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**Secretariat of the Conference  
on Interaction and Confidence  
Building Measures in Asia**

**Address:**

E 669 street, building 3/1, Esil district,  
Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan

-  + 7 7172 576510
-  s-cica@s-cica.org
-  www.s-cica.org
-  @cica\_secretariat
-  @CicaSecretariat
-  @CicaSecretariat
-  CICA Secretariat
-  @CICASecretariat

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# MILESTONE REFLECTION

The second issue of the Voice of Asia digest is dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the CICA Secretariat, celebrated on 17 June 2026. Over the past two decades, the Secretariat has evolved from a modest administrative unit into a dynamic, multi-functional institutional pillar of the CICA process.

This evolution is reflected in the concrete achievements of recent years. CICA has expanded its geography, now covering 90% of Asia and accounting for half of the world's population, broadened the scope of its observers and partners and significantly enhanced the Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures by expanding the range of cooperation areas and adopting modalities for their implementation, while also strengthening the framework of its advisory bodies and mechanisms.

Reflecting the growing role of Asia in global affairs, CICA is steadily progressing towards the status of a full-fledged international organization. The essence of the CICA mission remains clear and consistent – to bridge the efforts of various stakeholders, fostering synergies in pursuit of shared goals of peace, stability and prosperity. This transformation would not be possible without the support of the dedicated leadership of the current Azerbaijani Chairmanship as CICA prepares for the Seventh Summit in Baku. Deep appreciation is also extended to the contributions of the previous Chairmanships and all Member States, who serve as the true co-authors of this shared success.

The significance of this milestone is further underscored by a remarkable wave of global support. We are deeply



honored to feature warm congratulatory letters received from the foreign ministers of CICA Member States and leaders of partner and friendly international organizations. Sincere words of encouragement were also graciously extended by a dedicated group of friends of the Secretariat.

To commemorate this historic occasion, we have introduced a special dedicated section within this digest. This exclusive block serves as a chronicle of the activities organized to mark the 20th Anniversary. The pages ahead highlight active engagement through various diplomatic and public outreach initiatives, featuring coverage of the launch of the "CICA Talks" lecture series with mini-football tournament in Astana and bicycle tour in Burabay. The section also details the substantive Roundtable of Executive Structures of Regional Organizations in Asia and culmination of our festivities at the official reception on 17 June, 2026 in Astana.

As we look ahead, the Secretariat stands ready to continue supporting the Chairmanship and Member States, fostering partnerships and ensuring that CICA remains an effective platform for dialogue across the Asian continent.





**H.E. Mr. Yermek Kosherbayev**

Minister of Foreign Affairs of  
the Republic of Kazakhstan

Today, CICA stands at an important stage in its development: pursuant to the Astana Statement on CICA Transformation of 13 October 2022, the Conference is being transformed into a full-fledged international organization.

I am confident that the CICA Secretariat will continue to make a substantial contribution to strengthening trust and promoting cooperation in Asia.



**H.E. Ms. Aida Balayeva**

Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Culture and  
Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan remains firmly committed to supporting the further development of the organization, its institutional strengthening and the expansion of its practical agenda for cooperation.

I would like to particularly highlight the growing role of the humanitarian dimension of CICA, including the development of youth initiatives, the volunteer movement, and creative industries.

I am confident that CICA will continue to enhance its role as a unique platform for dialogue based on the principles of equality, mutual respect and consensus, while the Secretariat will remain a reliable driving force behind this process.



**H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov**

Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Since its establishment, the Secretariat has clearly demonstrated its practical value acting as the facilitator of cooperation and initiatives across diverse areas and significantly contributing to building confidence in Asia through advancement of mutually beneficial interaction.

... the broader transformation process of CICA into a full-fledged international organization ... further strengthening the CICA Secretariat as an integral part of the CICA process is not a preference, but a necessity in view of evolving international and regional dynamics.

**H.E. Mr. Wang Yi**  
Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC  
Central Committee  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic  
of China



As a broadly representative multilateral mechanism for dialogue and cooperation in Asia, CICA has made unique contributions to exploring a security and development path that suits Asia and serves the common interests of all countries.

... the Secretariat has operated with great efficiency, playing a key role in advancing the implementation of confidence-building measures (CBMs) and deepening exchanges and mutual trust among Member States, providing strong support along the way.



**H.E. Mr. Sirojiddin Muhriddin**

Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Tajikistan

The Secretariat's activity has helped CICA steadily consolidate its position as a pan-Asian platform for dialogue, the exchange of views and the development of coordinated approaches to military political, economic and environmental issues, as well as in the areas of the human dimension, and new challenges and threats.

In this anniversary year, we extend our sincere wishes to the leadership and staff of the CICA Secretariat for continued success and new achievements in their important mission.

**H.E. Mr. Hakan Fidan**

Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Türkiye



The CICA Secretariat has built the necessary organisational structure upon which the CICA Member States can deepen their collaboration to strengthen their ties in all these five dimensions of CICA. At a time marked by geopolitical uncertainties, asymmetric security challenges, exponentially ground-breaking technological developments and profound transformations in international relations, the role of regional multilateral platforms such as CICA has become more relevant than ever.



**H.E. Mr. António Guterres**  
Secretary-General  
of the United Nations

CICA's consensus-based approach and support for multilateralism are well-aligned with the priorities of the United Nations, as we work together to advance regional cooperation, preventive diplomacy, and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The United Nations looks forward to the next chapter of our partnership, and to strengthening peace and security across Asia and around the world.



**H.E. Mr. Alexandre Zouev**  
Acting Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations  
Office of Counter-Terrorism

I extend my warmest congratulations to all colleagues at the CICA Secretariat on this significant anniversary.

