

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION UNTIL 2025

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (hereinafter referred to as the SCO or the Organization) has established itself as one of the most influential partners in the modern system of international relations. A solid legal framework for its operation has been formed, and mechanisms of multilateral cooperation have been successfully functioning. The Organization has established partnerships with states, international organizations and institutions that share the SCO principles and values.

Currently, the SCO is set to reach a qualitatively new level distinguished by the increased effectiveness of cooperation in politics, security, economy, development of cultural and humanitarian relations, and of its enhanced participation in the affairs of the region and in the process of global governance.

The complex nature of this task has necessitated the elaboration of the SCO Development Strategy until 2025 (hereinafter referred to as the Strategy) - a document defining the benchmarks and parameters of the Organization's further evolution. The strategy has been developed pursuant to Decision No 3 approved by the Council of Heads of SCO member states on September 12, 2014 in Dushanbe entitled "On a draft Strategy for the development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization until 2025", and with due regard to the provisions of the "Main Directions of the SCO Mid-Term Development Strategy" approved at a meeting of the Council of Heads of SCO member states held in 2012 in the city of Beijing. It is based on the provisions of the SCO Charter and the Treaty on Long-Term Good-Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation of SCO member states.

This document takes into account the forecasted evolution of the international and regional situation, as well as assessments of the activities of the SCO itself, its role in the region and the world, and its relationship with other international players.

The member states will carry out SCO practical cooperation in 2015-2025 in compliance with this Strategy and other legal documents related to the various aspects of its activities.

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

The modern world is undergoing a profound transformation distinguished by a determinant trend of the Eastward shift of the global development potential.

Pursuit of peace and development, of equal and mutually beneficial cooperation, of community of universal peace and prosperity is increasingly gaining importance. At the same time, there are growing global challenges and threats, as well as factors of uncertainties and unpredictability. Existing regional and local conflicts remain unsettled and new ones are emerging.

The coming decade will be a period of a dynamic change in international relations associated with the establishment of a polycentric world, strengthened regional level of global governance and consolidated position of the developing countries. Globalization and technological progress will contribute to the increased interdependence of nations.

There will be a stronger correlation between security and prosperity of states. The complex nature of threats and challenges requires a collective approach to addressing them, as well as an awareness that it is impossible to ensure one's own security at the expense of others. In these circumstances, it becomes imperative for all the states to comply with the universal principles of

equal and indivisible security uniformly applicable to the Euro-Atlantic, Eurasian and Asia-Pacific region.

Despite the trend towards the recovery from the global crisis, the world economy is still at risk. Its recovery has been uneven and unsustainable and the threat of new recessions persists. High unemployment and reduced consumer demand remains a serious obstacle to sustainable development. There are emerging additional factors of the global economy destabilization, including those related to the increased volatility of world prices for raw materials. The situation is complicated by the lack of a proper level of cooperation among the leading economies of the world in overcoming the crisis impacts and insufficient coordination of the monetary policy at the international level.

The world is facing is a growing complex of security threats, escalated struggle in the information space, and continued deterioration of the environment. There are persistent grounds for radical sentiments, including those based on inter-faith and intra-religious contradictions, which is fraught with internal political excesses and increased tensions in the international relations.

Emergencies are become particularly acute and they impact, in a complex and simultaneous way, many dimensions of public life, threaten national security and have cross-border, inter-regional or global effects that directly or indirectly damage one or more states.

In these circumstances, the defense of peace and common development remain the most important and urgent tasks. It is becoming imperative to build in the region a universal comprehensive inclusive and transparent architecture of indivisible and reliable security and sustainable growth, based on the rule of international law, non-use of force or threat of force, respect for territorial integrity, national sovereignty and independence of countries, open equal and mutually beneficial cooperation. In this regard, the role of regional associations, such as SCO, is increasing.

