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Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Letter dated 5 January 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Referring to General Assembly resolution [59/48](#) of 2 December 2004, which granted the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) observer status in the General Assembly, and General Assembly resolutions on the cooperation between the United Nations and SCO, I have the honour to inform you of the following.

The Republic of Tajikistan, as the Chair of the SCO in 2021, is pleased to share the Moscow Declaration of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, adopted on 10 November 2020 in Moscow (see annex).

The document is meant to expand Member States' cooperation across different areas and assist in a more coordinated approach to addressing global and regional challenges, including the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 130 (s).

(Signed) Mahmadamin **Mahmadaminov**
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 5 January 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, Chinese and Russian]

Moscow Declaration of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The leaders of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), following the meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State held via videoconference on 10 November 2020, declare the following.

International relations are passing through a stage of profound transformation, consolidation of new political and economic power centres, and formation of the world order on the principles of multipolarity. This process is unfolding against the background of increased challenges and threats to international security and the existing system of interstate relations based on respect for and compliance with the generally accepted norms of international law. The politicisation of world economic ties and a lack of significant progress in reforming the existing international financial institutions, as well as the global political and socioeconomic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic involve serious risks for the sustained development of the world economy.

The member states note that 2020 is the year of the 75th anniversary of Victory in World War II and that of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Organisation (UN). The Great Victory over Nazism, fascism and militarism was of fundamental importance for the further course of world history, security and stability, and made it possible to form a stable system of international relations guaranteeing mankind's peaceful development. The Statement in connection with the celebration of great Victory, which is to be approved today, is a vivid and convincing demonstration of unity, friendship and mutual understanding, as well as a symbol of commitment to the preservation of historical memory about the heroic feat of valour committed by our peoples. They cherish and value highly the feat of valour committed by the peoples of all countries, which fought on the side of the Anti-Hitler Coalition and which secured the great Victory over Nazism, fascism and militarism at the cost of huge human losses.

The member states will continue to strengthen the SCO as one of the pillars of the emerging more representative world order based on the supremacy of international law, primarily the UN Charter, respect for the civilisational diversity and peoples' independent choice of the path of their political and socioeconomic development, equitable partnership of states in the interests of ensuring equal, joint, indivisible, comprehensive and stable security, progressive growth and prosperity in the SCO space, and the implementation for this purpose of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They intend to intensify their political dialogue, collaboration and coordination, to promote contacts and cooperation between legislatures and executive agencies, and to encourage an exchange of the best practices in the sphere of state administration and development.

The member states confirm their firm support for efforts being undertaken by the UN as a universal, multilateral organisation that plays the central and coordinating role in maintaining international peace and stability, incentivising global development, and promoting and protecting human rights.

The member states are in favour of shaping a multipolar world order based on generally recognised principles of international law, multilaterality, equal and

indivisible security, renunciation of confrontation and conflicts, and the strengthening of global and regional security and stability. Taking into consideration the opinions of the member states, they have confirmed the current importance of the initiatives to promote collaboration in building international relations of a new type in the spirit of mutual respect, fairness, equality and mutually beneficial cooperation and in shaping a common vision of the idea to create a community of common destiny for mankind.

The SCO is an influential and responsible member of the modern system of international relations, which will continue building up its contribution to ensuring peace and security and settling international and regional conflicts solely by the political and diplomatic methods based on the principles of equality, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs of states, and renunciation of the use or threat of force. The member states are guided by the principles of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, mutual consultations, respect for the diversity of cultures, striving for co-development, aims and objectives of the SCO Charter, the Treaty of Long-Term Good Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation, the SCO Development Strategy until 2025, and the Programme of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation, and intend to continue promoting their political, security, trade, economic, financial, investment, cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

Security

The member states note that transnational challenges and threats to security, primarily terrorism, separatism, extremism, drug trafficking, organised crime and cybercrime, continue to grow, and the interconnection between them is also increasing. Reaffirming the central and coordinating role of the UN, they advocate taking coordinated action to curb these risks on the basis of compliance with international law and respect for the national legislation of each state.

In this context, member states welcome the adoption of the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism at the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly.

The member states reaffirm their common conviction that there is no alternative to resolving the crisis in Syria through dialogue and with due respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of that state. They support promoting an inclusive political reconciliation process led by and consisting of the Syrians themselves in order to find solutions that would meet the interests of that country and the international community, above all the cessation of terrorist activity on Syrian territory. They underline the importance of intensifying international efforts to assist Syria in the post-conflict recovery, and help in bringing the refugees and internally displaced persons back home.