Twenty years of dedicated service to peace, security and cooperation in Asia is a remarkable achievement, and I wish the Secretariat continued success in the years ahead.



**H.E. Mr. Nurlan Yermekbayev**  
Secretary General  
of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

Over the years, a truly trusting and businesslike atmosphere of cooperation has developed between our structures, as evidenced by the successful implementation of joint initiatives, regular contacts at the level of leadership and officials, as well as mutual participation in events and meetings.

It is particularly gratifying to observe how, alongside the evolution of CICA itself, its Secretariat has also grown stronger, actively contributing to the development of the institutional framework, the implementation of practical initiatives and the expansion of the CICA agenda.



**H.E. Mr. Bakytzhan Sagintayev**  
Chairman of the  
Eurasian Economic Commission Board

The Eurasian Economic Commission highly values the established relations with CICA, with the 2022 Memorandum of Understanding creating a solid foundation for meaningful interaction.

The consistent efforts of CICA to foster an atmosphere of trust, good-neighbourliness and mutual respect for the interests of the states of the region deserve special recognition. Today, the Conference makes a substantial contribution to ensuring stability, advancing constructive cooperation and promoting the principles of multilateralism on the international stage.



**H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit**  
Secretary-General of  
the League of Arab States

We applaud your organization's role in promoting dialogue and peaceful coexistence among its member states for two decades.

I would like to express my great pride in the close cooperation between the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and your esteemed Conference that includes eight Arab countries. Our joint work aims to advance dialogue and promote peace, security and stability in Asia and the entire world.

**Scan to view the full collection  
of congratulatory letters**





## Two Decades of Dialogue and Dedication: CICA Secretariat Celebrates Milestone of 20th Anniversary



Astana, 17 June 2026 – The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) celebrated its 20th anniversary today, marking two decades since its formal establishment in Almaty in 2006. The commemorative event brought together representatives of CICA Member States and the diplomatic corps accredited in Astana, alongside officials from the Presidential Administration, Parliament and Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, to honor the Secretariat's evolution into a dynamic pillar of the CICA process. The event was also attended by the participants of the Roundtable of executive structures of regional organizations in Asia held earlier on 17 June, as well as the former Executive Directors of the Secretariat.



In his welcoming remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay extended his profound gratitude to the Republic of Kazakhstan for its dedicated

role as the host nation, noting that the Secretariat's modern headquarters in Astana serves as a tangible testament to the visionary support and commitment of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. The Secretary General also expressed sincere appreciation to the Azerbaijani Chairmanship, under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, for its invaluable contribution to the ongoing transformation of CICA into a full-fledged international organization – a process initiated at the 2022 Astana Summit and now being actively advanced toward the upcoming Baku Summit.



Secretary General Sarybay further highlighted that the Secretariat's evolution is, above all, a collective achievement. He underscored that the institution's success is built upon the unwavering support and contribution of all Member States that have enabled the Secretariat to significantly expand its reach and institutional framework. This progress is evidenced by the growing geographic scope of CICA's engagement, updating the Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures and development of the framework of advisory bodies and CBMs implementation mechanism.

Secretary General Sarybay presented a commemorative book chronicling two decades of the Secretariat's history. Featuring contributions from current and former Chairmanships, partners and the individuals who have shaped the institution, the volume serves as both a testament to past achievements and an inspiration for the future of multilateralism in Asia.

Representing the host country, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan H.E. Yermek Kosherbayev addressed the gathering, reaffirming Kazakhstan's long-standing commitment to the initiative since its 1992 launch at the UN General Assembly. Foreign Minister Kosherbayev emphasized CICA's growing relevance in today's challenging global landscape, underscoring its role as a vital platform for middle powers to drive dialogue, build consensus, and maintain a constructive balance of interests.

Building on this momentum, the Minister highlighted the ongoing negotiations on the CICA Charter as a historic opportunity to provide the organization with a solid legal foundation. In this regard, he expressed deep appreciation to the Azerbaijani Chairmanship for its dedicated efforts in advancing the

transformation process and ensuring impactful outcomes at the upcoming Seventh CICA Summit in Baku.

During the opening of the event, guests were presented with a video retrospective and a photo exhibition chronicling the key milestones of the organization's development and the Secretariat's evolution over the past two decades. The evening also featured a showcase of national cuisines from CICA Member States – Azerbaijan, China, India, Israel, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan, further emphasizing the importance of cultural enrichment alongside political cooperation.

The commemorative evening served as the culmination of a series of events dedicated to the 20th anniversary, encompassing both academic and outreach dimensions. Earlier in the day, a roundtable of executive structures of regional organizations fostered substantive dialogue on multilateral cooperation, while previous commemorative activities, including academic lecture and sports diplomacy events like football tournament and bicycle ride, which all highlighted CICA's role in promoting unity and people-to-people ties.









# Fostering Regional Synergy: UN and Asian Organizations Meet at CICA Headquarters in Astana

Astana, 17 June 2026 – The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) hosted a Roundtable of executive structures of the United Nations system and regional organization based in Asia. As a centerpiece of its 20th-anniversary program, a broad spectrum of regional and international organizations committed to the regional agenda.



The United Nations system was represented by the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Regional insights were provided by partner organizations, including Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), its specialized body SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (SCO RATS) and Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). The event also engaged CICA observer organizations – League of Arab States (LAS) and Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic States (TURKPA). They were joined by other key regional and international actors – Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Organization of Turkic States (OTS). The discussion was further enriched by the expertise of heads of leading think tanks from India and Kazakhstan and former CICA Executive Directors.

In his opening remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay invited participants to reflect on the realities of a shifting landscape, noting that today's interconnected

threats can no longer be contained by individual nations or isolated organizations. He further underscored that in this time of unprecedented complexity – from supply chain disruptions and climate vulnerability to emerging transnational security threats – the mandate for effective, proactive multilateralism has become more urgent than ever.



