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# STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

*The first edition of the Voice of Asia digest for 2026 presents key excerpts from the keynote address delivered by the Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, Ambassador Kairat Sarybay at the 2026 Boao Forum for Asia.*

*In the current climate of geopolitical transformation, these reflections illuminate a defining reality: the deepening complexity of the global environment calls for a renewed commitment to collective engagement and effective multilateralism.*

*Ambassador Sarybay articulates a vision for forging synergy between regional organizations, positioning CICA as an unifier of efforts across the continent.*

*As CICA undergoes strategic transformation into a full-fledged international organization, its growing capacity allows it to bridge diverse national interests and coordinate policies that ensure regional stability.*

*By highlighting the vital link between regional connectivity, economic integration, and collective security, this opening defines the vision for this 2026 edition, reaffirming CICA's role as the essential platform for a synchronized and prosperous Voice of Asia.*



Today, the international community is navigating a period of profound transformation, including geopolitical tensions, military actions, instability in international trade and rising protectionism. Asia is subject to all these challenges and threats.

Despite existing turbulence, Asia remains one of the principal engines of the global economy and an increasingly influential voice for the global community. Across the continent, countries are pursuing development-oriented cooperation,

*“CICA stands ready to serve as a bridging point connecting regional organizations across Asia – from East Asia to Central Asia, from the West Asia to South and Southeast Asia – helping translate our shared aspirations for peace, stability, openness, and development into practical cooperation”*

**– Secretary General, Ambassador Kairat Sarybay**

deepening economic integration, and strengthening connectivity across Asia and its subregions.

In this evolving landscape, Asian multilateralism has become an important stabilizing force. Regional organizations across Asia are helping countries coordinate policies, manage shared challenges, and promote inclusive development. Together, they form a diverse but complementary network of institutions supporting peace, stability, and prosperity.

The Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) represents one of the most inclusive platforms within this emerging architecture of Asian security and cooperation. Today, CICA brings together 28 Member States, covering nearly 90 percent of the Asian continent and representing more than half of the world's population.

Since its establishment, CICA has been guided by principles that remain highly relevant today: sovereign equality, mutual respect, consensus-based decision-making and voluntary cooperation. These principles allow countries with different political systems, development models, and cultural backgrounds to work together constructively.

Over the three decades, CICA has developed a unique Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures, which forms the operational backbone of our organization. These measures cover five key dimensions of cooperation: economic, environmental, human, new challenges and threats, and military-political. This framework allows Member States to gradually align policies, share best practices, and develop practical cooperation projects. Since its evolution, CICA has established a number of

advisory bodies, such as Business Council, Youth Council, Think Tank Forum, Council of Eminent Persons, Partnership Network of Leading Universities, recently established Finance Summit and Women Council, as well as a special mechanism – the CICA Fund.

The practice of adopting thematic statements and documents is expanding. At the Sixth CICA Summit in October 2022, the Member States adopted the CICA Leaders' Statement on Cooperation in the Field of Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies and the CICA Plan of Action on the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In 2023, the CICA Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs adopted the Statement on Promoting Volunteerism for Sustainable Development. Last year, the CICA Ministerial Conference adopted the High-level Statement on Environmental Issues.

The current Chairmanship of Azerbaijan has placed particular emphasis on advancing practical cooperation among Member States, as well as increasing synergy with other international and regional platforms. At present, under Azerbaijan's leadership CICA is undergoing a historic transformation into a full-fledged international organization, which will further strengthen its institutional capacity and enhance its ability to coordinate with other regional structures.

Asia's future will depend not only on economic dynamism but also on the strength of its cooperative institutions. Platforms such as the Boao Forum for Asia play a vital role in fostering dialogue among governments, business communities, and international organizations.

For its part, CICA seeks to contribute to this evolving architecture of Asian multilateralism by promoting dialogue, building trust, and encouraging cooperation across the continent.

As a pan-Asian platform, CICA stands ready to serve as a bridging point connecting regional organizations across Asia – from East Asia to Central Asia, from the West Asia to South and Southeast Asia – helping translate our shared aspirations for peace, stability, openness, and development into practical cooperation. CICA is already facilitating cooperation with several UN organizations and other regional fora. Memorandums of Understanding are in place with IOM and UNODC, efforts are ongoing to formalize relationships with UN ESCAP and UNOCT. Institutionalized relations also exist with the SCO and EAEU, while regular dialogue continues with the Economic Cooperation Organization, League of Arab States, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and TurkPA.

CICA-ASEAN dialogue has seen substantial progress as we play complementary roles in promoting dialogue, confidence building and cooperation in Asia and beyond. Our intention is to further promote interaction between CICA and ASEAN in areas such as connectivity, environmental issues, youth engagement, volunteerism, capacity building and project implementation.

By strengthening coordination among our institutions and by amplifying the collective voice of Asia, we can work together to build a more integrated, resilient, and prosperous continent and contribute meaningfully to a more balanced and cooperative international order.



## CICA Alley initiative takes root in Thailand



Bangkok, 27 February 2026 – The Institute of Asian Studies of Chulalongkorn University, in partnership with the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), hosted the first-ever CICA Alley tree-planting ceremony outside the organization’s host country. The event entitled “CICA Alley at Chula: Tree Planting for Multilateral Cooperation and Sustainable Growth in Asia” marked a significant milestone in the expansion of this confidence building initiative across Asia.

Held at Chulalongkorn University’s Centenary Park, the event gathered members of the diplomatic corps representing CICA Member States and Observer States, ASEAN partners and United Nations entities in Bangkok, alongside the Chula community.



Launched in Astana in June 2021, CICA Alley was conceived as a forward-looking initiative combining environmental stewardship with confidence building. Originally initiated during the Kazakh Chairmanship, the project envisaged the establishment of CICA Alleys not only in the host country, but progressively in other Member States’ capitals. The establishment of the first Alley beyond Kazakhstan signals the growing ownership of CICA’s agenda by its Member States across the region and reflects Thailand’s proactive role as coordinator of the Sustainable development priority area and its contribution to strengthening multilateral cooperation in Asia.





In his remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay expressed sincere appreciation to Professor Wilert Puriwat, President of Chulalongkorn University, Associate Professor Pavika Sriratanaban, Executive Director of the Institute of Asian Studies, and the broader Chula community for elevating the initiative to a new level.

A distinctive feature of the Bangkok ceremony was the planting of the “Kaew” (orange jasmine) tree, generously provided by the hosts. The Secretary General noted that in Thai culture “Kaew” symbolizes positive peace rooted in trust, cooperation and constructive relationships — values that closely reflect the underlying philosophy of CICA. He emphasized that just as the Kaew flourishes through attentive cultivation, sustainability and cooperation across Asia must be nurtured through collective action, dialogue and shared responsibility.

Highlighting the broader significance of the ceremony, the Secretary General observed that while the planting of trees enriches the green landscape of Bangkok, it also demonstrates CICA’s bridge-building role — connecting Member States, Observer States and multilateral organizations, as well as academic institutions and younger generations. The initiative illustrates how even small, tangible steps can contribute to greater strategic goals of stability, connectivity and sustainable growth.



The ceremony also featured remarks by H.E. Mr. Elchin Bashirov, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Kingdom of Thailand, representing the current CICA Chairmanship, which commenced in December 2024. The Chairmanship’s priorities — connectivity, digitalization and sustainable growth in Asia — find practical expression in initiatives such as CICA Alley, linking environmental sustainability with multilateral engagement and academic partnership.

The program combined official remarks and a ceremonial presentation with a flag procession of CICA Member States led by Chulalongkorn University students, followed by the collective planting of Kaew trees by senior officials, diplomats and members of the university community — a visual expression of unity in diversity and confidence building in action.



# Side-event on Women's Empowerment across CICA countries



New York, 13 March 2026 – High-level side event was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on the margins of the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70), focusing on advancing women's empowerment across the Member States of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA).

The event was organized by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations and with the support of the CICA Secretariat. It served as an important platform for discussing the role of women in advancing sustainable development, inclusive governance and regional cooperation across the CICA region. The discussions also highlighted the growing importance of strengthening institutional mechanisms that support women's participation in decision-making and promote gender equality across Asia.

The panel brought together distinguished speakers and experts, including Chairperson of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of

Azerbaijan Ms. Bahar Muradova, CICA Deputy Secretary General Ms. Zhang Ling, Member of Parliament of Türkiye and Chair of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Ms. Çiğdem Erdoğan, Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations H.E. Ambassador Aida Kasymalieva, and Chief of the Peace and Security Unit at UN Women Ms. Päivi Kannisto.

Chairperson Ms. Bahar Muradova underlined the importance of systemic and sustainable cooperation among CICA Member States to advance women's empowerment, noting that broad participation of women in decision-making is essential for regional stability and sustainable development. She emphasized the need to expand women's access to education, justice and economic opportunities, including entrepreneurship, financial resources and digital skills. Ms. Muradova also noted that the CICA Women Council will serve as a consultative platform for promoting joint initiatives and sharing best practices among Member States.

