

The Astana declaration

of the Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

The heads of state of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (hereinafter referred to as the SCO, or the Organisation) following the SCO Heads of State Council Meeting in Astana on 9 June 2017 declare the following.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has established itself as an internationally recognised and authoritative multilateral association, the activities of which are designed to maintain security and stability within the space uniting the member states, to jointly counteract emergent challenges and threats, to bolster trade, economic and cultural cooperation, and to unlock the enormous potential for neighbourliness and interaction between the SCO states and their peoples.

In this regard, the member states emphasise the historic importance of the SCO Charter adopted 15 years ago in 2002. This fundamental SCO document embodied the member states' readiness to pursue close, productive, and diversified cooperation in the "Shanghai spirit," which includes mutual trust and benefit, equality, mutual consultation, respect for the cultural diversity, and a focus on joint development.

Guided by the Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the SCO Charter, the Treaty on Long-Term Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation, as well as other international treaties and documents of the Organisation, reaffirming its commitment to the goals and principles of the UN Charter and other internationally recognised principles and norms of international law, expanding their mutual support for the efforts designed to safeguard independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and other fundamental interests, the member states will continue to jointly contribute to strengthening peace and ensuring global stability and security.

Amid profound transformations in international politics and the global economy, the SCO member states note the importance of creating a more equitable polycentric world order that meets the interests of each and every state, is based on international law and the principles of mutual respect and consideration of each other's interests, mutually beneficial cooperation, freedom from confrontation and conflicts, and equal and indivisible security, and will contribute to forging a human community sharing a common destiny.

The heads of state underscored the historical nature of granting full membership to the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. In this regard, they noted that India and Pakistan fulfilled the memorandums of commitment to obtain the status of SCO member state dated 2016 and approved the decisions of the SCO Heads of State Council on granting them the status of SCO member state.

The member states are convinced that expanding the SCO and further deepening cooperation with observer states and dialogue partners is of great importance for developing and enhancing the Organisation's potential.

II

The member states advocate strict adherence to the goals and principles of the UN Charter, primarily, the equality and sovereignty of states, non-interference in internal affairs, mutual respect for territorial integrity, inviolability of borders, non-aggression, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-use of force or threat of force, and other internationally recognised norms of international law designed to maintain peace and security, to develop cooperation between states, to strengthen independence, and to ensure the right to determine one's own future and paths of political, socioeconomic and cultural development.

They confirm their determination to strictly adhere to the Treaty on Long-Term Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation between SCO member states in order to promote neighbourliness and friendly relations in areas of mutual interest, including making the borders with each other into borders of eternal peace and friendship.

The member states are in favour of strengthening the key role of the UN Security Council as the primary body which, in accordance with the UN Charter, has the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

They believe that intergovernmental talks on reforming the UN Security Council, aimed at making it more representative and effective, should be carried out through the broadest possible consultations in a search of a "package solution" in the interests of ensuring the cohesion of UN member countries, without establishing artificial time frames, or forcing upon them options that are not widely supported by the UN members.

The member states welcome the election of the Republic of Kazakhstan as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2017-2018.

The member states will continue to cooperate in the area of disarmament and arms control, the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and the political and diplomatic settlement of regional challenges to non-proliferation regimes.

The member states consistently advocate strict observance of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the comprehensive and balanced advancement of all the goals and principles articulated therein, strengthening the role, effectiveness and universal nature of the Treaty, promoting the process of nuclear disarmament and strengthening the global nuclear non-proliferation regime with equal and indivisible security for all, taking into account all factors that affect international stability, as well as promoting equal and mutually beneficial cooperation in the sphere of using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The member states believe that the early entry into force of the Protocol on Security Guarantees to the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty for all its signatories will make a significant contribution to ensuring regional security and strengthening the global non-proliferation regime.

The member states reaffirm that the unilateral and unrestricted build-up of missile defence systems by one state or a group of states, without taking into account the interests of other countries, is detrimental to international and regional security and stability. They find it unacceptable to ensure one's own security at the expense of others.

The member states noted the importance of keeping outer space free of weapons in order to ensure equal and indivisible security for all and to maintain global stability. They expressed support for implementing practical measures to prevent an arms race in outer space, the most important of which is developing an international legal instrument banning the deployment of weapons in outer space.