To ensure high-level political aspirations translate into action, Secretary General Sarybay highlighted the essential role of executive structures. He reaffirmed CICA's pragmatic, result-oriented approach, emphasizing its readiness for open dialogue and practical cooperation with partner organizations to deliver tangible benefits across the region.

During the first session, dedicated to the challenges of effective cooperation in a changing global environment,



participants emphasized that rising global uncertainty and shared security threats demand a renewed and more robust framework for international cooperation. In this context, CICA was recognized as key platform for shaping an inclusive Asian architecture, given its consensus-based approach in a multipolar environment. To foster institutional synergy, a proposal was introduced to establish a regional observatory to monitor and evaluate transport, digital, and energy connectivity across the region.

The second session entitled “The United Nations System: Priorities and Challenges,” examined the strategic synergy between global mandates and regional platforms. Participants highlighted that partnerships between the UN and regional organizations like CICA are vital for conflict prevention, noting that peace is inherently regional in practice.

The dialogue framed transparent migration governance as a key confidence building measure for regional stability. Furthermore, it was stressed that global mandates must deliver tangible results on the ground.



As the third session focused on the essential role of executive structures in fostering cooperation, it provided a platform for the participants to share their firsthand expertise and outline practical approaches for deepening synergy and integration.

Participants agreed that in today’s turbulent world, continuous dialogue is essential for stability. They emphasized that regional organizations act as key pillars for peace, calling for flexible partnerships that allow institutions to collaborate while maintaining their unique roles. The discussion also highlighted the growing value of multilateral platforms and the need for global governance reforms to better reflect modern geopolitical realities.



To turn synergy into action, attendees stressed the need to align institutional goals to maximize collective impact. Key drivers for deeper integration include parliamentary diplomacy, legislative harmonization, and long-term strategic planning. Furthermore, participants identified digital and industrial collaboration as vital areas where joint efforts can bridge economic gaps and boost regional growth.

The Roundtable concluded with a shared recognition that international and regional organizations are partners, not competitors, working together to address global challenges and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Acknowledging that the transition from conceptual discussions to concrete implementation is a gradual process, participants agreed that this forum should evolve into a regular practice, serving as a pillar of stability and a platform for sustained dialogue to turn shared commitments into tangible results.





## CICA Secretariat Launches “CICA Talks: History and Heritage of Asia” Lecture Series



Astana, 20 May 2026 – The CICA Headquarters in Astana hosted the inauguration of the “CICA Talks: History and Heritage of Asia” lecture series.



CICA TALKS:  
History and Heritage of Asia  
20 May 2026, Astana

“Shyngyz Khan and his Descendants:  
Brief Historical Overview”

by **Dr. Yerzhan Issakulov**

Major General,  
Doctor of Political Science,  
Member of the Writers' Union of Kazakhstan,  
Member of the 4th Convocation of the Mazhilis of  
Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Opened by CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, the event highlighted the vital role of intercultural diplomacy in navigating today's complex international landscape. The informal initiative is driven by the understanding that historical awareness and cultural heritage extend far beyond academic study. Instead, it serves as an instrumental tool to shape mutual perception, navigate differences, and build genuine trust for stronger partnerships.





The inaugural lecture was delivered by Dr. Yerzhan Issakulov, Doctor of Political Sciences. His presentation focused on the 14th-century foundational historical source “Jamig at-tauarih” by Rashid-al-Din Hamadani, also known as “The Compendium of Chronicles”, which is widely recognized by the global scientific community as the definitive encyclopedia on the era of Shyngyz Khan. A work of literature and history describes cultures and major events in world history from China to Europe.

Dr. Issakulov shared a profound analysis of the historical narratives of the Great Steppe. He highlighted the challenges of interpreting medieval Persian and Mugul manuscripts, explaining how his research – incorporating ancient maps and documentary evidence – presents a comprehensive perspective on the history of Turkic tribes and the empire of Shyngyz Khan. He also explored how these texts deepen our contemporary understanding of Eurasian history.

As an initiative dedicated to the diplomatic community in Astana, it seeks to foster intercultural dialogue and build stronger ties. Reflecting this goal, the inaugural event brought together a distinguished audience, including Heads of Mission, accredited envoys, alongside senior officials from international organizations.

Future sessions will seek to engage scholars, historians and experts from various CICA Member States to reinforce the human and intellectual dimensions of multilateral cooperation.

The lecture series is part of a broader framework of initiatives organized by the Secretariat to mark its 20th anniversary, all aimed at fostering mutual understanding and enhancing intercultural dialogue.





## Diplomacy in motion: CICA Bicycle Tour 2026 unites participants in support of sustainable development



Burabay, 30-31 May 2026 – Sporting spirit, picturesque landscapes and a shared commitment to a greener future brought diplomats together in the Burabay resort area in an informal atmosphere of friendship.

The annual CICA Bicycle Tour 2026 gathered 44 participants on a bike lane, uniting members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of international institutions.

This sports celebration was jointly organized by the CICA Secretariat, the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Kazakhstan and the Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan, with the support of the Akimat of Akmola Region.

This year's event was dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the CICA Secretariat. Opening the Bicycle Tour, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay outlined plans to commemorate this milestone through a series of anniversary events. These include an informal round table with the participation of heads of Asian regional organizations, a commemorative reception, the publication of a book on the history of the Secretariat, and

a presentation of the CICA Fund to international development institutions scheduled for September 2026.

Speaking about the Bicycle Tour, Ambassador Sarybay noted that over the past five years the initiative, regularly held in Astana and Burabay, has acquired an increasingly broader significance. Today, it is far more than a sporting event; it serves as an instrument of “sports diplomacy”, fostering an atmosphere of open partnership.