Thus, SCO is entering a crucial period of its development against a challenging global and regional background and it needs a long-term thought through strategy that would enable to fully use the competitive advantages of the Organization and its capacity for addressing emerging challenges and threats.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Reaffirming their commitment to the goals and objectives of the SCO Charter, the member states consider as their common goals for the coming period the following:

- strengthening mutual trust and good-neighborliness between the member states;
- strengthening the SCO as an effective, full format regional organization;
- ensuring regional security, countering challenges and threats to the security of the member states, including emergency prevention and relief;
- enhancing trade, economic and investment cooperation, as well as of joint project activities in priority areas of cooperation aimed at sustainable development of the member states and improved welfare and living standards of their population;
- expanding cultural and humanitarian ties, *inter alia*, in science and technology, health, environment, education, and developing communication between people;
- consistently implementing the principle of SCO openness pursuant to the Charter and other legal documents of the Organization;

- enhancing SCO international prestige and, to this end, building cooperation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, as well as with the CIS, CSTO, ASEAN, ECO, CICA and other international organizations and associations;
- strengthening the SCO institutional foundation, including enhancing the role of the permanent representatives of the SCO member states to the Secretariat and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) of the SCO.

To achieve the above goals, the member states will focus on the following objectives:

- turning the SCO region into a one of peace, sustainable development, economic growth and progress, mutual trust, good-neighborliness, friendship and prosperity;
- improving SCO as a multi-format regional organization not envisaged as a military and political block or economic integration association with supranational governance bodies;
- creating within SCO favorable conditions for sustainable growth of trade and investment cooperation, developing and implementing joint infrastructure projects, as well as strengthening business cooperation with the engagement of the SCO Business Council and SCO Interbank Association;
- developing common approaches of the SCO member states to the Silk Road Economic Belt initiative as one of the tools for creating an enabling environment for the promotion of economic cooperation in the SCO region;
- building an indivisible security space, developing cooperation with the UN and other international and regional associations in various fields, *inter alia*, in addressing traditional and new security threats;
- improving the Organization's legal and regulatory framework;
- consistently improving the efficiency of cooperation mechanisms within the SCO;
- strengthening practical cooperation with the SCO observer states and dialogue partners.

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The SCO member states favor compliance with the commitments set forth in the Charter, the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, the Agreement on Long-Term Good-Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation of the Member States and other SCO documents.

The cooperation within SCO is distinguished by its spirit of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, mutual consultations, respect for cultural diversity and aspiration for common development. These principles, known as Shanghai Spirit, will continue to serve as the basis for the relations between the SCO member states.

The member states will provide full support to each other on the issues affecting sovereignty, security, development and other vital interests. They cannot participate in the alliances or organizations directed against the SCO member states, or support any actions hostile to any of them. They will not allow in their territory any activity contrary to the principles of respect for the state sovereignty and territorial integrity of each other.

The equality of SCO member states remains an unchanged pillar of the Organization's activities. It is supported by a provision regarding a consensus-based decision-making which will continue to be applied in accordance with the SCO Charter. In the course of their practical cooperation, the member states will use opportunities for the development of cooperation between interested states.

The member states will settle disputes between them through political and diplomatic means on the basis of a constructive dialogue and norms of international law.

The SCO activities will continue not to be directed against third countries and their associations. The member states believe in an inalterability of the principle of prevention of any illegal actions directed against the SCO interests, as enshrined in the SCO Charter.

The member states respect the right to choose the path of political, economic, social and cultural development with due account of the historical experience and national peculiarities of each state, contribute to the dialogue between civilizations, to common peace, progress and harmony. They are guided by the principles of non-interference in internal affairs, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of the SCO member states, and do not support the use of unilateral measures of pressure taken without the approval of the UN Security Council.

POLITICAL COOPERATION

The member states will enhance a political dialogue at all levels and continue the practice of holding regular meetings of the Council of Heads of State, the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers), the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and the meetings of Secretaries of Security Councils.

