditions for mutual trade and investment and strengthening market mechanisms;
- energy efficiency, clean energy and technologies, renewable energy, and energy security;
- introduction of innovative technologies;
- promotion of transport projects;
- deepened cooperation in customs control;
- promoting cooperation in healthcare, particularly in the area of prevention, diagnosis and

treatment of communicable diseases.

5. The heads of government attach great importance to the thorough preparation of the upcoming regular meeting of transport ministers in view of the need to continue active cooperation on issues related to the improvement of transport networks in the SCO and exploring the feasibility of building new routes, including rail.

The meeting has expressed appreciation to the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations ESCAP for providing practical assistance to the preparation of the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on Creating Favorable Conditions for International Road Transport.

6. The heads of government have noted that in the context of the sustainable development of the Central Asian countries, issues of rational and efficient use of water resources are of special significance. In this regard, they have noted the importance of the forthcoming first meeting of the heads of environmental agencies of the member states of the Organization.

7. The heads of government have reiterated the importance of cooperation in disaster prevention and mitigation of their effects. They have decided to hold, in the first half of 2009, a regular meeting of the heads of the SCO member states' agencies in charge disaster prevention and relief and accelerate the review of the issues related to the establishment of an appropriate SCO Center.

8. The heads of government consider it timely to convene the meeting of agriculture ministers of the SCO member states with a view to develop consolidated approaches to enhancing regional food security and promoting agricultural production.

9. The meeting has noted the promising practical implementation of the first "pilot" projects in the field of modern information technologies – "Cross-border cooperation of the SCO member states based on electronic digital signature" and "SCO information superhighway".

10. In view of the importance of enhancing relations between the business community and banking institutions of the SCO Member States, the Business Council and the Interbank Consortium have been recommended to consider holding a joint economic forum of business leaders of the SCO member states and involve representatives of observer countries and dialogue partners.

11. The heads of government believe that participation of the representatives of observer states in the meetings of sectoral ministries and agencies will help to engage these countries in the implementation of joint SCO projects.

12. The heads of government approved the Organization's budget for 2009 and discussed a number of organizational and financial issues of the SCO permanent bodies.

As part of the meeting, the authorized representatives of customs agencies of the SCO member states signed the Protocol between the Customs Services on Exchange of Monitoring Information regarding Energy Transfers.

The heads of government have appreciated the efforts of the Republic of Kazakhstan to ensure the success of the meeting of heads of government, and expressed gratitude to the Kazakh side for its hospitality.

The next meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the SCO member states will be held in 2009 in the People's Republic of China.

Astana, October 30, 2008