Held on the eve of World Bicycle Day, established by the United Nations upon the initiative of Turkmenistan, a CICA Observer State, the Bicycle Tour promotes healthy lifestyles and environmental responsibility. The participation of diplomats and their solidarity throughout the route reflected their collective commitment to the principles of sustainable development.

Highlighting the importance of the initiative, which was co-organized by the United Nations, Ms. Sarangoo Radnaaragchaa, UN Resident Coordinator in Kazakhstan, reminded participants that the bicycle is not merely a means of transportation, but also a symbol of inclusivity, health and climate

action. She encouraged the wider use of this accessible mode of transport as a way to reduce environmental pressures and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, inviting everyone to move together to a greener future.

In the evening, the sporting activities gave way to an official gala dinner. In a festive atmosphere, participants were presented with commemorative certificates. The organizers emphasized that the commitment of each participant makes such initiatives valuable platforms for strengthening mutual understanding, turning the Bicycle Tour into a celebration of unity, where friendship is the ultimate winner.

Addressing the participants, Mr. Abdulaziz Sharifi of the Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan in Kazakhstan noted that the route travelled together symbolized the very spirit of CICA – a commitment to continuous development, partnership and mutual support. He stressed that genuine human interaction in a friendly setting brings nations closer together no less effectively than formal negotiations.

A traditional palaw, generously prepared by the Embassy of Tajikistan, provided a fitting conclusion to the day's activities and became a well-deserved source of energy, reflecting the warmth and hospitality of the region.

The diplomatic weekend concluded the following day with a guided walk through the unique natural landscapes of Burabay.





## Annual CICA Football Tournament Unites Diplomats in Celebration of the Secretariat's 20th Anniversary



Astana, 16 May 2026 – The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) successfully hosted its annual Football Tournament uniting the diplomatic community and putting the values of mutual understanding and teamwork into practice.

In his opening remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay highlighted the strategic importance of the current year under the Chairmanship of Azerbaijan. As CICA approaches the 7th Summit to be held in Baku this October, the upcoming meeting of leaders is expected to adopt landmark decisions that will shape the organization's institutional future and continued evolution.

He further emphasized that 2026 marks a significant milestone – the 20th Anniversary of the CICA Secretariat, which was established during the Second CICA Summit in Almaty on 17 June 2006. Over the past 20 years, the Secretariat has transformed from an administrative unit into a core institutional pillar of CICA, reflecting the growing maturity and shared commitment of Member States to peace and sustainable development in Asia.

The tournament served as a practical reflection of the organization's institutional values. Secretary General Sarybay noted that success on the football field relies on the same synchronization and teamwork that the Secretariat has fostered within the diverse CICA community for twenty years.

This year's tournament featured teams from CICA Secretariat and the embassies of Russia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, and Turkmenistan, as well as from Presidential Administration and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Serving as a strong signal of partnership, representatives from international organizations – the UN and IOFS – also took part in the games. The footprint of the tournament continues to expand, with the teams from Indonesia and the OSCE making their proud debut on the field this year.

Following a series of intense and friendly matches, the team from the Embassy of Türkiye claimed the championship title. The team of the Embassy of Russia secured a well-deserved second place, while the team of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan took the bronze. The team from the Embassy of Turkmenistan rounded out the top four with a commendable performance.



However, as a friendly tournament defined by fair play and solidarity, the event proved to be a shared victory for all participants. Moving forward, the CICA Secretariat remains committed to hosting cultural and sports events aimed at enhancing the organization's visibility and fostering cooperation among CICA Member States and the diplomatic community in Astana.







# April

# Dialogue in Laos: Advancing Connectivity, Strengthening CICA-ASEAN Synergy

Vientiane, 1 April 2026 – Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay concluded his first-ever visit to the Lao People's Democratic Republic – CICA Observer State since 2017. In Vientiane, Secretary General was received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Laos H.E. Mr. Thongsavanh Phomvihane.



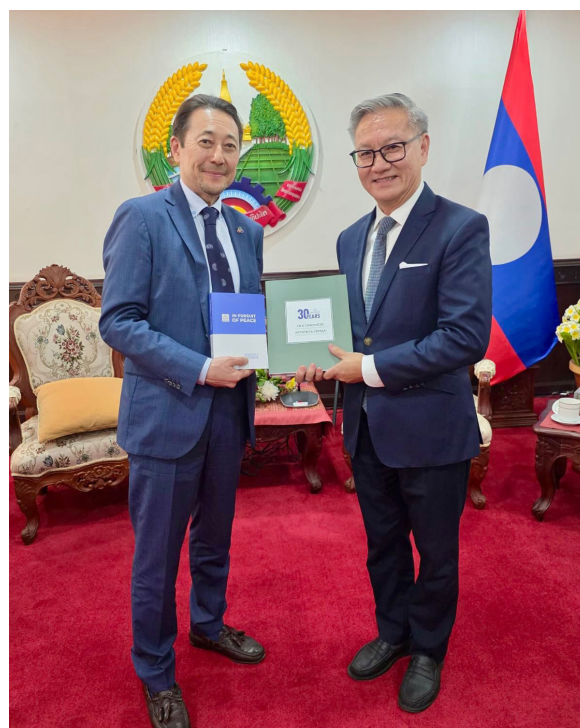
Ambassador Sarybay detailed the ongoing institutional development of CICA officially initiated at the Astana Summit in 2022 and underscored the priorities of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship determined to implement numerous initiatives across economic, environmental, and human dimensions. He emphasized that Baku's efforts are designed to ensure continuity and synergy by building upon the collective progress and institutional legacy of the previous Chairmanships.