The SCO will be contributing to building a democratic just and rational world based on collective principles, rule of international law, as well as on mutual respect, non-interference in internal affairs, trust and benefit, equality and partnership between states with the central coordinating role of the UN.

The SCO intends to intensify its constructive engagement in creating an effective global and regional security architecture that takes into account the legitimate interests of all states, and they seek to strengthen cooperation in the peaceful settlement and prevention of international conflicts.

The member states will continue their joint efforts aimed at promoting international stability and security, peacekeeping and confidence-building in the region. Based on the respect for international law and with due account of the national interests of each other, the member states will render mutual support in international affairs, including through the exchange of information and development of joint approaches.

In the United Nations and in other international organizations and multilateral forums where they are participants, the member states intend to consistently defend their common positions on a wide range of issues of mutual interest and in a timely manner respond to the world developments that have a direct impact on the stability and security in the SCO region.

The SCO does not accept ideological and confrontational approaches to the solution of pressing international and regional issues. Its activities will continue to serve as an example of how non-block multilateral associations can effectively ensure international security in a changing world. SCO is open for cooperation with all countries and international organizations in order to strengthen international and regional security, promote sustainable socio-economic development and expand cultural and humanitarian relations.

The member states consistently advocate the settlement of international and regional issues and conflicts solely by political and diplomatic means.

The member states will cooperate in the areas of disarmament and arms control, non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy, political and diplomatic settlement of the regional challenges to the non-proliferation regime, and assist the relevant efforts of the international community. Efforts will be directed at strengthening the regimes of non-

proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and arms control, including strict adherence to and strengthening of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1968), facilitation of an entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (1996), as well as of the increased number of states that have acceded to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (1993) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (1972).

The member states favor an early entry into force for each party of the Protocol on security assurances to the Treaty on the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, and execution of a multilateral international treaty on security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon states, and they support an appeal to all nuclear powers to forgo the deployment of their nuclear weapons in the territory of other countries.

The member states will advocate the use of outer space for peaceful purposes and prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space, and they will promote a draft of the corresponding legally binding treaty and facilitate the elaboration and voluntary implementation of the transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities.

The member states will hold consultations on the issues of the international economic relations agenda, and make efforts in support of a more equitable international financial regime reflecting a genuine balance of interests of all its participants and offering all States an equal access to the benefits of globalization.

The member states will cooperate in the human rights issues through taking joint steps aimed at transcending the atmosphere of politicization and confrontation in the human rights debate in international forums and compliance with the principle of equal cooperation, respect for the cultural and civilizational diversity of the contemporary world, and they will contribute to assigning by the international community an equal value of all kinds of human rights, including the right to development.

Guided by the principle of the respect for national sovereignty, the member states will develop cooperation in the field of law and justice and mutual legal assistance in accordance with national legislation and international treaties of the SCO member states.

COOPERATION IN SECURITY

The member states are resolved to realize the idea of a common, integrated, sustainable security based on equal cooperation in order to build an indivisible security space, arrange the cooperation and coordination of the efforts by international and regional organizations and forums in addressing modern challenges and threats.

The member states will continue to enhance cooperation in order to timely and adequate response to emerging threats and challenges to the security in the region.

The SCO priorities in ensuring regional security and stability will continue to include combating terrorism, separatism, extremism, trafficking in drugs, weapons, ammunition and explosives, nuclear and radioactive materials, as well as other components of WMD, transnational organized crime, ensuring international information security, strengthening border security, joint struggle against illegal migration and human trafficking, money laundering, economic crimes and corruption. The member states will regularly exchange information on these issues and undertake a joint analysis of the situation in the region, as well as carry out educational, research and practical measures on a bilateral and multilateral basis with the involvement of the competent

authorities. Particular attention will be paid to improving the mechanism of rapid response to emerging challenges and threats, including the efficient use of the potential of the Regulation on political and diplomatic measures and mechanisms of SCO response to situations threatening peace, security and stability in the region.

