

Astana Declaration of the 10th Anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

Astana, June 15, 2011

The heads of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, upon outcome of the Heads of State Council meeting commemorating the 10th anniversary of the founding of the SCO held on 15 June 2011 in Astana, state the following:

I

The decision to create the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (hereinafter – the SCO or the Organisation) made 10 years ago was a strategically calculated historic step. In the past decade the SCO has become a generally recognised and influential multilateral association which actively promotes peace and development in the region, confronts modern challenges and threats.

The choice made by the SCO member states at the start of the 21st century on the path towards deepening good-neighbourly, friendly and partner relations in the region set a good example for the international community in the cause of achieving pragmatic and important results in the field of common development.

The member states of the Organisation, strictly following the principles and articles of the SCO Charter as well as the Treaty on Long-term Good-neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation among the Member States of the Organisation, have laid solid foundations for the efficient management of the SCO with the aim of jointly safeguarding peace, security and stability, as well as developing multilateral cooperation in the SCO region in political, economic, cultural and other fields.

II

In the course of 10 years the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has successfully established and institutionalised effective mechanisms of interaction in various fields.

1. A high level of mutual trust prevailing during regular meetings of the SCO main bodies – the Council of Heads of State, the Council of Heads of Government and the Council of Foreign Ministers – ensures the adoption of concerted decisions over significant aspects of the Organisation's activity, assists in advancing mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields.

2. Effective cooperation was established in the field of security aimed to confront terrorism, separatism and extremism, illegal circulation of narcotics and weapons, transnational organised crime. Mechanisms of regular sessions and meetings on the level of secretaries of security councils, public prosecutors, supreme judges, ministers of defence and emergency situations, internal affairs and public security, heads of counternarcotics agencies were set up with the aim of tackling acute issues of joint struggle against new challenges and threats.

3. Long-term trade and economic programmes and plans were adopted with the aim of ensuring the socioeconomic development of the SCO member states. Meetings of ministers in charge of external economic and trade activity, transport, agriculture, finance and heads of national banks contribute to achieving the stated goals. The activity of the Business Council and the Interbank Consortium is shifting towards greater pragmatism.

4. Cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchange keep increasing, contributing to spiritual rapprochement and intercultural dialogue among the peoples of the SCO member states. There is

deepening interaction in the framework of meetings of ministers of culture, healthcare, science and technology, as well as the SCO Forum.

5. The permanent bodies – the Secretariat in Beijing and the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure in Tashkent – have been functioning effectively, playing an important part in practical implementation of treaties and agreements concluded in the framework of the Organisation. The adoption of the SCO Rules of Procedure and the Regulations on the Personnel of SCO Permanent Bodies has contributed to systematising the Organisation's activity.

6. The SCO has been showing openness for cooperation with other states, international and regional organisations. The observer states – India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan, as well as the dialogue partners – Belarus and Sri Lanka – are becoming engaged in multifaceted interaction in the SCO framework. Partner links were established with the UN, CIS, CSTO, EurAsEC, ASEAN, ESCAP and ECO.

III

The heads of state note with satisfaction a wide similarity of the SCO member states' approaches to global and regional problems, and reaffirm their readiness to interact closely on the international stage.

Serious fundamental changes and transformations are taking place in international relations. The realities of modern politics, economy and finance are changing rapidly. The problems of effective joint fight against global security challenges and ensuring sustainable development, of common concern to all states, become increasingly prominent.

The formation of a common security space covering all states, cooperation and prosperity on the basis of agreed understanding of the modern reality and rejection of the attempts to ensure one's own security at the expense of others' are becoming the priority tasks.

The mankind is still facing threats and challenges, such as financial economic instability, regional conflicts, WMD proliferation, terrorism, transnational crime, food shortage, climate change. The recent tragic events in Japan have underlined the need for a united action of the international community on neutralising modern threats, including the formulation of measures on providing timely assistance to countries affected by natural and manmade disasters.

Whilst expressing grave concern over the instability in Northern Africa and the Middle East, the heads of state call for the earliest possible stabilisation of the situation in this region. The SCO member states support the movement of the states of the region towards democratic development with due regard for their national realities as well as cultural historical features. The heads of state noted that internal conflicts and crises must be resolved solely through peaceful means, through a political dialogue, whereas the international community must act in the direction of facilitating the processes of national reconciliation on the basis of strict observance of the international law, full respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as upholding the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of all states. In this regard the SCO member states underline the need for a cessation of military confrontation in Libya, strict observance of UN GA Resolutions 1970 and 1973 by all the parties concerned.

The SCO member states stand ready to cooperate with other members of the international community with the aim of facilitating peace, stability and development on regional and global levels, promoting the democratisation of international relations and safeguarding the supreme role of the international law in world affairs.

IV

The heads of state stress that the priority goal of developing the SCO's external links consists in consolidation and expansion of ties with the United Nations Organisation in the field of fighting against new challenges and threats, as well as economic, social, humanitarian and cultural development.

As a unique organisation possessing generally recognised legitimacy, the UN plays a central role in maintaining peace and security on the planet, promoting common development, deepening international cooperation. The SCO member states support strengthening the authority and enhancing the effectiveness of the UN through a gradual reform, as well as continuous reinforcement of its potential with the aim of an adequate and rapid response to challenges and threats.