The member states support efforts and initiatives designed to maintain and comply with the Chemical Weapons Convention, enhancing the credibility of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, as well as strengthening the regime provided for by the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

To affirm the common desire to interact on the basis of internationally recognised principles of international law and the UN Charter, and in pursuance of the UN Security Council resolutions on combating international terrorism, the member states adopted the Statement on Joint Counteraction to International Terrorism.

The member states will step up joint efforts to counter common security challenges and threats, deepen dialogue and cooperation to ensure comprehensive security, primarily in fighting terrorism, including cyber-terrorism, separatism, extremism, cross-border organised crime, illicit drug trafficking, and to strengthen international information security and emergency response.

The member states intend to further promote the activities of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure in the interests of ensuring security within the Organisation's space in accordance with its tasks and functions.

The member states emphasise that the SCO Convention on Countering Extremism signed in Astana on 9 June 2017 will help consolidate the international legal framework to confront new challenges and threats along with the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, the SCO Convention against Terrorism and the SCO Cooperation Programme for Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism for 2016-2018, as well as relevant UN documents, such as the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the corresponding UNSC resolutions. The SCO Convention on Countering Extremism is designed to strengthen the security of all SCO member states, to increase the effectiveness of cooperation between their competent bodies and to improve legislation in this area.

The member states will continue to strengthen practical cooperation and coordination as they fight illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors based on the Agreement between the SCO Member States on Cooperation in Combating Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Their Precursors of 2004, Statement by the SCO Member States on Combating the Threat of the Drug Problem of 2015, and in accordance with UN conventions and resolutions, including the outcome of the UN General Assembly special session on drug trafficking in New York in April 2016. In this context, they welcomed the joint UNODC-SCO event, "The UN and the SCO in the Fight Against Drugs: Common Threats, Joint Actions" held in Vienna on 13 March 2017 and an international campaign, "For a World Without Drugs", held in Astana on 19 April 2017.

Considering the critical importance of the fight against the spread of terrorist ideology and propaganda, including public justification of terrorism with the aim of inciting people to commit terrorist attacks, the member states will step up their efforts to counteract the radicalisation of society leading to manifestations of radical forms of extremism, including terrorism, primarily among young people, as well as to prevent religious, ethnic, ideological and political extremism, ethnic and racial intolerance, and xenophobia. Along with cooperation of law enforcement and judicial bodies, special emphasis will be placed on strengthening the leading role of states in countering terrorism, separatism and extremism, with the voluntary and conscientious involvement of civil society, including traditional religious organisations, educational and academic institutions, media outlets, and public and non-governmental associations of the SCO member states operating in their territories in accordance with national legislation.

In this regard, the member states welcomed the UNSC draft resolution proposed by the Russian Federation to counter terrorist ideology that builds on the

relevant UNSC Resolution 1624 (2005), which calls upon all states to criminalise incitement to terrorism.

They will continue to work toward the speedy adoption of the UN Comprehensive Convention on Combating International Terrorism, as well as the ratification of 19 UN universal legal instruments on combating terrorism based on the national interests of the SCO member states.

The member states, expressing their concern over the growing threat of weapons of mass destruction ending up in the hands of terrorist groups, including the use of chemical and biological substances for terrorist purposes, support the initiative to draft an international convention to combat acts of chemical and biological terrorism.

Guided by the Cooperation Agreement in the sphere of identifying and cutting off the channels used by the individuals involved in terrorist, separatist and extremist activities to enter the SCO member states of 2006 and the Agreement on Cooperation and Interaction of the SCO Member States on Border Matters of 2015, the member states will continue to expand their cooperation on preventing the activities and movements of foreign terrorist militants and terrorist groups through effective border control; exchange of information on individuals involved in terrorist activities; falsified and stolen identity papers; and conducting joint investigations into terrorist crimes that are transnational in nature.

The member states will continue to cooperate in order to counteract the activities of individuals and legal entities related to the recruitment, training and utilisation of terrorists, public calls for terrorist activities or the justification of acts of terrorism, and financing terrorist activities.