Deputy Secretary General Ms. Zhang Ling highlighted the unique role of CICA as a platform for dialogue, confidence building and cooperation across Asia, drawing attention to the recent establishment of the CICA Women Council as a dedicated advisory body. She noted that the Council will facilitate an institutionalized exchange of experiences, support joint initiatives and promote women's participation in digital technologies, STEAM fields and sustainable entrepreneurship. Ms. Zhang Ling also referred to the upcoming inaugural meeting of the Council and the CICA conference entitled "Amplifying Women's Voices Across CICA for Sustainable Growth" to be held in Baku as important milestones for strengthening women's leadership in the region.



Ms. Çiğdem Erdoğan stressed that women play a central role in building strong families and resilient societies. She underscored the importance of addressing structural barriers and preparing girls for future opportunities, including in digital technologies and artificial intelligence, and referred to reforms in Türkiye aimed at enhancing gender equality, strengthening legal protections and expanding women's participation in education and public service.

Ambassador Aida Kasymalieva reaffirmed that women's empowerment remains a national priority for Kyrgyzstan and an essential condition for sustainable peace and development. She highlighted the importance of civil society engagement and partnerships between

governments, regional organizations and communities in promoting women's participation in decision-making, noting measures introduced in Kyrgyzstan to increase women's representation in politics, including gender quotas in elections.



Ms. Päivi Kannisto of UN Women highlighted the importance of strengthening cooperation among governments, international organizations and civil society to advance gender equality and protect the rights of women and girls. She noted that women remain underrepresented in global decision-making processes and emphasized that their meaningful participation in peacebuilding and governance contributes to more sustainable and lasting outcomes. Ms. Kannisto also expressed hope for continued cooperation with CICA and the CICA Women Council to further expand women's participation and support inclusive development across the region.



The discussion highlighted the importance of strengthening cooperation among CICA Member States in promoting women’s leadership, economic participation and access to education and innovation. Participants emphasized that empowering women contributes directly to sustainable development, social resilience and long-term stability across the region.

The side event provided an important platform for exchanging views and sharing best practices on gender equality, sustainable development and women’s leadership. It concluded with an interactive discussion session during which representatives of CICA Member States addressed key issues including women’s participation in decision-making, access to economic and educational opportunities, and the protection of women affected by conflict.





**January**

## CICA Secretary General advances engagement with Southeast Asia during visit to Jakarta



Jakarta, 20 January 2026 - The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, paid a working visit to Jakarta marking his first official visit to the capital of the Republic of Indonesia.

As part of the visit, the Secretary General held inaugural consultations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, alongside a meeting with the Secretary General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The discussions focused on strengthening CICA's engagement with Southeast Asia, advancing sectoral interaction, and exploring avenues for practical cooperation in support of peace, security and sustainable development across Asia.



In his meeting with Mr. Adi Dzulfuat, Director of Pacific and Oceania Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, the Secretary General briefed his counterpart on the current stage of CICA's development and its gradual transformation into a full-fledged international organization. He outlined the key priorities of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship for 2024–2026, pursued under the theme “Stronger CICA: Connectivity, Digitalization and Sustainable Growth in Asia,” as well as the three strategic pillars guiding CICA's work at present: strengthening institutional capacity, enhancing sectoral cooperation through confidence building measures, and increasing CICA's international visibility and partnerships.

The Secretary General recalled Indonesia's early involvement in the negotiations leading to the establishment of CICA and its long-standing status as an Observer State, noting that Indonesia has closely followed CICA's evolution. He emphasized the inclusive and consensus-based nature of CICA, its balanced membership and broad geographic representation, and reiterated that the organization remains open to Indonesia's closer engagement in the CICA process.





The Indonesian side was also informed about CICA's expanding programme of activities, including preparations for the Seventh CICA Summit to be held in October 2026 in Baku, where the signing of the organization's Charter is envisaged as a key milestone, as well as a number of major events planned for 2026, especially in the Environmental dimension.

Mr. Dzulfuat reaffirmed Indonesia's strong commitment to multilateral dialogue, citing its recent BRICS membership and the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the Eurasian Economic Union. He also pointed to Jakarta's interest in utilizing CICA's practical potential, in particular in the economic domain, including trade and connectivity.



The meeting with H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary General of ASEAN, marked the first engagement of a CICA Secretary General at the ASEAN Headquarters, building on the dialogue initiated between the two Secretariats in recent years. Ambassador Sarybay

provided an overview of CICA's mandate, priorities and programme of work, and expressed interest in further exchanges of experience on areas such as connectivity, environmental issues, youth engagement, volunteerism, capacity building and project implementation.

Both sides reaffirmed their readiness to maintain regular inter-secretariat contacts in a pragmatic and flexible format, recognizing the complementary roles played by CICA and ASEAN in promoting dialogue, confidence building and cooperation in Asia and beyond.

Secretary General Sarybay also got accustomed with environment-friendly technologies of the ASEAN Headquarters and visited the ASEAN Gallery where he was presented with information about the ASEAN Artists Residency Programme.

The working visit to Jakarta reaffirmed the relevance of inclusive multilateral platforms in addressing shared regional challenges and reflected CICA's continued efforts to strengthen partnerships with Southeast Asia as part of its broader pan-Asian mandate.



# Türkiye launches a series of anti-corruption trainings for law enforcement agencies of CICA Member States in 2026



19-23 January 2026 — The Turkish International Academy against Smuggling and Organized Crime (TADOC), in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), conducted an online anti-corruption training for CICA Member States.

Representatives of law enforcement agencies from Bahrain, Egypt, India, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Russia, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan participated in the training programme. The broad geographical representation of participants confirmed the high level of interest among the Member States in practical exchanges of experience in combating corruption.

The training was organized by Türkiye, in its capacity as coordinator of the priority area “New Challenges and Threats

(General)”, as part of the implementation of CICA confidence building measures. The programme aimed to share best practices of Turkish law enforcement agencies with officials of financial units responsible for identifying, investigating and preventing corruption-related offences.

The training course was designed to enhance the professional knowledge, practical skills and analytical abilities of law enforcement officials in financial units, equipping them to carry out effective anti-corruption investigations and operational tasks.

The TADOC seminar drew strong interest and received positive feedback from the event participants.

The Republic of Türkiye has extensive experience in organizing trainings for countries in the region. This training course represents another contribution by Türkiye to strengthening capacity and fostering practical cooperation within CICA.



## CICA Secretary General holds consultations in Malaysia to advance multilateral dialogue, parliamentary engagement and think-tank cooperation



Kuala Lumpur, 19–23 January 2026 — During his working visit to Malaysia, the Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, engaged in a series of high-level consultations with Malaysian government officials, parliamentary leaders and leading strategic think tanks, reaffirming a shared commitment to strengthening multilateral dialogue, inter-parliamentary engagement and Track 2 cooperation in support of peace, stability and sustainable development in Asia.

In his meeting with H.E. YB Dato Lukanisman bin Awang Sauni, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, the Secretary General highlighted the convergence between Malaysia's foreign policy objectives and CICA's goals and principles, with particular emphasis on the centrality of dialogue and mediation as effective mechanisms for fostering stability, trust and peaceful cooperation across Asia. He provided a briefing on the priorities of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship of CICA for 2024–2026, as well as on the ongoing transformation of CICA as it continues to strengthen its institutional capacity and role within the evolving regional architecture. Recalling CICA's evolution as an inclusive, member-driven intergovernmental forum operating on the principles of voluntariness and consensus, the Secretary General noted that several ASEAN countries are already members of

CICA and underscored the added value that full-fledged membership could bring, enabling both CICA and Malaysia to benefit from closer interaction across the organization's governing, working and advisory frameworks.





As a further component of his working visit, the Secretary General pursued parliamentary engagement, meeting with Nur Jazlan Mohamed, Deputy President of the Senate of Malaysia, and members of the parliamentary leadership, including Wong Chen, Chairman of the International Relations and Trade Committee of the House of Representatives. The exchange underscored the role of parliamentary diplomacy and democratic governance in advancing CICA's objectives, with particular attention to the contribution of small and medium-sized enterprises to inclusive economic development and social resilience, alongside the meaningful participation of youth and women in public life. In this context, the Secretary General outlined the work of the CICA Youth Council and the recently established Women Council as platforms to promote civic engagement and prepare future generations for the challenges of rapid technological change, including the growing impact of artificial intelligence and social media. The discussions also touched on CICA initiatives related to volunteerism, countering youth radicalization and confidence building measures to combat illicit drugs, noted as increasingly relevant for CICA Member States and the ASEAN region amid heightened uncertainty.



The Secretary General further engaged with leading Malaysian policy research institutions, meeting with Dr Mohd Faiz Abdullah, Chairman of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia and Adviser to the Prime Minister, and Iqbal Rawther, Deputy Chairman of the Kuala Lumpur Strategic Institute and President of the Global Muslim Business Forum. The discussions focused on the role of think tanks in Track 2 diplomacy, policy innovation and multivectoral cooperation, as well as on regional stability, South–South cooperation and the role of middle powers in reinforcing multilateralism. The interlocutors highlighted the potential for strengthened cooperation between Southeast Asia and Central Asia through CICA as a dialogue-based multilateral platform amid growing geopolitical uncertainty.