The member states underline that all the parties concerned should continue multilateral consultations with the aim of formulating a comprehensive approach to the issue of reforming the UN and its Security Council that would enjoy the widest possible support. In order to ensure solidarity among the UN member countries, one should neither artificially set a timeframe for the negotiation process, nor prematurely submit for discussion any drafts, not least those excluding certain aspects of the negotiation process and currently lacking the support of an overwhelming majority of the member countries.

The SCO member states regard the UN platform as the basic element of their counterterrorism interaction on the international stage, and stress the significance of working together with the aim of fulfilling the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as well as implementing the norms of universal counterterrorism conventions and relevant resolutions of the UN SC.

V

The SCO member states stand up for strict observance of the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons aimed to deter the threat of spreading nuclear weapons, ensure the process of nuclear disarmament and guarantee the development of broad international cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The creation of the Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons in Central Asia represents an important element of safeguarding the regional peace and security that can significantly contribute to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and raising the level of regional and international security. Signing the relevant Protocol to the Treaty on Establishing the Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons in Central Asia by all the parties will become an effective step in this direction.

The member states believe that a unilateral and unlimited build-up of anti-missile defense by a particular country or a narrow group of countries can damage the strategic stability and international security.

The member states stand up for the use of outer space solely for peaceful purposes, underline the need to ensure the security of space activities and formulate a legally binding draft Agreement in the framework of the Geneva Disarmament Conference on the Prevention of the Deployment of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force Against Outer Space Objects.

VI

The heads of state note with satisfaction that in the past 10 years since the founding of the SCO, the Organisation has become an important element of the fledgling partner network of multilateral associations in the Asia Pacific region.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation stands up for maintaining peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia Pacific region, in favour of forming an open, transparent and equal architecture of security and cooperation based on the norms and principles of the international law, bloc-free mentality and due regard for the legitimate interests of all states.

VII

The tasks of fighting against terrorism, separatism and extremism remain the key priorities for the SCO. Whilst resolutely condemning any manifestations of them, the SCO member states are committed to further joint work on implementation of the provisions of the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, as well as the SCO Counter-Terrorism Convention.

The SCO member states noted that transnational crime and illegal circulation of narcotics pose a serious threat to the modern society. The Counternarcotics Strategy of the SCO Member States for 2011-2016 is meant to strengthen pragmatic interaction with the aim of jointly preventing a negative impact from the narcotic threat in the SCO region and safeguarding a steady regional development.

The emerging real threats to information security are causing grave concern. The problem of cybercrime reaching global and transnational levels requires joint efforts and broad international cooperation. The SCO member states stand ready to boost interaction in the field of international information security.

Considering the rapidly unfolding situation and rising threats in the world, the task of creating political, social and other conditions aimed to prevent the resurgence of extremist ideology and terrorist propaganda is acquiring special significance.

The SCO calls for Afghanistan to become an independent, neutral, peaceful and prosperous country. The achievement of peace and stability in Afghanistan is one of the main factors in ensuring regional and international security. The SCO member states will continue to assist the friendly Afghan nation in its reconstruction efforts.

VIII

Improving the welfare and the living standards of citizens of the SCO countries is the Organisation's most important target.

The SCO member states believe that the implementation of joint measures on overcoming the effects of the global financial economic crisis and ensuring a steady balanced growth of the national economies must remain a top issue on the Organisation's agenda. The SCO member states stand up for further reforming the international financial regulation, strengthening the coordination of policies and cooperation in the field of financial regulation and control. The dialogue on the issues of effective protection of the stability of the member states' financial systems will continue.

The SCO member states intend to advance major joint projects in such areas as transport and communications, agricultural production, innovative and energy-saving technologies, trade and tourism. Creation of the relevant funding mechanisms will be expedited. The implementation of these projects will significantly boost mutual trade, create new markets, give essential impetus to the regional development and diversify transport corridors between Asia and Europe.

Gradual fulfillment of the Action Plan on implementation of the Programme of Multilateral

Trade and Economic Cooperation among the SCO Member States approved on 30 October 2008 in Astana is designed to help promote the economic growth of the SCO member states. The heads of state called for further intensification of trade, economic and investment interaction in the SCO region, including involvement of the potential of the observer states and dialogue partners.

IX

The member states note the significance of cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchange in the SCO framework, the main aims of which consist in strengthening the mutually enriching relations of good-neighbourliness, friendship and cooperation. In its future activity the Organisation will put greater emphasis on strengthening cooperation in the fields of culture, environmental protection, science, technology and innovation, healthcare, tourism and sport.

Continuation of cooperation in the field of confronting the threats of natural and manmade disasters remains an important issue as well.

X

Cooperation in the fields of security, economy and improving the livelihood of citizens remains the long-term priority direction for the Organisation. Proceeding from the experience of the previous years, the member states are committed to further increasing cooperation in a spirit of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, mutual consultations, respect for the diversity of cultures, aspiration to common development, jointly realising all the main goals and principles of the SCO basic documents.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, we, heads of the SCO member states, affirm in the present Declaration that the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation will effectively implement all the stated goals and tasks of ensuring peace, stability and prosperity in the SCO region.