The member states will extend their full support to the international anti-terrorism cooperation within the UN, particularly in the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Engaging the SCO observer states and dialogue partners in a joint work and enhancing contacts with interested countries and international organizations will become an important resource for strengthening cooperation in the field of security.

In the framework of the existing legal and regulatory documents, targeted programs will be regularly adopted aimed at cooperation in the combating terrorism, separatism and extremism that contain a set of measures aimed at their prevention, detection and suppression, cooperation in searching, arresting, extraditing and transferring persons suspected of, charged with or convicted of crimes related to the “three evil forces” - terrorism, separatism and extremism, and joint operational and search activities and mutual provision of technical and material assistance.

Special attention will be paid to the cooperation in countering the activities of international terrorist organizations (hereinafter referred to as the ITO) seeking to involve nationals of the member states in terrorist, separatist and extremist groups, to the development of cooperation with relevant international organizations and regional associations aimed at identifying and stopping the transit channels for persons who undertook terrorist training in order to participate, as part of the ITO, in armed conflicts in the territory of a third country, as well as to the identification of such persons when they return to the territory of the SCO member states following their training or engagement in the armed conflicts on the ITO side.

The member states will jointly counter the spread of extremist and separatist ideas, especially among young people, and take measures to prevent religious extremism, aggressive nationalism, ethnic and racial intolerance, xenophobia, fascism and chauvinism ideas. To this end, the member states will develop a SCO Convention on combating extremism. In addition to improved coordination between law enforcement agencies, particular attention will be paid to combining the efforts in this field of educational institutions, mass media (hereinafter referred to as media), research centers, religious organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

The member states will enhance the activities of the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure aimed at combating terrorism, separatism and extremism.

Drawing on the implementation experience of the Agreement between the SCO member states on cooperation in combating illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors of 2004 and the Anti-Drug Strategy for 2011-2016, the member states will continue to strengthen their anti-drug cooperation. Emphasis will be made on conducting joint operations against drug and precursors trafficking, training of law enforcement units' staff, provision of financial organizational and technical assistance, enhanced cooperation in the field of drug demand reduction, training and research and practical activities.

The member states will develop special projects in order to combat drug trafficking, promote research and exchanges in the field of techniques and technologies of monitoring and elimination of illicit cultivation of narcotic plants, promote educational activities to combat drug abuse. The above will be incorporated in an Anti-drug strategy of the SCO member states for a subsequent period and Program of actions for its implementation to be elaborated.

The anti-laundering of crime proceeds will be an important area of SCO activities. The Organization intends to intensify the cooperation with the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism.

While respecting the principle of inviolability of borders and waiving the unilateral military superiority in adjacent areas, the member states intend to actively strengthen cooperation in order to turn common borders into borders of peace and friendship.

SCO will seek to establish an effective joint mechanism of the information space security in order to prevent and counter threats to the political, economic and social security of the member states.

On the basis of the intergovernmental Agreement on cooperation in the field of international information security of 2009 and other documents, the member states will strengthen cooperation in the field of Internet management, prevent the use of Internet's "three forces of evil" for activities undermining security and stability in the region. To this end, they will improve the mechanism of cooperation in combating the use of information and communication technologies (hereinafter referred to as ICT) for terrorist purposes and in countering cyber threats to the security of SCO member states.

SCO will seek adoption by the UN of the "Rules of conduct in the field of international information security" and subsequently, on this basis, work together with other members of the international community on a unified international ICT regulation and develop cooperation in this field, including professional training of relevant experts of the member states.

In accordance with the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on cooperation in assistance to emergency situations of 2005, the member states will cooperate in preventing and mitigating natural and man-made disasters in view of the growing need in the modern world to protect the population and territory against threats generated by emergencies.

The member states consider addressing illegal migration as one of the important areas for the joint efforts related to the maintenance of security. They will take steps aimed at establishing a legal framework for the effective cooperation in this field.