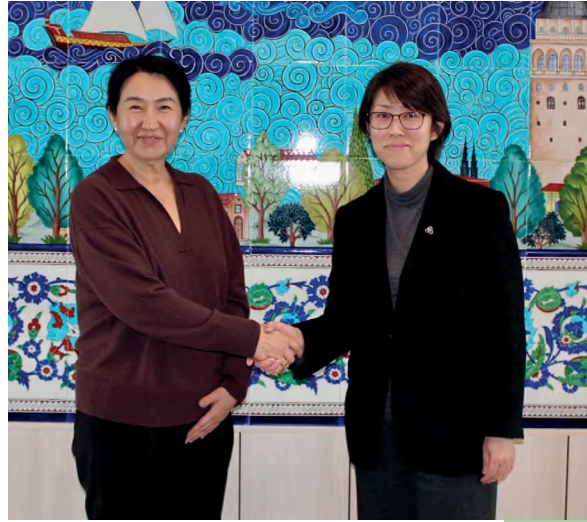
These engagements reflect CICA's ongoing efforts to broaden and deepen its partnerships in Southeast Asia, and to reinforce its role as a forum for trust-building, inclusive cooperation and multilateral engagement across governmental, parliamentary and expert communities.



## CICA – IOM consultations focus on migration issues of regional and global relevance



Astana, 27 January 2026 — The Deputy Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ms. Zhang Ling, received Ms. Bermet Moldobaeva, Head of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Office in the Kyrgyz Republic, at the CICA Headquarters. The meeting reaffirmed the importance CICA attaches to its interaction and cooperation with IOM and underscored the shared commitment of both sides to advancing dialogue on migration-related issues of increasing regional and global relevance.



During the exchange, the sides reviewed the respective mandates and activities of their organizations, noting the long-standing engagement between CICA and IOM, including the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2008 and recent efforts to revitalize practical cooperation.

Particular attention was given to climate-induced migration as a promising area for enhanced collaboration, reflecting its priority status for the Azerbaijani Chairmanship and Member States. Both



sides expressed interest in strengthening technical dialogue, promoting the exchange of good practices and fostering closer institutional synergies aimed at supporting safe, orderly and sustainable migration across the region.



## ICRC visited CICA Headquarters



Astana, 29 January 2026 — The Deputy Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, Ms. Zhang Ling, received Ms. Biljana Milosevic, Head of the Regional Delegation in Central Asia (Tashkent) of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), at the CICA Headquarters.

The meeting focused on the intersection of regional security, humanitarian action and confidence building, reflecting the relevance of humanitarian considerations in addressing contemporary and non-traditional security challenges across the CICA region.

The exchange underscored the shared commitment of CICA and the ICRC to advancing peace, and the protection of human rights, within the scope of their respective mandates. The sides emphasized the importance of dialogue, trust, and preventive engagement in mitigating humanitarian risks and strengthening resilience at the regional level.

The meeting also explored possible avenues for interaction within existing frameworks, including opportunities for expert-level exchanges and awareness-raising on issues of common interest.

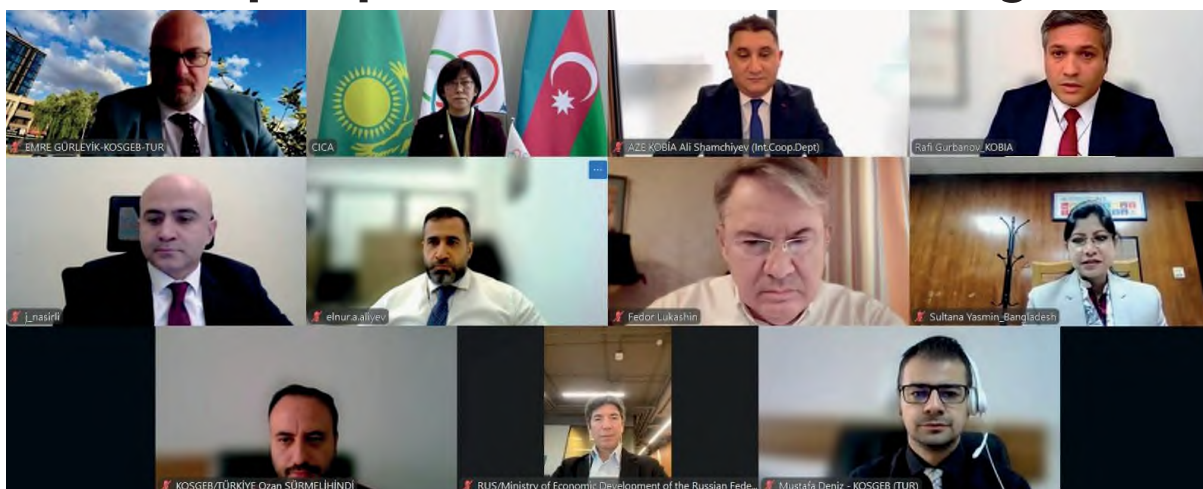
The consultations reaffirmed CICA's openness to constructive engagement with international humanitarian actors in support of peace, security and confidence building in Asia.





**February**

# Turning sustainability into SME advantage: business perspectives from the CICA region



5 February 2026 – The Small and Medium Business Development Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan (KOBİA) together with the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) convened an online webinar entitled “Policy and Practical Approaches for SMEs in Applying Green Economy Practices among CICA Member States.”

The webinar brought together policymakers, SME support institutions, business associations and entrepreneurs from across CICA Member States to explore how small and medium-sized enterprises can turn sustainability into a competitive advantage. Discussions focused on policy frameworks, public-sector support instruments, and business-oriented solutions that enable SMEs to integrate green economy principles while maintaining growth, profitability and resilience.

Opening the webinar, Mr. Elnur Aliyev, Adviser to the Chairman of KOBİA, referred to Azerbaijan’s COP29 experience, stressing the need to place SMEs at the center of the green transition. He noted that despite their significant cumulative environmental impact, SMEs remain underrepresented in global climate discussions, and highlighted the Baku Climate Coalition for SMEs Green

Transition launched at COP29 as a platform promoting coordinated support from governments, financial institutions and international partners, particularly in addressing financing challenges.

**Support Tools for SMEs**

- Concessional Green Finance**  
Access to specialized funding through the Green Transformation Fund and international development partners.
- Technical Services**  
Subsidized or free resource efficiency assessments and technical consultations for industrial optimization.



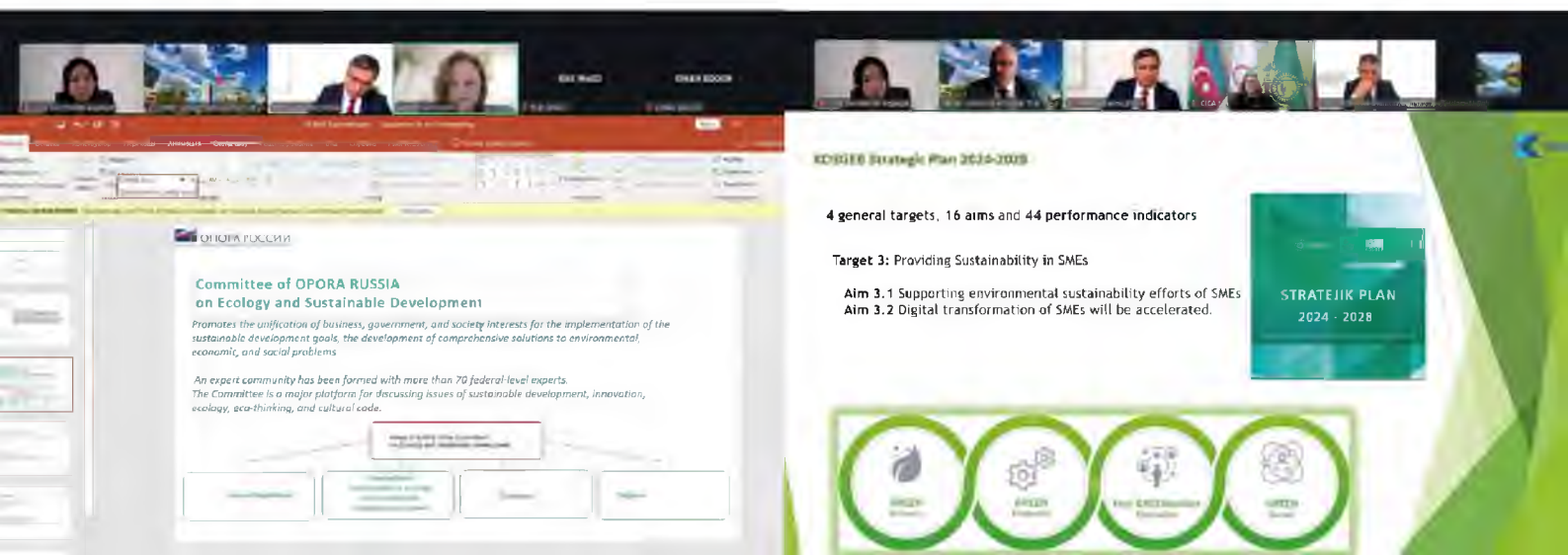


Ms. Zhang Ling, Deputy Secretary General of CICA, emphasized that SMEs remain the backbone of national economies, driving employment, innovation, and inclusive growth across the CICA region.