Secretary General further highlighted that CICA's focus on connectivity, digitalization, and sustainable growth provides a unique platform for Lao PDR to unlock the potential of practical cooperation across the economic and environmental dimensions. Special emphasis was placed on CICA's role and its mechanisms to promote connectivity with key subregions and trade partners, financial dialogue, as well as tourist and cultural exchanges.

Foreign Minister Thongsavanh Phomvihane reconfirmed Laos' strong commitment to multilateralism and sincerely welcomed the increased interaction between CICA and ASEAN Secretariats.

Preparations for the 7th CICA Summit and regional agenda were also discussed.

Ambassador Sarybay announced celebrations to mark the 20th Anniversary of CICA Secretariat and invited the Lao side to visit the premises of the new Headquarters in Astana.





# Astana Hosts CICA Senior Officials Committee Meeting



Astana, 7 April 2026 – Under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the first in 2026 meeting of the Senior Officials Committee (SOC) of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) was convened today at the CICA Headquarters in Astana.

At the opening of the meeting, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mr. Alibek Bakayev addressed the SOC members and confirmed Kazakhstan's full support for the Azerbaijani Chairmanship's priorities, highlighting the foundational goals of the Astana Statement on CICA Transformation and implementation of the Road Map. Mr. Bakayev described the organization's accumulated trust and legacy as solid foundation for its transformation, emphasizing that enhanced institutional capacity is vital for turning political commitments into tangible actions and outcomes.

In line with established practice, the SOC conducted its annual review of CBM implementation, focusing on the Military-Political Dimension.

Addressing the Committee, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay emphasized that this dimension remains a fundamental pillar for fostering mutual

trust and transparency across Asia's diverse landscape.

Strategic approaches and joint guidance of Kazakhstan and Türkiye, acting as coordinator and co-coordinator, respectively, enabled fostering professional military dialogue through information exchange, defense college visits, and mediation seminars. Since 2012, this collaboration has resulted 22 successful activities, including 12 visits to training centers and 10 specialized seminars.

While welcoming the dialogue on current measures, the Secretary General encouraged more active engagement in strengthening military dialogue, including prospects for enhancing the use of existing CBMs.

Additionally, the SOC further reviewed action plans and concept papers for CICA's priority areas. Discussions led to the approval of the Concept Paper on





cooperation among CICA Member States in the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) for 2026-2027, prepared by the Russian Federation as coordinator in this priority area.

The participants further considered the annual Action Plan of the CICA Think Tank Forum for 2026 developed by the current Chair of TTF – Indian Council of World Affairs and took note of the financial report for 2025 presented by the Secretary General.

Regarding CICA's legal framework, the Secretary General Kairat Sarybay briefed delegations on the Convention on Privileges and Immunities, noting that only one additional ratification is required for its entry into force.

The meeting concluded by highlighting several key events, including conference on empowering women's leadership and the first meeting of the CICA Women Council in Baku, a side-event on sustainable growth at the 82nd UN ESCAP session, and various activities commemorating the CICA Secretariat's 20th anniversary.





# CICA and Egypt Discuss Regional Security and Multilateral Cooperation



Cairo, 8-9 April 2026 – CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay conducted a series of high-level diplomatic engagements in Cairo, holding in-depth consultations with the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the League of Arab States and fostering academic and research synergies with Egypt's prominent think tanks and research centers.



During wide-ranging discussions Secretary General Sarybay and Ambassador Amr El Sherbini, Assistant Foreign Minister for Multilateral Affairs and International Security, discussed CICA's institutional development and the Azerbaijani Chairmanship's priorities, focusing on the outcomes of the Senior Officials Committee's recent meeting in Astana this week and refinement of the CICA Charter ahead of the 7th Summit in Baku.

The officials talked about evolving security landscape in West Asia and Egypt's role in bridging CICA with Africa. Secretary General Sarybay commended country's proactive engagement throughout 2025 in implementing Confidence Building Measures across various dimensions.

Assistant Foreign Minister El Sherbini reaffirmed support for CICA's transformation and mediation potential, commending its voluntary, consensus-based model as a unique engine for regional soft power.

In Cairo, Secretary General Sarybay visited Headquarters of the League of Arab States where he was received by the Secretary General Ahmed Abul Gheit.



Acknowledging the League's long-standing role as a CICA Observer since 2002, Secretary General Sarybay noted that the active involvement of eight Arab nations as CICA Member States remains vital in strengthening ties and promoting regional cooperation.

In an exchange of views on West Asian security, both executives reaffirmed their dedication to multilateralism and peaceful conflict resolution as pillars of regional integration.

Secretary General Sarybay met with Mr. Mohamed El-Orabi, former Foreign Minister and nominee to the CICA Council of Eminent Persons (CEP), to deliberate on the geopolitical developments and

security outlook in West Asia. Their dialogue focused on CICA's role in regional confidence-building through its key institutions – including the CEP, Women Council, Youth Council, and Think Tank Forum. They further deliberated on the Azerbaijani Chairmanship's priorities and the strategic transformation of CICA into a full-fledged international organization at the upcoming Baku Summit.



During the visit, Secretary General Sarybay engaged in talks with Ambassador Seif Kandeel, Director Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding. The interlocutors discussed soft power in conflict resolution, focusing on the women, peace, and security agenda and youth de-radicalization. Both sides agreed to explore synergies for capacity building between the CICA Youth Council and the Aswan Forum.

In the course of the working visit, Secretary General Sarybay visited Cairo University and attended presentation of the Arabic translation of the monograph “The Near and Middle East in the System of International Relations” authored by the late Ambassador Askar Mussinov.