The member states will continue holding joint anti-terrorist exercises on a regular basis, including the Peace Mission exercises.

Based on the Agreement between the governments of the SCO member states on cooperation in the sphere of ensuring international information security of 2009, the member states will continue to strengthen practical interaction in countering propaganda and justifications of terrorism, separatism and extremism in the media. They will coordinate their efforts in order to resolve these tasks with the relevant countries, and regional and international organisations in bilateral and multilateral formats, including with the corresponding UN institutions.

The member states support the idea of developing, within the UN framework, a universal code of rules, principles and norms of responsible behaviour of states in the media and consider the revised version of the Rules of Conduct in the Sphere of International Information Security circulated on behalf of

the SCO member states as an official UN document in January 2015 to be an important step in this direction.

The member states will continue their in-depth cooperation in combating crimes in the information and communication sphere and call for developing a corresponding international legal instrument with the UN playing the central coordinating role.

The member states reaffirm their determination to establish a secure barrier to all sources and channels of financial and logistical support for terrorists. They declare their willingness to promote the exchange of operational information and criminalise manifestations of terrorist activity in their respective national legislations, and call for the comprehensive implementation of the provisions of the UN Security Council resolutions 2199 and 2253 and the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) standards.

They note that, corruption, as a threat to national and regional security, in all its forms and manifestations leads to less effective public administration, adversely affects investment appeal and hampers socioeconomic progress. In this regard, they expressed their intention to develop comprehensive international cooperation in the sphere of anti-corruption activities, including through the sharing of experience and information, as well as practical measures of cooperation in this area between competent authorities.

III

The member states believe there is no alternative to political and diplomatic settlement of conflicts in various parts of the world on the basis of strict observance of universally recognised norms and principles of international law.

The member states support the aspiration of the government and people of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to build a peaceful, stable and economically prosperous state that is free of terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking, proceeding from the central and coordinating role of the United Nations in the international efforts to stabilise and develop that country. They support the continued efforts of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group to promote the restoration of peace in Afghanistan.

The member states welcome the aspiration of Arab nations to achieve the political and diplomatic settlement of crises and conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa on the basis of mutual respect for each other's interests, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the right to decide their own destiny without outside interference, and the supremacy of law, including the norms and principles of international law.

The member states advocate a political settlement in the Syrian Arab Republic via a broad intra-Syrian dialogue based on the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. The Syrians alone can determine the future of a new, secular and democratic Syria in which people of all ethnic groups and religions live in peace and security, enjoying equal rights and opportunities. The member states support the collective efforts aimed at facilitating a settlement in Syria and emphasise the important role of the Astana process in creating conditions that would allow all sides to find a mutually acceptable solution of the issue as part of the UN-led Geneva process designed to establish peace and stability in Syria.

The member states praise the efforts to implement the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to resolve the situation around Iran's nuclear programme between the Islamic Republic of Iran and six international mediators with the participation of the European Union. They believe this is enhancing the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the consolidation of peace and stability in the region and beyond.

The member states reaffirmed the importance of achieving a political settlement of the crisis in Ukraine on the basis of the earliest possible and full implementation of the Minsk Agreements of 12 February 2015.

The member states will continue promoting SCO cooperation with the United Nations and its specialised agencies as well as other international associations in line with relevant documents.

IV

Despite recent challenges and trends the member states are actively building up their own economic potential and carrying out long-term development strategies.

The member states favour the development of broad international cooperation to promote the recovery of the global economy, ensure economic and financial stability and support dynamic, well-balanced and inclusive growth in conditions of economic globalisation. They have reaffirmed their common understanding that world trade should be conducted on the principles of transparency and non-discrimination and rules that apply equally to all participants. In this context they noted the risks linked with the growing trend towards trade protectionism and the importance of countering all of its manifestations, in particular, removing existing trade barriers and preventing the emergence of new ones. The member states advocate the formation of an open global economy and the consolidation of the multilateral trade system.

In this context they emphasised the need to build a system of regional trade and economic cooperation and take additional measures to facilitate the

development of trade and investment activities, upgrade infrastructure, establish industrial parks and improve living standards.

The member states will support initiatives aimed at facilitating regional economic interaction and a search for new models of international cooperation.