In her remarks, Ms. Zhang Ling noted that climate change and environmental pressures are already reshaping economic realities, making the transition to greener and more resource-efficient business models both a necessity and an opportunity for SMEs. She highlighted that environmentally responsible practices can help enterprises improve operational efficiency, optimize costs and strengthen long-term business resilience, while contributing to broader sustainable development goals. Expressing appreciation to KOBIA and all partners, she stressed the value of experience-sharing and cooperation among CICA Member States in advancing sustainable SME development.

The panel session featured contributions from Member States and business organizations, presenting policy-to-practice approaches for SME green transformation. Speakers shared national strategies and institutional mechanisms designed to support SMEs through incentives, advisory services, financing tools, and capacity-building programmes. Business perspectives focused on how sustainability principles can be embedded into everyday operations, management decisions, and value chains, helping SMEs adapt to changing market expectations and regulatory environments.

The event reaffirmed the role of the CICA platform in facilitating business-relevant dialogue, knowledge exchange, and partnerships in support of sustainable and environmentally responsible growth across the region.





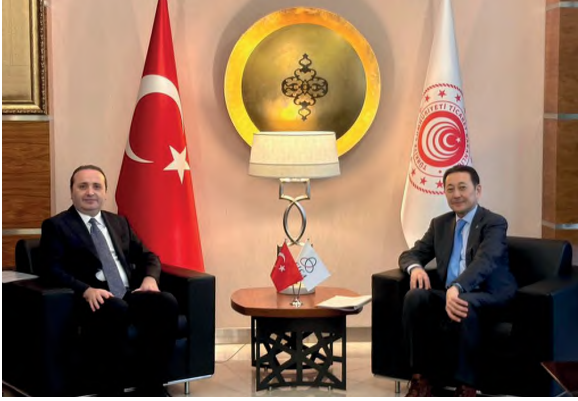
## Ankara consultations underscore momentum in advancing CICA’s core institutional priorities

Ankara, 12–13 February 2026 — The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, paid a working visit to Ankara, during which he held series of substantive and forward-looking meetings with senior officials and key stakeholders, aimed at advancing CICA’s transformation agenda and strengthening its economic, institutional and analytical pillars.

In the course of the visit, H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay held in-depth consultations with Mrs. Berris Ekinçi, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye. The Secretary General expressed appreciation for Türkiye’s sustained political, financial and institutional support to CICA, including its active role as a founding Member State and a major contributor to the activities of the organization. The sides exchanged views on the ongoing transformation process, progress in discussions on the draft CICA Charter and prospects for Türkiye’s proactive engagement across CICA advisory bodies and confidence building measures, including in the military-political, economic, youth and analytical dimensions.



[https://s-cica.org/index.php?view=page&t=press\\_releases&id=2883](https://s-cica.org/index.php?view=page&t=press_releases&id=2883)  
The economic dimension of cooperation featured prominently in the programme of the visit. In this context, the Secretary



General met with Mr. Mustafa Tuzcu, Deputy Minister of Trade of Türkiye. The discussion highlighted the centrality of trade, investment, SME development and economic connectivity in contemporary diplomacy. The Secretary General welcomed Türkiye's longstanding support to CICA, including its contributions to institutional development and capacity-building initiatives. Both sides reached preliminary understanding on organizing CICA Business Council meeting and Business Forum in Türkiye, aiming to foster practical cooperation, government-business engagement and B2B interaction among Member States.



The economic track was further elaborated during meetings with Türkiye's key institutions supporting SME development and international assistance. In talks with Mr. Ahmet Serdar İbrahimcioğlu, President of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of Türkiye (KOSGEB), the Secretary General reviewed the current and prospective agenda of the CICA Business Council, discussed opportunities for capacity building through targeted

training programmes. Particular attention was devoted to the role of digital platforms in enhancing SME resilience, innovation and cross-border cooperation across the CICA region, as well as to aligning SME initiatives with CICA priorities, including sustainability and the green transition.



Within the framework of development cooperation, the Secretary General met with Mr. Abdullah Eren, President of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA). The sides underscored the strong alignment of priorities in promoting sustainable development, resilience and institutional capacity, and explored practical avenues for expanding project-based cooperation within the framework of the CICA Fund. Both meetings reaffirmed the shared commitment to advancing inclusive growth and strengthening cooperation across the CICA region.



The institutional and analytical dimension of cooperation was addressed during the meeting with Dr. Polat Safi, Chairman of the Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye. The discussions focused on the role of strategic research and archival materials in diplomacy and regional security. The Secretary General emphasized the importance of exchanging analytical materials through the Think Tank Forum to strengthen confidence building and institutionalization of the organization in the region. Building on this, the Center proposed developing joint research and publications on relevant topics, ensuring adherence to academic standards. Both sides expressed their commitment to continue cooperation, advancing joint studies and publications to reinforce regional engagement in Asia.

As part of the programme, the Secretary General met with H.E. Sok Chea, Ambassador of Cambodia to Türkiye. The exchange reaffirmed Cambodia's support for CICA's transformation into a full fledged international organization

and addressed preparations for the Seventh CICA Summit in 2026, as well as Cambodia's continued engagement in institutional development and confidence building activities.

The working visit to Ankara reaffirmed the shared commitment of CICA and Türkiye to advancing dialogue, strengthening institutional foundations and promoting inclusive cooperation across the region, in line with CICA's evolving role as a pan-Asian platform for confidence building and sustainable development.



## Kuwait's contribution highlights deepening engagement within CICA framework

Astana, 17 February 2026  
 — The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, received Mr. Meshari Al-Sayegh, Charge d'Affaires a.i. of the State of Kuwait in the Republic of Kazakhstan, at the CICA Headquarters.



The meeting marked the occasion of Kuwait's latest voluntary financial contribution to the CICA Secretariat budget, further reaffirming its enduring support for the organization's confidence building objectives.

The Secretary General recalled that Kuwait's contribution in February 2024 enabled the translation and subsequent publication of the "Tales of Asia" compilation in Arabic and Kazakh, promoting multilingual outreach and expanding the accessibility of CICA's cultural initiatives across the Arab world and the wider Asian region.

The Secretary General expressed appreciation to the State of Kuwait, emphasizing that these contributions,

reflect a sustained commitment to strengthening multilateral cooperation within CICA. As the organization's newest Member State, Kuwait possesses considerable potential capable of bringing important added value to CICA activities.

The CICA Secretary General also briefed the guest on Member States' contributions to the CICA Headquarters, reflecting the rich diversity and shared spirit of Asia embodied in the premises.

The meeting reaffirmed Kuwait's growing engagement within CICA and highlighted the organization's unique role in building trust, fostering dialogue and advancing cooperation for peace and stability across Asia.



# From trade routes to trust: advancing Asia's connectivity dialogue in Bangkok



Bangkok, 26 February 2026  
–The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, delivered a keynote address at the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University under the Seventh Asia Forward Series, focusing on the strategic theme “From Corridors to Confidence: Central Asia, the Middle Corridor, and Asia’s New Connectivity Architecture.”

The event, convened by the Institute of Asian Studies of Chulalongkorn University, provided a distinguished platform for dialogue among members of the diplomatic corps, scholars and students on the evolving architecture of connectivity across Asia. In his remarks, the Secretary General conveyed his sincere appreciation to the University’s leadership and academic community for their hospitality and intellectual engagement, noting that Chulalongkorn University’s vision of international partnership and “togetherness” resonates strongly with CICA’s inclusive and consensus-based philosophy.

Ambassador Sarybay noted that as Asia assumes a growing role in shaping global economic dynamics, connectivity should be understood not solely as physical infrastructure, but as a multidimensional process grounded in trust and cooperation. He stressed that sustainable connectivity requires transparency, dialogue and mutual respect, observing that the Middle Corridor, also known as the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route, represents not only a transport artery but also a strategic platform for strengthening shared responsibility and regional stability.



Positioning CICA within this emerging architecture, Ambassador Sarybay emphasized the organization's unique role as a pan-Asian platform uniting 28 Member States across 90 percent of the continent and operating strictly on the principles of inclusiveness, consensus and voluntariness. He noted that connectivity remains central to the priorities of the current Azerbaijani Chairmanship under the theme "Connectivity, Digitalization and Sustainable Growth in Asia," as Member States advance the transformation of CICA into a full-fledged international organization ahead of the Seventh Summit in Baku.

Highlighting CICA's institutional ecosystem, the Secretary General elaborated on the role of its advisory bodies — including the Business Council, Youth Council, Think Tank Forum, Partnership Network of Leading Universities, Women Council, Finance Summit — as practical platforms translating dialogue into sectoral cooperation. These bodies serve as platforms where connectivity is operationalized through SME development, academic exchange, youth engagement, gender empowerment and financial dialogue, reinforcing confidence building across economic and humanitarian dimensions.

Special attention was also given to the CICA Fund as an operational instrument enabling Member States to mobilize voluntary resources for concrete



regional projects. Referring to the Fund's first approved initiative supporting Afghan farmers, Ambassador Sarybay encouraged broader participation to further strengthen CICA's practical impact in addressing urgent regional challenges.