The member states will be contributing to the common efforts by the international community and the UN aimed at ensuring security in its various dimensions, including economic, financial, energy and food.

The member states intend to take practical steps to ensure the safe and stable operation of the jointly used infrastructure facilities in transport, communications, and energy.

TRADE AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Economic cooperation is an important element of stability in the SCO region and one of the tools to achieve long-term sustainability of the Organization. The work in this area aims to facilitate economic development of the member states, as well as improving the living standards of the citizens.

SCO will contribute to the harmonious development of all the member states for the sake of the balanced economic growth in the region.

The member states shall take concerted measures aimed at further expanding mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation in the SCO region, including through the promotion of a favorable investment and business climate, support to business initiatives, and implementation of projects in the priority areas of cooperation and of infrastructure development.

The member states will take steps to establish cooperation in the development of the production capacity on the basis of mutual benefit.

The member states will provide mutual assistance to support their integration into the global economy and minimize the negative impacts of globalization and international economic crisis on the national economies.

The member states will take practical measures aimed at implementing specific economic and investment projects within the SCO, including respective specialists' training. If necessary, the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Program of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation will be updated and a List of Measures for further development of project activities within the SCO will be prepared for subsequent periods.

In order to implement a high level common understanding achieved and provide financial support to project activities, the member states will continue efforts aimed at establishing the SCO Development Fund and SCO Development Bank (Special Account).

The member states will support an active involvement of the SCO Business Council and SCO Interbank Association in the selection and implementation of trade and economic co-operation projects in the SCO region, particularly in the innovative sectors of the economy.

The member states will encourage the participation in project activities of the concerned government agencies and business community of the SCO observer states and dialogue partners.

The member states will continue to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation in the banking and financial sector, share best practices and information, make efforts in order to create favorable conditions for the development of the financial services market and investments, and improve the payment, settlement and other financial and economic mechanisms within SCO.

The member states will take measures to take stock of and improve the efficiency of existing economic and trade cooperation mechanisms in order to strengthen their effectiveness and coordination mechanisms, *inter alia*, subject to international best practices.

The member states will promote the development of mutually beneficial cooperation in the innovation sector, including small and medium businesses, and implementation of cross-border and inter-regional projects and establishment of joint ventures.

To share best practices and develop cooperation between entrepreneurs, the practice will be continued of having regular joint forums, exhibitions and seminars of businessmen representing SCO member states that aim to facilitate the collaboration of small and medium-sized businesses with the research institutions of the SCO member states and introduction of innovative technologies.

The member states will take measures to ensure an early entry into force and implementation of the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on favorable conditions for international road transport of 2014.

Measures will be taken aimed at realizing the SCO transit potential and the establishment of regional transport and transit corridors. An important area of co-operation will be collaboration in the field of infrastructure and logistics upgrade, including through an expanded network of international logistics centers and creation of a network of industrial clusters along the transport arteries in the SCO region.

The SCO member states will develop mutually beneficial multifaceted cooperation in the energy sector, including renewable and alternative energy.

As regards the ICT development in the region, the member states will be guided by the generally accepted Telecommunication Standards approved by the International Telecommunication Union, as well as the principles of interoperability and flexibility of telecommunications services.

As a follow-up to the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on scientific and technical cooperation of 2013, the member states will assign priority to the development of innovation cooperation programs and projects, improvement of the legal framework, *inter alia*, to the preparation and implementation of a SCO scientific and technological partnership plan. They intend to develop a dialogue in the field of scientific and technological innovation and arrange an exchange of scientific and technological achievements.

The member states will develop cooperation in the field of advanced environmental protection technologies, renewable and clean energy, and energy efficiency in order to support sustainable development.