In the context of implementing the Programme of SCO Member States Cooperation in Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism for 2019–2021, the member states will continue their collaboration in identifying and blocking channels for the movement of participants in planned terrorist activities, including movement of persons incriminated in terrorist, separatist and extremist activities within the borders of the SCO countries.

The member states advocate the consistent deepening of counterterrorism cooperation between the SCO and the UN, including projects where relevant UN bodies provide technical assistance to the SCO member states at their request. They welcome the signing of Memorandums of Understanding between the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, as well as with the Executive Directorate of the UN Security Council Counterterrorism Committee. The parties call for the early adoption, by consensus, of a comprehensive convention against international terrorism.

The member states underscore the special role of the SCO RATS, a body engaged in practical activities for countering terrorism, separatism and extremism within the SCO space.

The member states commend the results of the first and second stages of the joint border operation Solidarity 2019–2021, the joint anti-terrorist exercise Sary-Arka-Antiterror 2019, as well as the joint anti-terrorist exercise Xiamen-2019 aimed at identifying and combating the use of the internet for terrorist, separatist and extremist purposes. They also note the importance of the regular joint anti-terrorist military exercises Peace Mission.

The member states welcome the efforts of the Republic of Tajikistan to promote cooperation in the fight against terrorism and its financing in Central Asia by regularly holding high-level international conferences in Dushanbe (the Dushanbe Process).

The member states reiterate the importance of stepping up common efforts to prevent and preclude the proliferation of terrorist, separatist and extremist ideologies. They are convinced that the promotion of extremist, separatist and terrorist ideas and any information support, propaganda and justification of terrorism are creating conditions for the proliferation of radical sentiments and the recruitment of new members into terrorist organisations.

The member states point out the humanitarian character of the activities to return their citizens, most of them women and children, from the zones of armed conflicts. They pay particular attention to the social rehabilitation and reintegration of their citizens who have succumbed to terrorism. However, these measures must not rule out or replace the prosecution of those whose involvement in terrorist activities has been established in court in accordance with the national legislation.

The member states consider it important to implement the UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on combating terrorism and extremism, as well as the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, with due regard for their national experience and specifics. In this context, they emphasise the special significance of the SCO Convention on Countering Extremism, which came into effect in 2019.

The member states note the importance of building up the combined efforts of the international community to resist any attempts to involve young people in the activities of terrorist, separatist and extremists groups, and, in this context, will continue to consistently implement the SCO heads of state's Joint Address for the Youth and the Action Plan to implement it (adopted in Qingdao on 10 June 2018), giving particular attention to the efforts to prevent the proliferation of religious intolerance, xenophobia and racial discrimination.

The member states emphasize the importance of developing a best practice guide to prevent the proliferation of illegal content on the internet and coordinating common standards based on the norms of international law and respect for the leading role of the concerned states and their agencies in the fight against the proliferation of extremist, separatist and terrorist content on the internet and the use of information and communications technology for terrorist purposes.

The member states express concern over the global drug problem, in particular, the illegal production, trafficking and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including opiates and other drugs. They also express readiness to coordinate their efforts at related international venues during discussions on the practical aspects of the fight against the global drug threat.

The member states proceed from the premise that the illegal cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, in particular, in Afghanistan, pose a serious threat to international and regional security and stability. They are especially concerned about the connection between drug-related crime and terrorism, including the use of drug profits for terrorism financing.

The member states declare their firm intention to facilitate the maintenance and strengthening of the existing international system of drug enforcement based on the UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961), the UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971) and the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988) and express their resolve to work together against the promotion of drug abuse and attempts to legalise the non-medical use of narcotic drugs.

The member states advocate stepping up cooperation with other interested countries, regional and international organisations and structures for coming up with a consolidated response to the threat posed by narcotic drugs at global and regional levels, based on the principle of the common and shared responsibility of the states. They reaffirm their commitment to effectively carrying out the SCO Anti-Drug Strategy for 2018–2023, the Programme of Action for implementing it, as well as the SCO Concept for the Prevention of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

Emphasizing the importance of the three international drug control conventions and other relevant legal instruments, they believe it necessary to act in order to build an effective framework for combining their efforts to fight the drug threat, effectively counter the cultivation, production and trafficking of drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, as well as counter the spread of drug abuse, including by drafting a concept for the establishment of an SCO anti-drug centre in Dushanbe.