The Secretary General also drew attention to CICA's expanding network of international partnerships. He recalled the organization's reciprocal observer status with the United Nations and its alignment with global priorities in regional security and sustainable development. He further noted ongoing engagement with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), emphasizing that such cooperation enhances CICA's international visibility and reinforces multilateral synergies across Asia.

Ambassador Kairat Sarybay concluded by encouraging academic institutions and young leaders to actively engage with CICA's dialogue platforms, noting that the organization's transformation into a full-fledged international body reflects not only institutional evolution, but also the consolidation of a platform for future generations. Referring to the "Chula Power of Togetherness," he emphasized that sustained multilateral interaction and intellectual exchange are essential to transforming corridors of trade into corridors of lasting peace.



## CICA deepens engagement with key stakeholders in Thailand

Bangkok, 25–27 February 2026  
– The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, conducted a series of high-level meetings in the Kingdom of Thailand, reinforcing strategic partnerships at a pivotal stage of CICA’s institutional transformation and advancing practical cooperation across the Asian continent.

The Secretary General was received by H.E. Mr. Sihasak Phuangkitkeow, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand. Ambassador Sarybay expressed sincere appreciation for Thailand’s steady and principled engagement in the CICA process. He underscored the importance of Member States’ ownership amid transition toward a full-fledged international organization,



including through voluntary financial contributions to the CICA Fund and the Secretariat, which will be celebrating its 20th Anniversary this June. Secretary General also thanked Minister for the donation of the “Suphannahong” Royal Barge replica that is now proudly displayed at the CICA Headquarters.

Mr. Phuangkitkeow was briefed on the priorities of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship under the motto “Stronger CICA: Connectivity, Digitalization, and Sustainable Growth in Asia,” as well as on the ongoing negotiations on the draft CICA Charter, expected to become a landmark outcome of the 7th CICA Summit in Baku in October 2026. In this regard, the Minister conveyed his best wishes to the Azerbaijani Chairmanship for the successful organization of the Leaders’ Meeting and reaffirmed Thailand’s readiness to make a constructive contribution to its positive outcome.

Particular attention was devoted to further expanding Thailand’s engagement in confidence-building measures, sectoral cooperation and newly established advisory bodies — including the Partnership Network of Leading Universities, the Women Council and the Finance Summit — as well as to enhancing synergies between CICA and regional organizations such as ASEAN, BIMSTEC and ACD.



In light of these discussions, Minister Phuangketkeow underscored the importance of upholding international law and preserving the integrity of multilateral institutions amid growing geopolitical tensions and global uncertainty. He described CICA as an inclusive platform for confidence building and mutually beneficial cooperation.

During consultations with H.E. Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Secretary General emphasized the growing depth and substance of cooperation between the two Secretariats. The discussion focused on preparations for the 82nd Session of ESCAP in Baku, where CICA intends to convene a dedicated side-event highlighting its achievements in the economic and human dimensions and advancing the Azerbaijani Chairmanship's



priorities. Both sides explored avenues for elevating inter-secretariat cooperation to a new level, including the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding and the development of joint project-based initiatives, notably in the field of transport connectivity through dry ports and intermodal integration, potentially supported by the CICA Fund. Climate diplomacy, sustainable development, volunteerism and inclusive growth were identified as natural areas of convergence. where he outlined the history and key achievements of CICA, as well as the priorities of Azerbaijan's Chairmanship, focused on expanding economic and humanitarian cooperation, enhancing the role of youth and promoting the digital agenda. He pointed out that implementing these priorities contributes to the further development of CICA as a credible mechanism for multilateral cooperation, founded on trust, equality and the pursuit of sustainable peace and prosperity in Asia.





In an exchange with Ms. Delphine Schantz, Regional Representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, the Secretary General highlighted the strong alignment between CICA's Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures and UNODC's mandate in addressing new challenges and threats. Discussions centered on combating transnational organized crime, illicit drug trafficking, terrorism, cybercrime, trafficking in persons and money laundering. Particular attention was paid to the growing scale of online scams. Recalling the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2017, both sides agreed on the importance of reinvigorating cooperation on a pan-Asian scale, expanding engagement beyond Central Asia and strengthening practical interaction through expert exchanges, training activities and participation in regional initiatives.



In focused discussions with Mrs. Arunee Hiam, Deputy Director-General of the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), the Secretary General

encouraged renewed project-based cooperation in support of CICA's development agenda. He presented the evolving portfolio of the CICA Fund, including its first successfully completed project in Afghanistan and several new initiatives under preparation in the areas of governance capacity-building, climate action, youth empowerment and trade development. The two sides discussed the potential for leveraging Thailand's development cooperation expertise, including through in-kind contributions and capacity-building support, to enhance the operationalization of the Fund and strengthen the Secretariat's institutional capacity.

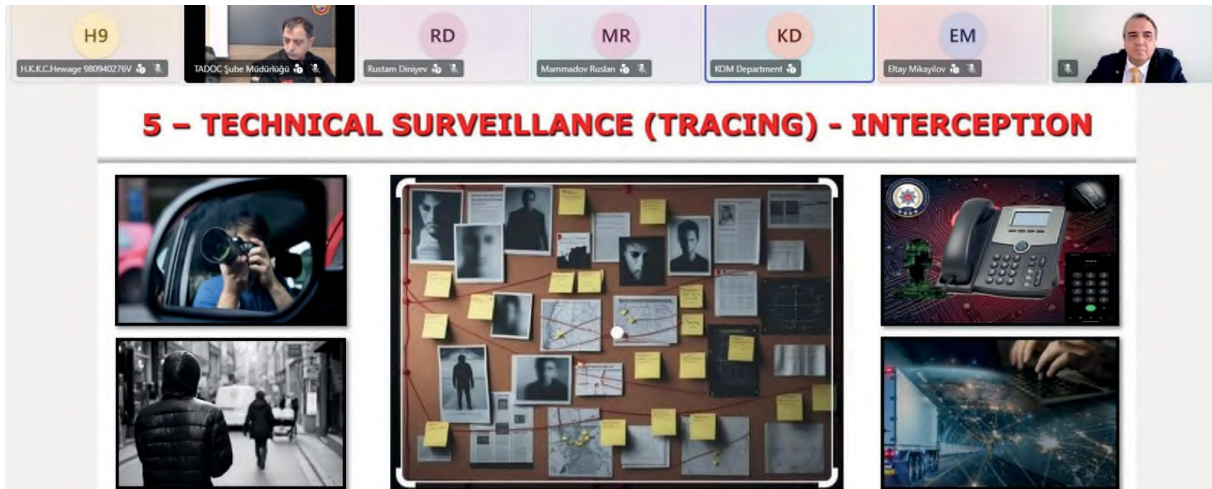


The Secretariat also participated in 13th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and delivered a statement on CICA's contribution to transformative, equitable and coordinated action in support of 2030 Agenda, outlining CICA's institutional mechanisms, upcoming initiatives and prospects for cooperation and synergies with ESCAP to advance sustainable development across the region.

The Bangkok engagements of the CICA Secretary General further consolidated momentum ahead of the 7th CICA Summit in Baku and reaffirmed the importance of principled multilateral cooperation, strengthened inter-institutional linkages and practical sectoral initiatives in addressing shared regional challenges.



March



## Türkiye continues a series of law enforcement trainings for CICA Member States

2-6 March 2026 – The Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC), together with the CICA Secretariat, organized an online training course on risk analysis and search techniques for representatives of CICA Member States. The course was attended by experts from several countries, including Azerbaijan, Bahrain and Sri Lanka.

The event was hosted by the Republic of Türkiye in its capacity as coordinator of CICA confidence building measures in the priority area “New Challenges and Threats.” The training was aimed at exchanging experience and strengthening the capacity of law enforcement agencies of the Member States in the field of detecting and preventing crimes related to illicit trafficking in drugs, weapons and ammunition, smuggling, illegal migration, as well as the illegal movement of financial resources and cultural property.

Participants were introduced to modern approaches to risk assessment and profiling, as well as practical techniques for searching persons, vehicles, cargo and premises. Particular attention was given to common methods used to conceal illegal assets, methods of detecting them, and security considerations during search operations.

The training organized by TADOC received positive feedback from

participants, who emphasized its practical relevance and contribution to strengthening the professional skills of specialists.

The Republic of Türkiye, as coordinator of the priority area “New Challenges and Threats (general)” within the implementation of the CICA confidence building measures, has accumulated significant experience in conducting training courses for Member States. This event represented another contribution by Türkiye to building the capacities of law enforcement agencies in the Member States and fostering practical cooperation within CICA.

Further training activities organized by TADOC for CICA Member States are expected to take place in 2026, aimed at sharing best practices and improving the professional skills of law enforcement officials.

## New Delhi consultations enhance cooperation across CICA dimensions



New Delhi, 4-6 March 2026 – During a working visit to New Delhi, the Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, held consultations with representatives of Indian governmental institutions, analytical centers, academia and the business community, and participated in a panel discussion within the framework of the Raisina Dialogue 2026.



The discussions focused on strengthening cooperation across CICA's dimensions, as well as advancing practical initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue, connectivity and sustainable development in Asia.