Agriculture is one of the priority areas for the member states' cooperation. Particular attention will be paid to a joint high-tech projects of the production and processing of agricultural products, introduction of innovative technologies in agriculture, including the food sector. To share best practices and technologies in the agricultural sector, joint forums, exhibitions, educational and practical courses and seminars as well as scientific research will be arranged.

The customs remain an important area of cooperation. It includes protection of intellectual property rights; exchange of information on goods and transport means moved across customs borders, cooperation in the development and application of risk management systems; combating customs offenses; training of customs services staff through programs of vocational training, retraining and advanced training.

CULTURAL AND HUMANITARIAN COOPERATION

The member states will strive to create favorable conditions for the development of relations in the field of science and technology, education, culture, health and tourism, and enhanced contacts between public organizations and citizens.

Both bilaterally and multilaterally, the member states will consistently expand the links between educational, scientific and research institutions and implement joint research programs and projects of mutual interest.

Particular attention will be paid to the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement between the governments of SCO member states on cooperation in culture of 2007.

The member states will cooperate in areas such as study and preservation of cultural and natural heritage sites in the SCO region, including those along the historic Silk Road, prevention of theft and illegal import and export of cultural property; creation of databases and registries of monuments; training of specialists in the field of civilizational and cultural heritage; restoration of works of art; scientific, technical and artistic expertise; museum design; study of intangible spiritual heritage; study of folklore, contemporary art and media culture, cinema, theater arts; research in the field of economics and sociology of art and cultural policy.

As multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies, the member states seek to ensure domestic inter-ethnic and inter-religious peace, strengthen the centuries-old traditions of harmonious coexistence of different nationalities and religions, and advance a dialogue between civilizations with the engagement of the SCO observer states and dialogue partners.

There will be an ever increasing relevance of SCO cooperation in health, including prevention of communicable diseases, epidemic monitoring, creation of favorable environment for the prevention of chronic non-infectious diseases, maternal and child health, and others. The member states shall cooperate in the field of safety and quality of drugs and medical devices. Experts and scientists of the member states will exchange experiences in the field of research and development of medical technology, achievements transfer, and advanced clinical therapies.

Proper upgrading of cooperation in public health will contribute to ensuring bio-security in the SCO region.

The main task in the field of tourism is to contribute to further growth of mutual tourist flows and improved quality of related services. To this end, the member states will exchange experience in the implementation of state policy in this area, expand contacts between the relevant organizations and professional associations, arrange tourist fairs, create new tourist routes, and carry out regular exchanges of information on touristic market and national tourism resources.

The member states will develop cooperation in the framework of the meeting of heads of national tourism administrations and elaborate a relevant document on cooperation in this field.

The member states will assign major importance to the cooperation in environmental protection, ecological safety, prevention of the negative effects of climate change and they will continue their work in respect of a draft concept of SCO member states' cooperation in environmental protection and supporting action plan. They will hold meetings of heads of ministries and agencies of the SCO member states in charge of environment protection and create an conditions for the exchange of information, experience and achievements.

The SCO member states will contribute to the development of cultural and humanitarian contacts between non-governmental organizations, non-profit entities and citizens of the member states. This could be facilitated, *inter alia*, by the establishment of committees of good neighborliness, friendship and cooperation or other mechanisms of similar functionality.

An important role will continue to be played by the SCO Forum which is a multilateral public consultation and expert mechanism established to provide scientific and other support to the SCO activities and develop cooperation between research and political science centers of the SCO member states, observer states and dialogue partners. The member states consider necessary to enhance practical results of these activities.

INFORMATIONAL DIMENSION

One of the most important SCO tasks in the field of information support to its activities will be a promotion of the SCO positive image among the member states' citizens, and of the SCO adequate image throughout the world and in the region. This should serve as a catalyst for the convergence of the member states and their peoples and strengthening of good neighborliness and mutual trust between them.

The member states will facilitate contacts and exchanges among media, regular provision to media of updated materials on the ongoing SCO work and political, economic, cultural and humanitarian achievements, as well as promotion of information about the Organization to the international media.