The member states favour constructive dialogue and the continuation of holding joint events with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The SCO and UNODC will coordinate their positions within the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and other relevant international multilateral forums.

The member states intend to work together on countering attempts to legalise the non-medical use of narcotic drugs, proceeding from the premise that legalising drugs is unacceptable, and constitutes a flagrant violation of the three universal conventions on this matter.

The member states are looking forward to strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation with the interested countries and international organisations in countering drug trafficking. They note the need to draft a memorandum of understanding between the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for Combating the Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Their Precursors and the SCO Secretariat for promoting contacts, sharing experience and best practices.

The member states gave a positive assessment of the high-level side event, held on 2 March 2020 in Vienna as part of the 63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and titled “UN and SCO in the fight against the illicit drug threat: Countering drug trafficking via the dark net,” and reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Pact Initiative.

The member states have taken note of the outcomes of the regular anti-drug operation Spider Web, held between 23 and 27 May 2020 by the Russian Federation, and intend to hold it in the future.

The member states intend to pay special attention to disrupting the financing of drug trafficking, including considering the fact that this matter is intertwined with other forms of organized crime and terrorist activities.

The member states view fighting organized crime and economic crime within the SCO as a major priority. They believe that devising more international cooperation mechanisms in this sphere would constitute an adequate step towards building up and upgrading capabilities for making effective joint use of the emerging opportunities and countering new challenges and threats.

The member states have taken note of the initiative by the Kyrgyz Republic to establish a mechanism for discussing ways to fight economic crime.

The member states note that all manifestations of corruption threaten national and regional security. They reduce the efficiency of governance, undermine the international prestige and appeal of the states involved and impede their steady socioeconomic development. The countries favour further consolidation of international cooperation against corruption, and an increase in the authority and role of the UN in the global anti-corruption drive, and support the relevant UN Convention.

The member states firmly advocate the preservation and consolidation of the existing norms and mechanisms of global stability and arms control. They are concerned about unilateral actions that undermine these mechanisms and express regret over the discontinuation of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States.

The member states shall continue cooperating on issues of disarmament and arms control, including non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and political and diplomatic responses to global and regions challenges to non-proliferation.

The member states point out again that unlimited unilateral build-up of global missile defence systems by individual states or groups of states is undermining international security and stability. They consider any attempts to ensure national security at the expense of the security of other states to be unacceptable.

The member states stand for keeping the outer space free of any weapons and note the importance of strict observance of the existing regulations on exclusively peaceful uses of space. They emphasise the need to sign a legally binding international document that would ensure transparency and provide reliable guarantees for preventing the arms race and refraining from first placement of weapons in outer space. They welcome the efforts of the UN's Group of Governmental Experts to review and present their recommendations on the substantive points of this document.

The member states emphasize the importance of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC) as a pillar of the global security architecture. They point to the need to strictly abide by the BTWC and advocate the adoption of a protocol that would envisage a reliable verification mechanism. They are opposed to creating any mechanisms that duplicate the BTWC functions, including those covered by the competence of the UN Security Council.

In response to the threats of chemical and biological terrorism, they reaffirm the need to launch multilateral talks on the international convention on countering the acts of chemical and biological terrorism at the Conference on Disarmament.

The member states urge full observance of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their

Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention) as an effective disarmament and non-proliferation instrument. They emphasise the importance of destroying all declared stocks of chemical weapons as soon as possible.

The member states again declare their support for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). They advocate the adoption of agreed-upon decisions with a view to overcoming differences within the OPCW and ensuring its integrity and effective work in accordance with the convention.

The member states consider important the consistent implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear programme in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2231, and urge all participants to strictly fulfil all of their commitments for the all-round and effective implementation of the plan.

The member states that are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty support strict observance of the NPT provisions, the comprehensive balanced promotion of all the goals and principles set forth in it, the strengthening of the global nuclear nonproliferation regime, the further nuclear disarmament process, and the advancement of equitable, mutually beneficial cooperation in peaceful uses of atomic energy.