During a meeting with Ms. Muanpuii Saiawi, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs of India, the parties reviewed progress in the CICA transformation process, including ongoing negotiations on the draft CICA Charter. The Secretary General expressed appreciation for India's constructive engagement in the Charter discussions and emphasized the importance of maintaining close coordination in preparation for the Seventh CICA Summit to be held in Baku in 2026. The discussion also addressed cooperation in combating terrorism, where India serves as Coordinator within CICA framework.



Consultations with H.E. Mr. Shri Ngulksam Jathom Gangte, Acting Director General of the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Chair of the CICA Think Tank Forum, focused on priorities for analytical cooperation within CICA. Ambassador Sarybay congratulated ICWA on assuming leadership of the Think Tank Forum for 2026–2027, and the parties discussed preparations for the upcoming 14th meeting of the Forum, as well as opportunities to expand policy dialogue and capacity-building initiatives.

In discussion with Dr. Sarah Jayal Sawkmie, Director at the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of India, the Secretary General elaborated on opportunities to further promote youth engagement through CICA initiatives, including activities of the CICA Youth Council aimed at strengthening people-to-people contacts across the region.



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Ambassador Sarybay also met with Dr. Preetam B. Yashvant, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Child Development of India, to discuss advancing women's empowerment through CICA initiatives. The parties exchanged views on preparations for the inaugural meeting of the CICA Women Council, scheduled for 14 April 2026 in Baku, as well as the upcoming side event on women's empowerment to be held on the margins of the 70th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70) in New York.

Additionally, the Secretary General met with Prof. Yogesh Singh, Vice Chancellor of the University of Delhi, to discuss academic cooperation through the Partnership Network of Leading Universities of CICA Member States (PNLU). The parties exchanged views on expanding joint research, academic exchanges and policy dialogue among universities participating in the Network.



During a meeting with Mr. Manish Mohan, Senior Director of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the discussion focused on strengthening economic cooperation through the CICA Business Council, including initiatives aimed at promoting business-to-business interaction, trade and investment. Particular attention was given to cooperation among small and medium-sized enterprises, including the Secretariat's initiative to develop the "SME Landscape in Asia: Interactive Guidebook."



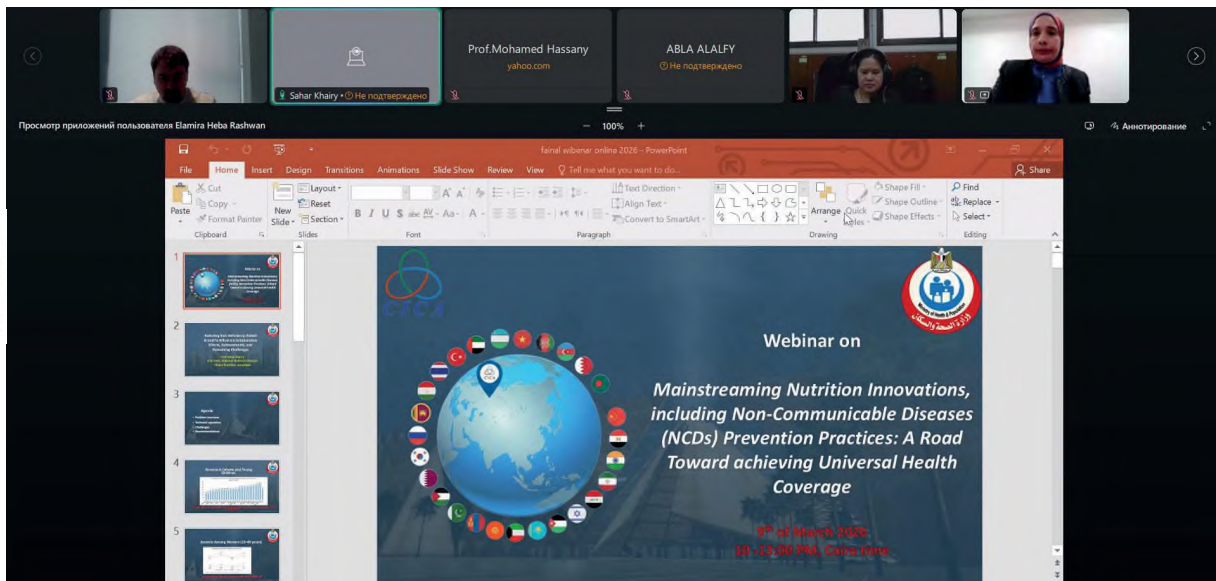
As part of the visit, Ambassador Sarybay participated in a session of the Raisina Dialogue 2026 titled “The Heartland Revisited: Central Asia Reimagined,” organized by the NatStrat think tank. In his remarks, he noted that Central Asia is evolving from a land-locked region into an increasingly land-linked and interconnected sub-region, supported by growing regional cooperation, border settlement agreements and expanding connectivity initiatives.

He highlighted major infrastructure and energy projects linking Central Asia with wider Asian markets and emphasized that sustainable connectivity must be accompanied by confidence building, transparency and cooperative approaches among states. Ambassador Sarybay underscored that CICA provides

an inclusive multilateral platform for advancing dialogue on security and development across Asia.

The meetings reaffirmed India’s active engagement in CICA activities and underscored the importance of continued coordination ahead of the Seventh CICA Summit in Baku in 2026, with a view to strengthening dialogue, connectivity and mutually beneficial cooperation across Asia.





## Egypt hosts CICA Webinar on Nutrition Innovations

9 March 2026 – The Ministry of Health and Population and the National Institute of Nutrition of the Arab Republic of Egypt, with the support of the CICA Secretariat, organized a webinar titled “Mainstreaming Nutrition Innovations, including Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) Prevention Practices: A Road Toward Achieving Universal Health Coverage.” The event brought together experts and representatives of CICA Member States to exchange experiences and discuss innovative approaches to improving nutrition and preventing non-communicable diseases.

The webinar was opened by Prof. Abla Alalfy, Deputy Minister of Health and Population of Egypt, who encouraged Member States to utilize the CICA platform to strengthen dialogue, networking and practical cooperation in

the field of public health and well-being. In her remarks, she emphasized the importance of preventive strategies and the need to strengthen national health systems in order to advance universal health coverage.





The first session focused on policy frameworks and interventions addressing micronutrient deficiencies, highlighting national efforts to combat iron and iodine deficiencies. Egyptian experts presented initiatives such as the fortification of “baladi” bread with iron and programs aimed at monitoring and reducing iodine deficiency, as well as community-based efforts to improve nutrition through school meal programs.

The second session explored national policies addressing obesity and early childhood nutrition, including Egypt’s “Golden 1000 Days” initiative, which promotes healthy nutrition during the critical early stages of life. Experts also discussed sustainable approaches to tackling obesity and the importance of responsible marketing of breast milk substitutes.

A third session addressed national efforts to prevent and manage non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through early screening, prevention programs and health awareness campaigns. Representatives of several CICA Member States, including Azerbaijan, Russia and Türkiye, shared their national strategies and experiences in addressing NCDs.

The discussions highlighted the importance of knowledge sharing and cooperation among CICA Member States in addressing nutrition-related challenges and strengthening preventive healthcare systems. Participants emphasized that innovative nutrition policies and early prevention strategies play a critical role in reducing the social-economic burden of non-communicable diseases and improving public health outcomes.

The webinar was organized within the framework of 2026 Annual Plan of confidence building measures under the New Challenges and Threats Dimension, which promotes cooperation in areas such as epidemiological safety, public health, social development and well-being across the CICA region. The event demonstrated the potential of the CICA platform to facilitate the exchange of best practices and support practical cooperation aimed at improving health and quality of life across Asia.



## CICA Secretary General, Ambassador Kairat Sarybay holds meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan

Ashgabat, 17 March 2026 – As part of a working visit to Turkmenistan, the Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, held talks with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Akhmet Gurbanov in Ashgabat.

At the meeting, Ambassador Sarybay highlighted key aspects of CICA's current activities, including the work of its governing and advisory bodies, the priorities of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship in preparation for the Seventh Summit in Baku in autumn 2026, and the ongoing process of transforming the Conference into a full-fledged international organization.

The CICA Secretary General highly appreciated Ashgabat's contribution to the development of multilateral diplomacy. He added, Turkmenistan's joining CICA as an observer in 2021 became a logical reflection of the country's approaches to international relations, which are fully consistent with the goals and principles of the Conference.

The diplomats also noted the positive dynamics in relations among the Central Asian states, including the successful resolution of border issues and progress in the joint management of water resources in the region. In this context, the Secretary General underlined the importance of raising Turkmenistan's status within CICA, which would make it possible to fully tap into the potential of Ashgabat's neutrality within the framework of the Conference.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Gurbanov highlighted CICA's extensive agenda and broad membership and invited CICA to engage in dialogue with the Group of Friends of Neutrality, identifying energy security, connectivity, and counter-terrorism as key cooperation areas.

Discussing regional security, both parties called for diplomatic resolutions to conflicts in West Asia, particularly regarding situation in and around Iran, in alignment with the UN Charter.

# CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay Meets with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Yermek Kosherbayev



Astana, 20 March 2026 – Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Yermek Kosherbayev.