Reflecting on a long-standing professional and personal bond with the author, Secretary General Sarybay described the book as an intellectual legacy of a statesman that serves as a diplomatic bridge, continuing to foster mutual trust

and cooperation across the Arab world and beyond.





# Asia - Our Shared Home: A View From Space



In 2026, the international community marks a milestone – the 65th anniversary of Yuri Gagarin’s legendary flight. For the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, this year also commemorates a significant milestone: on 17 June, the CICA Secretariat will celebrate its 20th anniversary.

The two historic landmark events are linked by a unique artefact kept at the organization’s Headquarters in Astana – the CICA flag, which has been in near-Earth orbit.

On 9 April 2021, ahead of the 60th anniversary of the first human spaceflight, the “Yuri Gagarin” manned transport spacecraft (Soyuz MS-18) delivered the CICA flag to the International Space Station. The flag, symbolizing Asia’s aspiration for unity and progress, spent several days in space before returning safely to Earth.

Seen from orbit, our continent appears as a calm, unified and indivisible whole. This view from above vividly illustrates

the indivisibility, interconnectedness and inclusiveness of the nations of Asia, to which CICA has remained firmly committed since its inception. The flag’s space expedition embodies the organization’s mission to shape a paradigm of security and cooperation in Asia based on mutual trust, open dialogue and the consolidation of collective efforts.

The symbolism of this date is inextricably linked to CICA’s current development trajectory. As CICA transforms into a full-fledged international organization, it is focusing on strengthening confidence building measures and expanding areas of interaction among its Member States; among other things, support for humanity’s cutting-edge achievements, the integration of advanced technologies and the expansion of scientific cooperation will form an important part of the new strategy for regional interaction.

The flag bearing the autographs of the international crew members – Oleg Novitskiy, Pyotr Dubrov and Mark Vande Hei – is kept at the CICA Headquarters.

# Baku Visit Highlights: CICA Launches Women Council, Secretary General and Azerbaijan's Chairmanship Strengthen Coordination

Baku, 13-14 April 2026 – The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay conducted a working visit to Azerbaijan focused on strengthening coordination with the Azerbaijani Chairmanship and advancing organization's institutional transformation.



Central to these efforts was the inaugural session of the CICA Women Council that marked an official launch of this recently established advisory body – an initiative driven by the Azerbaijani Chairmanship to advance cooperation on women's empowerment and gender equality across the region.

During the meeting, Member States presented national reports on women's rights and empowerment, sharing diverse approaches and best practices from across the region. The session resulted in the adoption of Recommendations that establish a framework for the Council's future activities. Secretary General Sarybay underscored the Council's role as a vital link between national and global agendas, designed to support CICA's broader social and economic objectives.

Prior to Women Council's first meeting, Secretary General Sarybay participated

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Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Ms. Leyla Aliyeva headlined the event and highlighted women's vital role as driving force behind the progress of society. In a brief exchange on the sidelines of the conference, Secretary General Sarybay thanked Ms. Aliyeva for contribution and echoed her vision towards the essential influence of women in fostering peaceful and compassionate global society.

At a press briefing following the conference, Secretary General Kairat Sarybay and State Committee Chairperson Bahar Muradova both underlined that elevating women's leadership is vital for regional resilience. Secretary General Sarybay reaffirmed CICA's commitment to mainstreaming gender and ensuring women's meaningful participation in decision-making across all sectors.

While in Baku, Secretary General Sarybay held a series of meetings with representatives of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship aimed at synchronizing further steps to implement their priorities.

Consultations with Mr. Hikmet Hajiyev, Head of Foreign Policy Affairs at the Presidential Administration, highlighted the dynamic calendar of events scheduled for 2026 that form a substantive political pathway toward the successful 7th CICA Summit in Baku this October.



CICA Media Forum, which will serve as vital platform for enhancing the organization's visibility in the lead-up to the Summit.

During conversation with Mr. Khalaf Khalafov, Representative of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan for Special Assignments, the sides focused on practical aspects of advancing the draft CICA Charter.

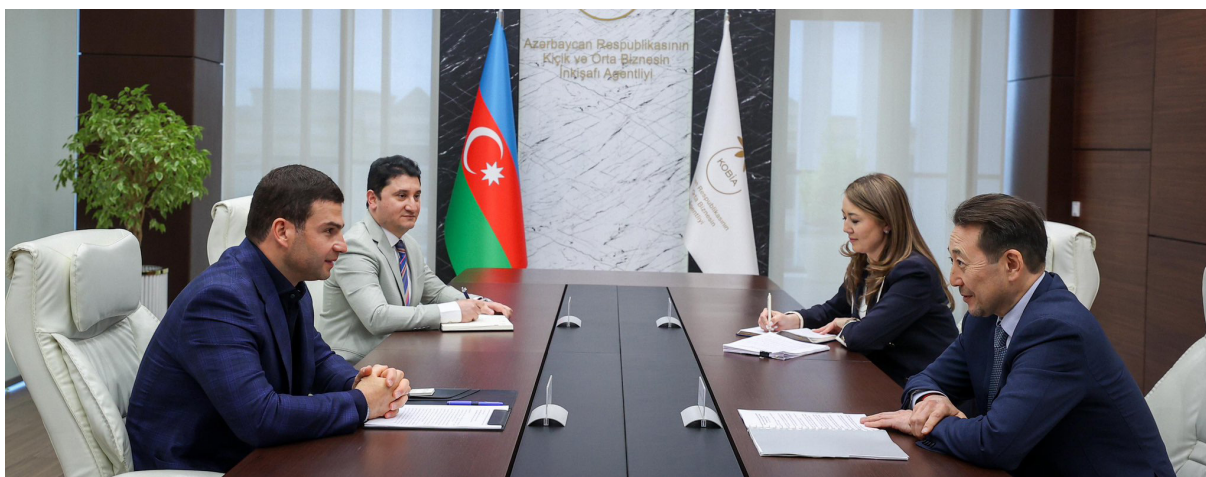
They emphasized the importance of sustained consultations with Member States to reach the consensus on the final political document for the upcoming Summit.