The member states believe that the Protocol on security assurances to the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty for all signatory states should be enacted as soon as possible and will make a significant contribution to regional security and the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The member states emphasise that modern information and communications technology creates new advantages and development opportunities for all humankind. They oppose discriminatory steps, taken under any pretext, that can impede the development of the digital economy and communications technology. They consider it necessary to work out, under the auspices of the UN, universal rules, principles and norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace in order to promote the development of the digital economy and communications technology, as well as to prevent the use of this technology for purposes incompatible with maintaining international peace, security and stability. The member states reaffirm their commitment to continue intensive exchanges in this area and coordinate their efforts on international platforms, also in order to ensure information security in the SCO space. The coordinated position of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan with regard to further efforts on this track is laid out in the Statement by the Council of Heads of State of the SCO Member States on Cooperation in International Information Security.

The member states believe that putting together a SCO cooperation plan for ensuring international information security will further strengthen cooperation in this area.

The member states consider the soonest possible settlement in Afghanistan as one of the most important factors in maintaining and strengthening security and stability within the SCO space. They support the efforts made by the Afghan government and people to restore peace, advance economic development and fight terrorism, extremism and drug-related crime. The member states emphasise that there is no alternative to resolving the conflict in Afghanistan through political dialogue and an inclusive peace process led and pursued by the Afghans themselves, and call for deeper cooperation of all interested states and international organisations, with the central coordinating role of the UN, in order to stabilise and develop that country. In

this context, they attach great importance to further interaction in various multilateral formats, including the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group, the Moscow format consultations and others.

The member states welcome the Republic of Tajikistan co-chairing the Heart of Asia–Istanbul Process 2020 aimed at expanding regional cooperation on Afghanistan, as well as the planned ninth ministerial conference of the Istanbul Process in Dushanbe.

The member states point out that the dynamically developing global processes are posing new challenges to the regional countries when it comes to coordinating common confidence-building measures and promoting cooperation. In this connection, they reiterate the need to continue expanding ties between the SCO and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA).

The member states welcome the outcome of the 15th SCO Forum held on 29 September 2020 via videoconference, and emphasise the importance of the further development of the SCO Forum's activities as a public advisory and expert mechanism.

Interparliamentary ties

The member states consider it important to give a fresh impetus to the ties between their legislative assemblies and to promote an exchange of experience in the field of state governance and development.

Interaction in the judicial sphere

The member states express appreciation for the results of the Supreme Court Chief Justices of the SCO Member States' meetings held in Sochi on 17–19 June 2019 and in Nur-Sultan on 30 October 2020. They believe that this mechanism has become a reliable platform for productive cooperation aimed at facilitating joint activities to protect human rights and freedoms and to promote justice, law and order, which helps to coordinate the functioning of the SCO member states' courts, find solutions to the common challenges facing the regional countries' judicial systems, enhance the efficiency of inter-court collaboration, and create conditions for deeper judicial reforms. They are convinced that effective cooperation between the SCO member states' supreme courts is conducive to maintaining and strengthening mutual trust, neighbourliness and friendship, as well as mutually beneficial cooperation.

Trade and economic cooperation

The member states emphasise the importance of the further improvement of the global economic governance architecture and will work consistently to uphold and strengthen an open, transparent, fair, inclusive and non-discriminatory trade system based on the principles and rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), promote the development of an open global economy, and combat the unilateral protectionist measures, which are undermining the system of multilateral trade and endangering the global economy.

The member states view the WTO as the main platform for discussing the international trade agenda and adopting the rules of a multilateral trade system. In order to make the WTO more resilient to the current and future challenges, the member states point out the need to conduct an inclusive WTO reform as soon as possible, focusing on its further development and adaptation to modern economic realities, as well as an efficient implementation of its monitoring, negotiating and dispute settlement functions. Emphasising the importance of complying with the

obligations adopted within the WTO framework, they will coordinate their approaches to multilateral trade rules at WTO ministerial conferences.

The member states regard the task of enhancing the wellbeing and living standards of their people as a priority. In this connection, they express appreciation for the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to establish a Special Working Group on Poverty Alleviation.

The member states call for the further strengthening of cooperation in trade, production, transport, energy, finance, investment, agriculture, customs, telecommunications, information technology, innovation and other spheres of mutual concern in the interests of open, inclusive, innovative, green and sustainable development.

The member states are committed to facilitating trade and investment for gradually introducing the free movement of goods, capital, services and technology, as stipulated by the SCO Charter. They spoke in favour of further efforts to devise approaches to streamlining regional trade as per the Joint Communiqué by SCO Heads of State on Simplifying Trade Procedures, dated 10 June 2018.