During the meeting, the counterparts engaged in a substantive exchange of views on the key directions for CICA's further development amid growing turbulence in international relations and the emergence of a new security architecture in Asia. The discussions focused on preparations for the Seventh CICA Summit, to be held in Baku on 15 October 2026, as well as on the steady advancement of CICA's institutional transformation into a full-fledged international organization.

The Minister reaffirmed Kazakhstan's unwavering commitment to strengthening CICA's capacity as a relevant multilateral platform for dialogue and interaction, emphasizing the country's readiness to continue active and substantive engagement in implementing its priority initiatives.

The Secretary General expressed his appreciation to Kazakhstan for its consistent political, financial and institutional support for CICA, highlighting the country's key role as the initiator of CICA and one of the main drivers of its transformation and institutional strengthening.

The parties noted the steady progress in

developing the draft CICA Charter and underscored its importance for building trust and implementing the key initiatives of the Seventh Summit.

They reaffirmed their willingness to take joint action to improve institutional mechanisms and promote measures aimed at reinforcing a resilient regional security architecture.



## CICA Member States discuss risk-based approach to improving safety in mining industry



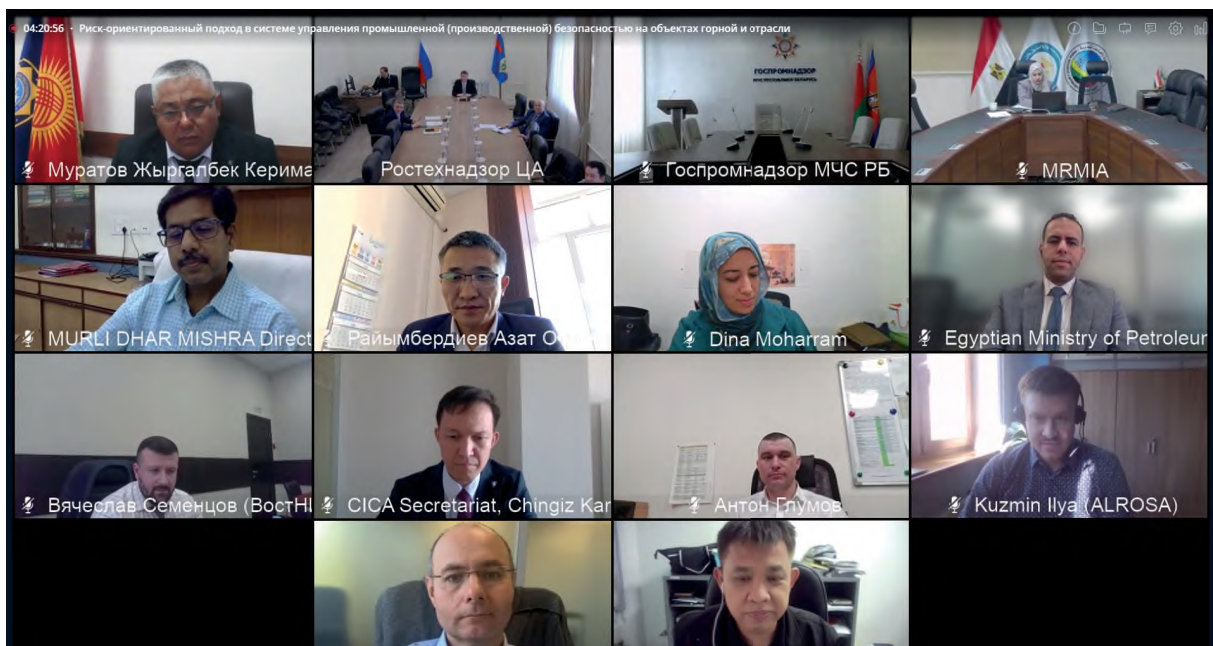
Astana, 26 March 2026 – The Federal Environmental, Industrial and Nuclear Supervision Service of the Russian Federation (Rostekhnadzor), with the support of the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), held the Second CICA Workshop on Mining Safety entitled “Risk-based approach in the industrial (occupational) safety management system at mining facilities” which gathered representatives of regulatory authorities and industrial enterprises from 12 CICA Member States, as well as the Republic of Belarus in its observer capacity.

Building on the first workshop held by Russia in November 2024, during the today’s best practices were shared on the introduction and application of the risk-based approach in supervising mining facilities, particularly regarding the criteria and indicators used to

classify them according to their potential risk of accidents or incidents, as well as inspection frequency.

The Secretariat briefed the participants on the Azerbaijani Chairmanship’s priorities in the environmental dimension, and confirmed its readiness to encourage further practical cooperation among Member States in this field.

A similar topic will be addressed at the Third International Conference entitled “Mine safety risk prevention and control”, as well as at special training sessions for CICA Member States on mine safety disaster management, scheduled to take place from 14 to 17 April 2026 in Xi’an, China.





# CICA Secretary General paid working visit to China: met with senior Chinese officials in Beijing, addressed the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference in Hainan

Beijing-Boao, 23-25 March 2026 – Ahead of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2026 in Hainan, Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia Ambassador Kairat Sarybay paid a working visit to Beijing and held high-level meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China.

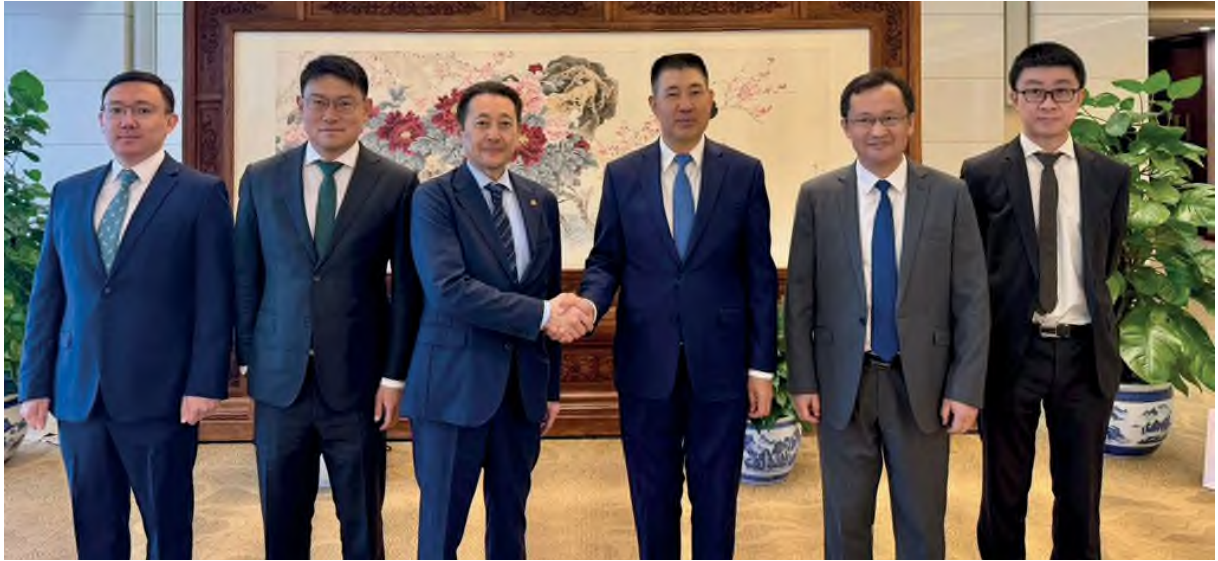
During extensive consultations with the Assistant Foreign Minister Liu Bin Secretary General Kairat Sarybay expressed appreciation to the Chinese Government for Beijing’s enduring role in CICA growth since its establishment.

Parties discussed CICA’s institutional evolution and reviewed the current agenda and developments, including priorities of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship and preparations to the 7th Summit set to be held in Baku on 15 October 2026. The counterparts acknowledged the establishment of CICA

Women Council in the year of the 30th Anniversary of the Beijing declaration on women rights, and recalled the Finance Summit and the Think Tank Forum – the institutional bodies China pioneered during its Chairmanship in CICA in 2014-2018 which were later transformed into permanent advisory organs as part of the ongoing institutional strengthening of the organization.

Assistant Foreign Minister Mr. Liu Bin expressed the support for implementation of the priorities and initiatives of the current Chairmanship. He underscored the importance of CICA’s shift to a full-fledged international organization and adoption of the Charter as key milestone in its transformation.

Ambassador Sarybay highlighted China’s significant support for ensuring organization’s operational capacity through voluntary financial contributions



and staff secondment. Particular words of appreciation were shared for providing solar panels and a work of art featuring CICA logo as gifts to the Headquarters in Astana.

Central to negotiations with the Special Representative of the Chinese Government on Eurasian Affairs, Ambassador Sun Linjiang was CICA's role in consolidating Asian consensus.

Secretary General Kairat Sarybay emphasized that Global Initiatives, put forward by President Xi Jinping, are aiming at strengthening multilateralism and UN-centred international order, and CICA can benefit from implementation of these initiatives.

Special Representative of the Chinese Government on Eurasian Affairs, H.E. Ambassador Sun Linjiang noted that the ongoing institutional transformation represents CICA's evolving role as a solid pan-Asian platform for practical and multifaceted cooperation.