OPENNESS AND PARTNERSHIPS POLICY

SCO is open for accession by interested states which meet the criteria and terms set forth in the SCO legal documents, including the Regulation on the procedure for admitting new members to the SCO and the model Memorandum of Commitments of a state applying for the SCO membership.

The member states believe that the effective response to the challenges in the field of security and stability and active promotion of the economic and humanitarian cooperation within SCO can be ensured only by the combined efforts at a regional level.

The SCO expansion reflects the principle of the Organization's openness, set forth in its Charter. Accession of new members to SCO will be based on the strict compliance with and fulfillment by applicant states of their contractual and legal obligations in respect of SCO. If necessary, the member states may hold bilateral consultations with the applicant states in order to gain mutual understanding of the issues of mutual interest.

Participation of the SCO observer states and dialogue partners in its activities is an important component of the SCO operation. SCO observer states will continue to be invited to the public meetings of the Council of Heads of State, Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers), and meeting of heads of ministries and agencies of the member states. The SCO dialogue partners will be actively engaged in ministerial and expert meetings in the areas of mutual interest, as set forth in the respective memoranda.

Cooperation in the security area will be strengthened through the establishment of cooperation of the observer states and dialogue partners with the competent authorities of the SCO member states aimed at combating terrorism, separatism and extremism, as well as at combating illicit drug trafficking and other forms of organized transnational crime.

Flexible terms of participation in SCO project activities will enable the SCO observer states and dialogue partners to be involved in the trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

At the same time, the mechanism of regular consultations with the observer states and dialogue partners will continue to be improved in order to strengthen the relations with these countries and increase the practical results of cooperation in various fields.

Enhanced cooperation with the SCO observer states and dialogue partners will create prerequisites for the future establishment of a partnership system that promotes peace and security and development of mutually beneficial cooperation in the SCO region.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

In the coming period, the efforts to expand the SCO international relations will be accentuated in order to further enhance the Organization's role in shaping the new global and regional architecture and strengthening its authority in the world.

The SCO member states will assign priority to the cooperation with the UN, especially in matters of maintaining international peace and security and promoting development on the basis of the Joint Declaration on Cooperation between the Secretariats of the SCO and the United Nations of 2010. The priority areas will include combating terrorism and drug trafficking, implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, following up on the issue of international information security on the basis of the "Rules of conduct in the field of international information security" elaborated by SCO.

The member states are convinced that the United Nations should play a central coordinating role in world affairs, and they favor improved efficiency of its mechanisms, including the UN Security Council reform, in order to ensure an adequate response to modern challenges and changing political and economic realities, and maintain and restore international peace and security. They believe that the reform of the UN Security Council should make it more representative and effective through having the widest possible consultations aimed at a "package solution" that ensures the UN member states cohesion, without setting artificial deadlines and imposing options that have not enjoyed the wide support of the UN member states.

SCO will make efforts to strengthen cooperation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. UNESCAP will continue to be an important partner of the SCO in the trade and economic field, especially in matters of transport infrastructure development and fostering an enabling environment for international transport.

SCO plans to establish official relations and practical cooperation with other United Nations organs, specialized agencies and offices.

In accordance with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter and its own Charter, SCO, as an international organization, will continue to play an active role in maintaining regional peace, security and stability.

The member states will enhance dialogue, exchanges and cooperation with international and regional organizations having official relations with SCO.

Establishment of relations and practical cooperation with regional integration organizations, including through the signing of relevant cooperation documents, will remain an important element of the SCO international relations.

* * *

The member states are convinced that the consistent implementation of the Strategy will strengthen the SCO as a consolidated, efficient multidisciplinary international organization that ensures regional security and stability, economic cooperation and increased welfare of its member states' citizens. By 2025, the SCO will strengthen its position in the global and regional architecture by actively working in support of building a polycentric democratic system of international relations.