Reaffirming their support for China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan note the ongoing joint work on the project including efforts to promote connectivity between the Eurasian Economic Union and BRI.

The member states believe in the importance of engaging the potential of countries in the region, as well as international organisations and multilateral associations in building a space for broad, inclusive, mutually beneficial and equal cooperation in Eurasia in keeping with international law, primarily the principles of equality, mutual respect and taking into consideration national interests. In this context, they noted the initiative by the Russian Federation to establish a Greater Eurasian Partnership with the participation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, as well as other interested states and multilateral associations.

The member states emphasise the importance of consistently implementing the Programme for Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation and the corresponding Plan of Action. They note that the SCO has considerable economic and investment potential for stepping up trade and economic cooperation. Expanding and strengthening cooperation in finance, investment, industry, transport, energy, agriculture and other areas, including through the development and implementation of joint programmes and projects, serves the interests of sustainable socioeconomic development across the SCO region.

The member states believe in the importance of strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation and sharing best practices on matters related to the digital economy, and upholding the principles of fair competition when developing digital technology. The Statement by the SCO Heads of State Council on Cooperation in the Digital Economy sets forth coordinated approaches in this sphere.

The SCO member states note the initiative by the People's Republic of China to step up high technology cooperation and promote industrial applications for advanced technological solutions, and believe that the relevant ministries and agencies in the SCO member states should examine this proposal.

They call for implementing the Concept for Cooperation between the SCO Member States in the Sphere of Digitisation and Information and Communication Technology (Bishkek, 14 June 2019), including by devising and adopting a plan of

action to this effect, as well as promoting dialogue within the SCO Special Working Group for Information and Telecommunications Technology.

The member states note the initiative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to establish a mechanism for facilitating interaction between the heads of agencies in charge of promoting information technology.

The member states support expanding the practice of national currency payments and increasing the share of such payments in the mutual settlements between the interested SCO member states. They noted the outcome of the roundtable meeting involving representatives of finance ministries and central banks (held on 24 September 2020 via videoconference), including the discussion of the roadmap for gradual transition to mutual payments in national currencies. They found it expedient to continue working on measures to resolve this issue, including establishment of an expert group.

The member states spoke in favour of continuing consultations on establishing the SCO Development Bank and the SCO Development Fund (Special Account).

The member states note the initiatives focusing on cooperation in strategic territorial and spatial planning, including exchange of practices and developing common approaches to developing remote and rural areas, including sparsely populated areas, building an urban environment, including by means of digital technology. They find it important to make practical steps in this area based on the Concept of Cooperation on the Development of Remote and Rural Areas in the Digital Age, as well as to develop an action plan for implementing the concept in line with the objectives and principles of the SCO Charter and other regulatory documents of the Organisation.

The member states emphasise the importance of cooperation between scientific, research and analytical centres on economic issues for the purpose of conducting a study and comprehensive analysis of the factors affecting economic cooperation within the SCO with due consideration of global and regional processes. They welcome the establishment of the SCO Consortium of Economic Analysis Centres and the results of its first meeting in India.

The member states realise that the lack of access to sources of safe drinking water, basic sanitary services and healthy hygiene are serious problems in today's world, and note the importance of paying great attention to sustainable development and the integrated management of water resources.

The member states confirm their support of the Republic of Tajikistan's efforts with regard to the 2018–2028 International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development initiative, which seeks to facilitate achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and other water-related objectives. In this context, they note the preparations for the 2nd international high-level conference on the issue in Dushanbe.

The member states will continue to further strengthen cooperation between regions and concentrate on implementing the Programme for the Development of Interregional Cooperation. They welcomed the results of the First SCO Member States' Heads of Regions Forum held on 29 October 2020 via videoconference and the initiative of the People's Republic of China on building the Demonstration Zone for China-SCO Local Economic and Trade Cooperation in Qingdao.

The member states support promoting the potential of the SCO Business Council, the SCO Interbank Consortium and the business communities' joint initiatives to step up cooperation on projects in the areas of finance, high technology,

transport and communication infrastructure, power generation, and investment in the SCO space.

In this context, they noted the Russian initiative to have the SCO Interbank Consortium draw up and approve a Roadmap on Overcoming the Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic for the SCO Economies, as well as Common Approaches to using national currencies in mutual settlements between SCO member states.