The negotiations reiterated the importance of synchronized efforts of CICA Member States in practical implementation of the

Confidence Building Measures to ensure that CICA's growth translates into tangible benefits for all regional partners.

CICA Secretary General, Ambassador Kairat Sarybay participated in the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2026 entitled "Shaping the Future Together: New Trends, New Opportunities and New Cooperation".

Delivering a statement at the session "Strengthening Cooperation among Regional Organizations to Forge Synergy in Policy Coordination", CICA Secretary General noted that while Asia remains a major force for global growth, the region's future positioning will depend on the strength of its cooperative institutions.



Here, Ambassador highlighted CICA's unmatched geographical coverage and comprehensive agenda, as well as its ongoing historic transformation into a full-fledged international organization. Through this evolution, CICA aims at bolstering multilateral collaboration and strengthening Asia's role on the global stage.

Secretary General also addressed the special session "Boao Forum for Asia 25th Anniversary – Review and Prospect" – celebrating a quarter-century of Forum's dedicated efforts to foster dialogue and build Asian consensus.

In his speech, Ambassador Sarybay reflected on how Boao wisdom, that promotes Asian approach to shared prosperity, echoes CICA vision for regional engagement – anchored in mutual trust, consensus, and confidence building.

In this regard, with aspiration to encourage greater cooperation between regional organizations across the continent, he shared the idea of hosting a gathering of the executive structures of international organizations in Asia at the Astana Headquarters this June perfectly coinciding with celebration of the 20th Anniversary of CICA Secretariat.

On the sidelines of the Boao Forum, CICA Secretary General held series of talks with forum participants.

The recent developments in West Asia and their broader impact on regional stability and global economy were addressed during a meeting with the Secretary General of Economic Cooperation Organization Dr. Asad Khan.

The executives agreed that, in current geopolitical realities, the role of international

organizations as essential platforms for dialogue has become increasingly vital, and thus they should remain mutually reinforcing and well-coordinated. In this context, head of ECO highlighted the immediate relevance of the upcoming gathering of international organizations in Astana this June.



During the meetings with Danilo Türk, former President of Slovenia, and Volkan Bozkir, President of the 75th UN General Assembly, interlocutors indicated the capacity of CICA in bridging the diverse regions of Asia. It was also noted that, beyond its role in regional connectivity, CICA is building up the capacity to drive international mediation efforts, providing space for facilitating communication among parties in dispute.

In an engaging dialogue with Kirill Babayev, Director of the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the sides discussed the range of agenda items of the of CICA Think Tank Forum.

## Traditional winter gathering with enduring diplomatic significance



Astana, 15 February 2026 — The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), with the support of the Astana Akimat and the Golf Club, held the annual CICA Ski Tour, bringing together Ambassadors and Heads of Diplomatic Missions accredited in Astana.

The Ski Tour remains a long-standing format of the CICA Secretariat that enables engagement beyond conference halls. Set against Astana's winter landscape, the gathering offered an open and relaxed environment for exchange, allowing the diplomatic community to interact in a more personal and candid manner.

Addressing the participants, CICA Secretary General H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay emphasized that informal encounters of this kind strengthen mutual understanding among Member States and create an atmosphere of trust that supports effective cooperation across the organization's work.

The Secretary General noted that the Ski Tour opens a series of initiatives for the diplomatic corps in Astana throughout

the year, including the CICA Football Tournament and the CICA Bicycle Tour. He also announced a new initiative — the CICA Spring Charity Bazaar, scheduled for 26 April 2026 — envisioned as a public charitable and cultural event bringing together diplomatic missions, international organizations and the wider community in support of humanitarian causes.

The Secretary General further highlighted that 2026 will also feature major institutional milestones of CICA in the lead-up to the 7th CICA Summit, including the launch of the Women Council's activities and a Secretariat initiative dedicated to compiling Member States' best practices in volunteerism, to be presented at an international platform later this year.

Informal initiatives such as the CICA Ski Tour complement the organization's regular diplomatic work by maintaining continuous contact among Member States throughout the year.

The CICA Secretariat expresses its appreciation to all participating diplomatic missions and partners for their engagement and continued support of CICA initiatives.



## CICA Secretariat Hosts Annual Iftar Gathering at its Headquarters in Astana



Astana, 12 March 2026 – The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) hosted a traditional Iftar dinner on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan at the CICA Headquarters in Astana. The event brought together heads of diplomatic missions of CICA Member and Observer States, leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as heads of international organizations accredited in Kazakhstan.

Welcoming the guests, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay extended his warm greetings and noted that Ramadan serves as a time for reflection, compassion and solidarity. He emphasized that the tradition of breaking fast together reflects the core values of CICA – dialogue, mutual respect and the strengthening of trust among nations.

In his remarks, the Secretary General highlighted recent developments within CICA under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan and ongoing preparations for the Seventh CICA Summit to be held in Baku on 15 October 2026.

Ambassador Sarybay also noted the establishment of two new advisory bodies – the Finance Summit and the CICA Women Council – and expressed hope for active participation of Member States in the inaugural meeting of the Women Council scheduled for 14 April 2026 in Baku. He further highlighted the continued work of other CICA institutions, including the Think Tank Forum, the Business Council, the Youth Council and the Partnership Network of Leading Universities.





The Secretary General also drew attention to the activities of the CICA Fund, noting recent contributions and projects aimed at supporting communities affected by natural disasters and other humanitarian challenges. He also informed guests about the Secretariat's initiatives marking the International Year of Volunteers 2026, including the preparation of an e-publication on volunteerism

Expressing appreciation to Kazakhstan as the host country, Ambassador Sarybay thanked the Government of Kazakhstan for its continued support and for providing the new Headquarters in Astana.

In closing, the Secretary General informed guests about the upcoming CICA Spring Charity Bazaar to be held at the CICA Headquarters on 26 April 2026, which will bring together members of the diplomatic corps and the wider public to promote cultural exchange and raise funds for charitable causes.

The gathering provided an opportunity for representatives of the diplomatic community and international organizations to exchange views in an informal setting and strengthen professional contacts among partners engaged in the CICA process.

The traditional CICA Iftar reflected the spirit of Ramadan and reaffirmed the shared commitment of participants to dialogue, mutual respect and cooperation in support of peace, security and stability across Asia.





Meeting between CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay and Ambassador of Indonesia to Kazakhstan Mochamad Rachman highlighted Indonesia’s role in advancing multilateralism and CICA–ASEAN relations



CICA Secretary General welcomed Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran Kazem Gharibabadi at CICA Headquarters, discussed regional development and preparation for upcoming CICA Summit in Baku

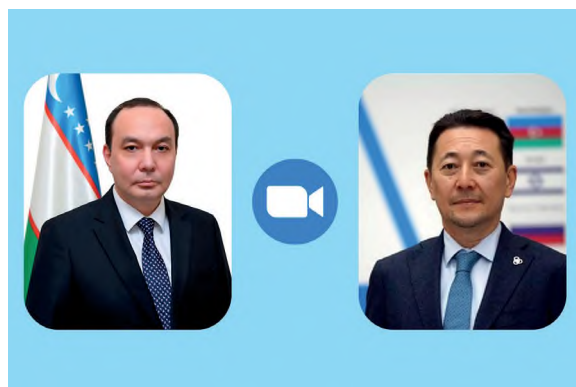


Talks with Yoav Bistrisky, Ambassador of Israel in Astana, focused on current priorities of CICA-Israel cooperation and further engagement ahead of Israeli Foreign Minister to Kazakhstan

Ambassador Kairat Sarybay met with Ambassador of Egypt Ibtissam Rakha Hassan in Astana, briefed on Azerbaijan Chairmanship priorities and broader context of CICA transformation



A productive discussion between CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay and Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of Uzbekistan Dr Eldor Aripov: the CICA Think Tank Forum agenda and preparations for the Termez Dialogue are in the focus. The talks also covered regional dynamics and enhancing Asian connectivity



Ahead of Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2026 in Bangkok, Secretary General Sarybay met with Thailand's Ambassador Piyapin Niyomrerks to discuss regional security cooperation and CICA transformation



Secretary General and India's Ambassador in Astana Sailas Thangal talked about regional cooperation in Asia, New Delhi's engagement in CICA and efforts in advancing CBMs



## MARCH

Shobini Kaushala Gunasekera, Sri Lanka's Ambassador in Moscow visited CICA Headquarters. Secretary General and Sri Lankan diplomat discussed advancing cooperation within CICA in sustainable development and connectivity





CICA and SCO Secretary Generals met at CICA Headquarters in Astana: Ambassadors Kairat Sarybay and Nurlan Yermekbayev reaffirmed their commitment to pan-Asian dialogue and discuss future CICA-SCO cooperation under their existing Memorandums of Understanding



Kairat Sarybay held talks with CIS First Deputy Secretary General Igor Petrishenko discussed strengthening CICA-CIS cooperation, focusing on economic ties and the importance of multilateral dialogue across Greater Eurasia



CICA Secretary General's talks with Yoav Bistrisky, Ambassador of Israel in Astana, focused on current priorities of CICA-Israel cooperation and further engagement ahead of Israeli Foreign Minister to Kazakhstan

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