

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 (hereinafter referred to as the SCO) was held on June 3, 2015 in Moscow. The meeting was attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan E. Idrisov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China Wang Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic E. Abdyldaev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation S. Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan S. Aslov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan A. Nasyrov.

The meeting was chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation S. Lavrov.

The SCO Secretary General D. Mezentsev and Director of the Executive Committee of the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure Zhang Sinfen participated in the meeting.

The heads of delegations were received by President V. Putin of the Russian Federation.

As part of the preparation for the upcoming meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO member states to be held on July 9-10, in Ufa, the heads of delegations discussed the state and prospects of the SCO further development and reviewed the main areas for the improvement of the Organization.

The heads of delegations approved, as the basis for future development, a draft SCO Development Strategy until 2025, which will be submitted to the heads of state. The Strategy is called upon to ensure new quality and renewed momentum of the cooperation of the member states in politics, security, economy and humanitarian ties. The agreed approaches of the member states to the on-going tasks of the SCO operation are reflected in a draft Ufa Declaration and press release of the SCO CHS meeting that will be submitted to the heads of state.

The heads of delegations approved draft SCO CHS decisions regarding the start of the procedure for the admission of India and Pakistan to the SCO as members. They noted the importance for the SCO development of the practical launch of the expansion process, as well as deepened cooperation with observer states and dialogue partners.

The heads of delegations approved a draft Declaration of the heads of SCO member states on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Victory over fascism in the Second World War. They noted the invaluable contribution made by the peoples of the SCO member states and other countries to the achievement of the victory over fascism and militarism. The heads of delegations are convinced that the lessons of this human tragedy commit the international community to act together in defending peace, stability and security in the world.

The heads of delegations call for the strengthening of existing mechanisms of global governance, particularly of the system of the United Nations organizations that celebrates in 2015 its 70th anniversary, and they are convinced of the need to preserve the key role of the UN Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the UN Charter. They believe that the reform of the UN Security Council should make it more representative and effective through the widest possible consultations as part of the search for a "package solution" based on the interests of ensuring the cohesion of the UN member states, without setting artificial deadlines and imposing options that have not been widely supported by the UN member states.

The heads of delegations had a thorough exchange of views on the situation in the SCO region and important regional and international issues, including the situation in Afghanistan, the

Middle East and North Africa. They call for the crises settlement and ensuring peace and stability through a nation - wide dialogue with the participation of all interested parties on the basis of mutual respect of interests and without interference from the outside.

The heads of delegations spoke in favor of an early restoration of peace in Ukraine based on the full and unconditional implementation by all parties of the Minsk Agreement of February 12, 2015.

The heads of delegations reaffirmed their support for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic and stressed the need to resolve the Syrian crisis solely by political and diplomatic means.

The heads of delegations expressed their concern over the escalated activities of terrorist organizations in the region and approved a draft Program of cooperation among the SCO member states on combating terrorism, separatism and extremism for 2016-2018, which provides for specific measures to enhance co-operation in this area. They welcomed a high-level regional security conference to be held on June 4, 2015 in Moscow.

The heads of delegations consider important to further strengthen the international community's fight against illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, and supported a draft Declaration of the heads of SCO member states on the issue of drug threat.

The heads of delegations supported the promotion of the new version of the "Rules of conduct in the field of international information security" distributed in January 2015 on behalf of the SCO member states as an official UN document.

The member states expressed their support for the Government of Afghanistan's efforts to achieve national reconciliation and economic revival of the country while stressing the leading role of the Afghans themselves in this process, and welcomed the continuity of the policy of the Afghan leadership in respect of the development of regional co-operation both with the SCO member states and with the Organization as a whole.

The heads of delegations noted the progress in the negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the six international mediators with the EU assistance to resolve the situation around the Iranian nuclear program. They believe that an early achievement of a comprehensive agreement will contribute to strengthening peace and stability and deepening mutual trust and understanding between the countries of the region.

The heads of delegations consider important an early entry into force for each party of the Protocol of security assurances to the Treaty on the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, and express confidence that it will contribute to the regional security and global non-proliferation regime.

The heads of delegations favor further development of the SCO partnership relations with other international organizations and forums, including the UN, UN ESCAP, UNODC, ASEAN, CIS, CSTO, and CICA.

The meeting approved a report on the work of the SCO Secretariat over the past year and draft decisions of the forthcoming meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO member states to be held in Ufa.

The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SCO Member States submitted for the approval by the Council of Heads of member states the candidacy of R. Alimov (Tajikistan) for the position of the SCO Secretary General for the period from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018.

The heads of delegations expressed their appreciation of the ongoing Russian chairmanship of the preparatory work for the meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO member states in Ufa.

The meeting was held in an atmosphere of openness, trust, friendship and mutual understanding traditional for the SCO cooperation.