The member states concur with the importance of further developing transport cooperation, including the creation of new and the upgrading of existing international highway and rail routes, multimodal transport corridors and logistics centres, trade and tourism, the introduction of digital, innovation and energy saving technologies, the streamlining of trans-border procedures in keeping with best international practices, and the implementation of other joint infrastructure projects ensuring the effective use of the SCO member states' transiting potential. They note the need for the early coordination of the draft Framework Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on the Formation of the Integrated Transport Management System.

The member states will focus on implementing projects that ensure the expansion of the region's transport and communications capabilities, including with reliance on the potential of the SCO observer states and dialogue partners, as well as international organisations. In this connection, they noted the holding by the SCO Secretariat and the UN Economic Commission for Europe of a joint themed event titled Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development along the Trans-Continental Eurasian Transport Corridors (Geneva, 27 February 2020).

The member states stand for creating new and of modernising the existing international multimodal logistics centres in the SCO space, including by preparing a relevant programme aimed at enhancing the level of transport connectivity in the region.

The member states noted the initiative by the Republic of Uzbekistan to create a Regional Centre for the Development of Transport and Communications Connectivity in Central Asia under UN aegis.

The member states are in favour of the further development of collaboration between rail administrations based on the concept approved on 2 November 2019 in Tashkent.

The member states noted the initiative by the Republic of Uzbekistan to draft a strategy for cooperation between SCO member states in promoting transport connectivity.

The member states stressed the importance of further increasing energy and industrial cooperation. They noted the initiative advanced by the Republic of Tajikistan on creating mechanisms for meetings of the SCO energy ministers and meetings of the ministers of industry of the SCO member states.

The member states will further strengthen cooperation in agriculture, specifically focusing on the effective implementation of the SCO Cooperation Programme on Food Security (Dushanbe, 12 October 2018). They also consider it necessary to develop a package of measures aimed at improving cooperation in ensuring food security, primarily by creating an appropriate regulatory and legal framework, at conducting awareness and analytical work in this area, joint training of specialists and building cooperation with interested states and international organisations. The member states are confident that finalising and adopting a plan to implement this programme will be an important practical step.

The member states noted the relevance of the initiative by the Republic of Uzbekistan to adopt a concept of the SCO member states' cooperation in smart agriculture and agricultural innovation.

The member states noted the initiative by the People's Republic of China to establish an SCO Demonstration Zone for agricultural exchanges and training in Yangling.

The member states think it necessary to strengthen the potential of technology parks, to jointly develop an innovation ecosystem, implement joint R&D projects, and start new digital projects in the SCO countries. They noted the initiative by the Republic of Kazakhstan to form a pool of modern technology parks in the SCO member states.

The member states noted the initiative by the Republic of India to establish a special working group on innovations and startups, and also welcomed the results of the first SCO Startup Forum held via videoconference on 27 October 2020.

The member states intend, while recognising the importance of science and technology innovation as a key factor in medium and long-term economic growth and global sustainable development, to expand cooperation in science, technology and innovation, to conduct joint scientific research, and organise exchanges of experience between SCO scientists and scientific organisations to find new drivers of economic growth and solutions to overcome common social challenges. They welcomed the results of the 5th Meeting of the Heads of Science and Technology Ministries and Departments of the SCO Member States (Moscow, 21 November 2019) and reaffirmed the need for their consistent implementation.

The member states express concern about the drastic impact of the desiccation of the Aral Sea and underscore the importance of further cooperation with the UN, as well as with other interested states and agencies in tackling the problems in the Aral Sea basin. Taking into account the positions of the parties, they noted the initiatives by the Republic of Uzbekistan to prepare a draft resolution of the UN General Assembly declaring the Aral Sea region a zone of environmental technologies and innovations, as well as to establish the UN International Day for the Protection and Conservation of Ecosystems.

The member states noted the initiative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to develop the SCO Green Belt Programme to promote a broad introduction of resourcesaving, environmentally friendly technologies.

Cultural, humanitarian and public exchanges

The member states support the efforts to promote the inter-civilisational dialogue and foster links in education, science, technology, culture, humanitarian sphere and tourism, thereby further strengthening the relations of neighbourliness, friendship and cooperation. They will encourage the intercultural dialogue in the interest of the peoples living across the SCO area, help increase the cultural diversity and cooperate in exploring and protecting the region's cultural and natural heritage.

In this context, they note the role of the regular World Nomad Games in preserving and promoting the ancient nomad culture and traditions.