The discussion on advancing the draft Charter and identifying areas for further convergence continued at the meeting with Mr. Azer Mussayev, the Director of the Regional Security Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan. The sides reviewed preparations for the upcoming Summit in Baku and CBM implementation, as well as highlighted close coordination between Secretariat and Azerbaijani Chairmanship in steering the activities within CICA framework.

In talks with Minister of Youth and Sports Farid Gayibov, agreement was reached to host the 9th CICA Youth Council meeting in Baku at the end of June. The Secretary General Sarybay and Minister Gayibov discussed organizational arrangements and preparations for a joint side event on volunteering, to be held on the sidelines of the UN High-Level Political Forum in New York.

In a productive exchange with Mr. Orkhan Mammadov, Chairman of the Board of the Small and Medium Business Development Agency of Azerbaijan (KOBIA), the sides explored avenues for strengthening cooperation to support small and medium-sized enterprises across the CICA region. The Azerbaijani side confirmed its readiness to host the CICA Business Council and Business Forum in Baku in the lead-up to the Summit.





# Xi'an Hosted the 3rd International Conference on Mine Safety Risk Prevention and Control



Xi'an, April 17, 2026 – The 3rd International Conference on Mine Safety Risk Prevention and Control among CICA Member States successfully concluded in Xi'an, China. Hosted by the Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM) of the People's Republic of China and organized by the Information Institute of the MEM, the four-day series of events provided further momentum to the ongoing process of regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction.



The comprehensive program brought together senior officials, experts, and engineers from 10 CICA Member States, including Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan, to promote experience sharing and capacity building to foster more efficient and safer mining development systems across the region.

On 14-15 April participants engaged in specialized training on coal mining technologies, disaster control theories, and intelligent equipment systems.

The training was followed by a conference featuring keynote addresses from regional leaders and technical sessions on early warning technologies. Central to these discussions was active exchange of national expertise, where Member States

presented specialized case studies on their respective mining safety frameworks and disaster management strategies.

In her video message to the participants of the conference, the CICA Deputy Secretary General Zhang Ling, on behalf of the CICA Secretary General, Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, thanked the organizers for putting together such an informative, engaging and diverse program of events, appreciating such a dedication of the government of China and local municipal authorities which fosters a perfect atmosphere for productive discussions and exchanges.

She noted that confidence-building events, such as today's conference reinforcing the practical component of Member States cooperation, are a perfect example of CICA's added value. The

Deputy Secretary General further commended the proactive approach of Russia who hosted an online workshop on a similar topic on 26 March 2026 and its recent proposal to include “mining industry safety” as a new confidence-building measure in the CICA Catalogue of CBMs.

The program of events also featured field visits to advanced technology enterprises to get acquainted with smart mining equipment and geological security solutions in action, such as the CCTEG Xi'an Research Institute, where participants visited key laboratories for mine water hazard prevention and intelligent industrial drilling bases.

The conference concluded with a Demand Matchmaking Session designed to facilitate strategic networking through bilateral and multilateral practical cooperation.

The discussions highlighted the interconnected nature of modern threats, with a particular focus on how climate change amplifies disaster risks.

By prioritizing improved ecological supervision and the identification of hidden disaster factors, CICA is enabling Member States to build resilient mining systems.

This focus on precise and efficient prevention not only ensures industrial safety but also secures the mining sector as a vital pillar for sustainable regional economic growth.



# Supporting Collective Efforts to Counter the Drug Threat: CICA Participates in the Samarkand International Forum



Samarkand, 20 April 2026 – A delegation from the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), headed by Deputy Secretary General Mr. Farid Damirli, participated in the Samarkand International Forum entitled “Countering Transnational Drug Threats to Public Health and Security.” The Forum was organized by the Republic of Uzbekistan in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

In his remarks during the session on international cooperation for effective drug control, the CICA Deputy Secretary General highlighted the efforts undertaken by CICA Member States to combat illicit drug trafficking.

Mr. Damirli expressed confidence that the Forum’s outcome document, the Samarkand Declaration, would become an important milestone in advancing regional cooperation in countering the drug threat and would contribute to strengthening practical interaction among states, as well as with international and regional organizations. He also expressed readiness to cooperate within the framework of the emerging regional platform aimed at sharing effective drug prevention practices, programmes and methodologies

adapted to the cultural context of Central Asia.

Mr. Damirli reaffirmed the aspiration of the CICA Secretariat to continue contributing to regional efforts to combat drug trafficking and drug addiction in close cooperation with Central Asian states, international and regional organizations.

Combating illicit drugs remains one of the priority areas of CICA confidence building measures, through which Member States cooperate, inter alia, by exchanging information and best practices, as well as organizing training programmes and seminars. CICA established a partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in 2015 through the signing of a corresponding MoU.



# Beyond Competition: Secretary General Kairat Sarybay Spotlights CICA's Non-Confrontational Approach at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum 2026

Antalya, 17-18 April 2026 – Navigating a dynamic global environment, the Antalya Diplomacy Forum (ADF) convened leaders to tackle today's most urgent challenges. CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay joined the high-level discussions to ensure the voice of Asian multilateralism remains front and center.



Secretary General Sarybay addressed the premier diplomatic platform at the panel session on the “Asia-Pacific Security Equation: Managing Competition” and reflected the current geopolitical dynamics in the broader region. He noted that today's geopolitical reality is increasingly shaped by the growing influence of the middle powers, acting alongside major powers across the 194 UN Member States.