The member states stand for creating favourable conditions for the gradual free movement of commodities, capital, services and technology in accordance with the SCO Charter.

The member states have stressed the importance of invigorating their efforts to diversify the structure of their commodity flows, expand the range of reciprocal supplies and increase the transit and export of goods with high added value and other products that are required in their markets of member states.

The member states favour cooperation between regions and administrative and territorial entities. They welcome the initiative to establish a forum of SCO regional governors and recommend further efforts in this vein.

To ensure financial support for joint projects in the SCO, the heads of state consider it important to speed up the implementation of the 2016 decision of the SCO Heads of Government Council (Prime Ministers) on further expert consultations on establishing the SCO Development Bank and the SCO Development Fund (Special Account).

The member states emphasised the importance of developing multilateral cooperation in transport, expanding the region's transport and communications capacity by building new and upgrading existing sections of international transport routes, promoting the development of railway transport, including construction of high-speed trains, establishing multimodal logistics hubs, introducing innovation technology and implementing joint infrastructure projects.

In this context they have noted the need to carry out the 2014 SCO Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport Facilitation.

Referring to the decision of the SCO Heads of Government Council (Prime Ministers) of 3 November 2016 on the draft programme for developing roads in the region, the member states believe that its adoption will become a major step towards coordinated development of roads, improved transport accessibility interconnectedness, optimised transport links between all areas of production and consumption in the countries of the Organisation.

The member states welcomed the One Belt, One Road initiative. Having highly praised the results of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation that took place in Beijing on 14-15 May of this year, they supported

the implementation of these results by coordinating international, regional and national projects geared toward cooperation in the interest of sustainable development on the principles of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit.

The member states noted the active efforts to implement the 2007 agreement on cooperation and mutual assistance in customs affairs, the Customs Cooperation Programme for 2016-2021 and other customs documents aimed at facilitating trade and economic development in the SCO.

The member states pointed out the importance of continuing their mutually beneficial multifaceted cooperation on energy, including the use of renewable and alternative energy sources. They have supported broader use of cost-effective and environmentally friendly types of energy and expressed support for enhancing energy efficiency with a view to ensuring sustainable development.

The member states emphasised the importance of the SCO's participation in the International Specialised Exhibition EXPO-2017 with the theme "Energy of the Future" that will be held in Astana from 10 June to 10 September this year.

The member states favour more active cooperation on sanitary and phytosanitary measures, including the exchange of information on requirements for the imports of agricultural produce in line with their national laws.

The member states are stepping up the implementation of the 2010 SCO intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in agriculture.

Emphasising their aspiration to develop mechanisms of public-private partnership, the member states will continue carrying out joint financial, infrastructure and investment projects using the capabilities of the SCO Business Council and the SCO Interbank Consortium. They highly praised the measures taken in the SCO countries to further develop business activities, provide comprehensive protection of private property and substantially improve the business climate.

The expediency of involving government agencies and business communities of the observer states and dialogue partners in project activities was noted.

V

The member states will continue their fruitful cooperation to strengthen ties in healthcare, science, technology, culture, tourism, education and environmental protection.

The member states have noted the need to step up multilateral and bilateral cooperation in developing healthcare, medicine and pharmacology, ensuring the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population, preventing and combatting infectious diseases, training medical personnel and upgrading their skills.

The member states encourage practical cooperation on the basis of the SCO Intergovernmental Agreement on Culture of 2007. They will continue promoting cultural ties in the SCO, the deepening of mutual understanding between peoples, respect for each other's cultural traditions and customs, the preservation and encouragement of cultural diversity, the holding of international exhibitions, festivals and contests, the participation of group and individual performers in different SCO events, the discovery of historical documents in archives and libraries, the expansion of cultural exchange and cooperation, and the study and preservation of the region's heritage, including that of the Great Silk Road.

Emphasising their unwavering commitment to peace, joint development and equitable cooperation, and greater dialogue and interaction with the international community, the member states will do all they can to bolster peace and stability and promote trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian ties in the SCO in line with the SCO Development Strategy Towards 2025 and the 2016-2020 Plan of Action for its implementation.

Astana, 9 June 2017