In keeping with the Agreement Between the Governments of the SCO Member States on Cooperation in Culture of 2007, work will go on to hold international festivals and competitions, expand cooperation in music, theatre and fine art, as well as in film-making, TV and radio broadcasting and in the media, foster contacts between archives, museums and libraries, and encourage tourism across the SCO area and contacts between people, especially young people.

The member states believe it is important to declare the SCO Year of Culture as part of the celebrations to mark the 20th anniversary of the SCO in 2021.

The member states praise India's proposal to hold, in a digital format, a joint exhibition of the SCO Shared Buddhist Heritage in New Delhi from 30 November 2020 through 28 February 2021.

The member states note the importance of vigorous efforts to support women's involvement in politics, the economy and the civil, social and other areas. They believe it is important that women regularly hold forums, congresses and meetings as part of the SCO events.

While recognising the role of sport as a key tool for ensuring peace, social integration and sustainable development, the member states note that the use of athletes and sporting events for political purposes is unacceptable. They support the consistent efforts to implement the Agreement on Cooperation in Physical Fitness and Sport signed by the authorised bodies of the SCO member states in 2019 and will help create favourable conditions for promoting physical fitness and sport, seek to strengthen friendly relations through physical fitness and sport, motivate athletes to take part in international sporting events, foster cooperation in developing Olympic, Paralympic and national sports, and also facilitate direct contacts between sports federations.

The member states noted the initiative put forward by the Republic of Tajikistan to develop a mechanism for holding meetings of the heads of the sports bodies in the SCO member states.

The member states praise the efforts to regularly hold SCO marathons in Kunming, People's Republic of China, and the Issyk-Kul Region in the Kyrgyz Republic. They believe the 2022 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing will contribute to strengthening friendship and promoting mutual understanding and accord between nations.

The member states will continue to consistently develop cooperation in tourism and help introduce measures to expand tourist exchanges and step up cooperation with the World Tourism Organisation. They remain committed to holding a series of the SCO Eight Wonders events, which are aimed at creating a single tourist space.

The member states emphasise the need to continue efforts to reduce the risks of disasters and develop emergency response potential. They intend to enhance their cooperation in areas such as the exchange of real-time information, personnel training, and holding of joint exercises on relief efforts following natural disasters and industrial accidents. They are also going to promote cooperation on early warning and disaster relief in border areas, in part, by involving SCO observers and dialogue partners in these efforts and developing cooperation with other multilateral mechanisms in this area.

The member states highly praised the results of the 10th SCO Meeting of Heads of Emergency Prevention and Relief Agencies and SCO Joint Exercise on Urban Earthquake Search and Rescue (New Delhi 4–8 November 2019).

The member states pointed to the importance of implementing the SCO Concept of Cooperation in Environmental Protection for 2019–2021 and the Programme for Developing Environmental Wellbeing of SCO Cities.

The member states noted the activities of the SCO Youth Council and praised the results of its regular meeting in Moscow on 29–31 October 2020. They emphasised the need for the Youth Council's continued participation in implementing the provisions of the Joint Address of the SCO Heads of State for the Youth and the 10 June 2018 Programme of Action on its fulfilment.

The member states welcomed the decisions of India and Pakistan to join the SCO Youth Council.

They noted the timeliness of the initiative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to draft a convention on youth rights and expressed their readiness to take an active part in coordinating this document.

The member states advocate the development of youth entrepreneurship and the drafting of special acceleration programmes on upgrading the competence of young business people in conducting economic activities across the SCO space. They support the SCO Youth Council's project on the International Youth Business Incubator of the SCO Countries.

The member states noted the results of the Model SCO student meeting (Moscow, 3 July 2020) and welcome the holding of Model SCO intellectual contests for school and university students.

The member states reaffirm their commitment to cooperation on countering infectious diseases and response to sanitary-epidemiological emergencies with a view to minimising the negative impact of infections on the public health systems of each state and the socio-economic and humanitarian situation in the region. They welcomed the results of the regular meeting of the SCO Heads of Departments on Sanitary-Epidemiological Wellbeing (Moscow, 16 December 2019).

The member states stand for the further development of cooperation and implementation of comprehensive measures aimed at ensuring their readiness to respond to the threat of infectious diseases, quickly discover any outbreaks and react to sanitary-epidemiological emergencies. They emphasised the need to draft a multilateral mechanism for exchanging information on the signs of infectious diseases in the SCO space and adopted response measures in conformity with the WHO International Health Regulations (2005). They also advocated close cooperation between research centres, conducting joint research and development of new means of diagnosing and preventing dangerous infections.

The member states noted the initiative by the Republic of Uzbekistan to set up a permanent SCO platform on emergency response, prevention and countering of the cross-border spread of dangerous infections.

Opposing the attempts to stigmatise the coronavirus, the member states emphasise the need to further promote international cooperation on countering its spread and eliminating the global political and socio-economic consequences of the pandemic. In this context, they adopted the Statement by the Council of Heads of State of the SCO Member States on Joint Response Efforts Against the Novel Coronavirus Infection (COVID-19).

The member states welcomed the inclusion of the item on consumer rights protection in the SCO agenda. They emphasised the importance of further improving the system of consumer rights protection, especially considering the globalisation of the e-commerce market, growing transborder trade and digitisation of personal information and development of cooperation on these issues.

The member states reaffirmed their intention to expand information cooperation, in part, by implementing the Agreement between the governments of the SCO Member States on cooperation in the field of mass media of 14 June 2019. They consider it necessary to develop contacts between their media outlets, in part, in the digital space and between the press services of their government bodies.

The member states emphasise the importance of public diplomacy in developing mutual trust, enhancing understanding and expanding cultural and humanitarian ties in the SCO. They noted the activities of the Chinese Committee on Neighbourliness,

Friendship and Cooperation and the SCO Public Diplomacy Centre in Tashkent and also the initiative of the Kyrgyz Republic to establish the SCO Cultural Integration Centre.

International contacts

The member states reaffirm their intention to step up foreign policy coordination in the SCO format within the UN and its specialised agencies, as well as in other international platforms. They will expand their cooperation, hold consultations and develop contacts through their foreign ministries, embassies and the permanent missions of the SCO member states to the UN and other international organisations.

The member states emphasise that the UN General Assembly resolution titled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation” (New York, 30 August 2019), adopted by consensus, reaffirms that the two organisations maintain intensive dialogue and stipulates that the international community recognises the SCO’s contribution to achieving the UN’s goals, objectives and implementing its agenda. They confirmed their intention to submit another draft resolution to this effect as part of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly.

The member states have praised the outcome of the UN Security Council meeting on “Cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organisations in countering threats to peace and security: the contribution by the SCO, the CIS and the CSTO to countering terrorism” (New York, 25 September 2019), as well as the special SCO-UN high-level event “Cooperation to promote peace, security and stability: preventing the linking of terrorism with organised crime and financing through drug trafficking” (New York, 19 November 2019), held at the initiative of the Russian Federation.

Being a responsible and influential contributor to international efforts to ensure peace and steady development across the Eurasian space, the SCO will continue taking coordinated steps to counter emerging threats and challenges in the region.

The member states reaffirm their unwavering support for strengthening equal and indivisible security in Eurasia based on the rule of international law, noninterference in domestic affairs and settling disputes through peaceful means.

The member states are committed to further engaging observers and dialogue partners in meaningful trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation, including within the framework of the SCO Business Council, the SCO Interbank Association and the SCO Energy Club. They are focused on consistently following the roadmap for stepping up ties between the SCO Secretariat, observers and dialogue partners.

The member states call for more contacts with international and regional associations and organisations.

The member states will continue strengthening their cooperation within the SCO to elevate it to a new level and turn the SCO space into a region of lasting peace, friendship, universal prosperity and harmony.

The member states praise the Russian Federation’s SCO chairmanship in 2019–2020 and its results, which helped consolidate mutual trust and understanding, promote constructive and effective cooperation, and neighbourly relations and friendship between their peoples.

The member states will further promote constructive dialogue, expanded and deeper partnership and multifaceted cooperation for bringing about effective

solutions to regional and global issues, reinforcing political and economic stability and building a world order of justice and equity.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister
Republic of India

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev
President
Republic of Kazakhstan

Xi Jinping
President
People's Republic of China

Sadyr Zhaparov
Acting President, Prime Minister
Kyrgyz Republic

Imran Khan
Prime Minister
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Vladimir Putin
President
Russian Federation

Emomali Rahmon
President
Republic of Tajikistan

Shavkat Mirziyoyev
President
Republic of Uzbekistan

10 November 2020