Advocating for a shift away from confrontational mindsets, Secretary General Sarybay called for a return to the “wisdom of coexistence”. He underlined that inevitable state competition can only remain constructive when anchored in international law and the UN Charter that carefully balance national interests.





Continuing his focus on regional cooperation, Secretary General Sarybay recognized ASEAN as another successful model of integration due to its proven ability to turn past competition into lasting cooperation. He also mentioned that this approach aligns with CICA's own commitment to building trust and confidence.

Broadening the scope, Secretary General Sarybay stressed the need for a multi-layered architecture in Asia where CICA and other Asia-based organizations mutually reinforce one another and achieve synergy. To advance this vision, he invited executives of 10 international organizations in Asia to convene in Astana, marking the 20th anniversary of the CICA Secretariat, to exercise mapping of responsibilities of multilateral fora in the continent.

Secretary General Sarybay engaged in a series of bilateral discussions at the forum, focused on CICA's ongoing transformation and reinforcing a shared commitment to its institutional development and enhanced regional connectivity.



During a substantive meeting with Dr. Khalilur Rahman, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Secretary General Sarybay commended the country's active role in the CICA process and its support for the Azerbaijani Chairmanship's priorities. He also expressed deep appreciation for Bangladesh's shared emphasis on Asia's role in global governance and its valuable contributions to the CICA Fund.



With Cambodia's Secretary of State Meas Kim Heng, the dialogue centered on progress on CICA Charter and entry into force of the CICA Convention on Privileges and Immunities, with both parties agreeing to deepen Cambodia's engagement in SMEs, tourism, and CICA-ASEAN interaction.



During the meeting with OSCE Secretary General Feridun Sinirlioğlu, Secretary General Sarybay briefed the counterpart on the preparations for the upcoming CI-CA Summit in Baku. He highlighted the OSCE's role as a longstanding observer and valued their continued engagement. The sides explored sharing best practices in preventive diplomacy and identifying synergies between Asian and European security frameworks to foster a more resilient and interconnected security architecture across the wider Eurasian space.



Secretary General Sarybay met with D-8 Secretary General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood to explore aligning the mandates and shared geographies to promote institutional synergy. The executives agreed to exchange successful models of cooperation across Asia, focusing on identifying common interests and sharing expertise in preventive diplomacy to foster a more resilient security architecture.



# Advancing a Society for All Ages: CICA Promotes Synergized Action at UN ESCAP



Bangkok, 20-24 April 2026 – Ambassador Raushan Yesbulatova, Expert in the Economic Dimension of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), participated in the 82nd session of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).



Guided by the theme “Leaving no one behind: advancing a society for all ages in Asia and the Pacific”, the session provided a critical platform to address emerging demographic trends and socioeconomic priorities. Key discussions centered on securing decent and productive employment across all age groups, promoting healthy and active ageing, advancing women's economic empowerment, and ensuring overall social integration.

Deliberations under Agenda Item 2, “Opportunities and Solutions for a Sustainable Future”, underscored the urgency of strengthening regional cooperation to drive inclusive growth and tackle shared challenges across the Asia-Pacific.

Addressing participants at the United Nations Conference Centre, Ambassador Yesbulatova emphasized that today's multifaceted challenges demand collective action. She highlighted the vital role of dialogue between regional and subregional organizations, noting that synergized cooperation through platforms like ESCAP and CICA can transform regional challenges into tangible opportunities.

CICA remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing sustainable development, deepening economic cooperation, and building a resilient, inclusive future for the entire region.



# CICA Unites Asian Expertise on Climate Action at a High-Level Side Event in Astana

Astana, 23 April 2026 – As part of the programme of the Regional Ecological Summit, the Republic of Kazakhstan and Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), supported by the Azerbaijani Chairmanship, hosted a high-level side event titled "Global Climate Change and Sustainable Development in the CICA Region".



The meeting was held in a hybrid format with the participation of 17 CICA Member States and two regional organizations. Demonstrating an interconnected approach to common challenges, the discussions included active engagement of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) and the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS).

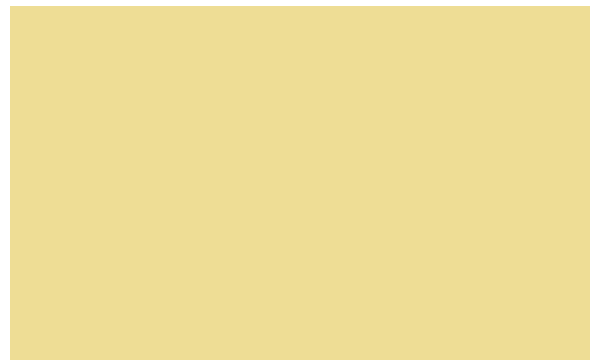
Addressing the gathering, Representative of the President of Azerbaijan on climate issues Mukhtar Babayev reaffirmed the Azerbaijani Chairmanship's commitment to strengthening CICA's environmental dimension. Building on seamless continuity between the Chairmanships of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan in advancing regional climate goals, Mukhtar Babayev highlighted Chairmanship's plans to foster international partnerships, specifically the intention to propose observer status for CICA at the UNFCCC, while further working with Member States to elevate the Organization's global visibility in environmental forums.

From Kazakhstan's part, Vice-Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan Mansur Oshurbayev reaffirmed the country's commitment to collective efforts and offered Kazakhstan as a central platform for CICA Member States to exchange best practices, conduct joint scientific research, and train environmental specialists to ensure sustainable



development across Asia.

A central topic of the event was the pragmatic shift in regional diplomacy. Echoing the vision of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev voiced at the RES, CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay underlined that the organization is moving beyond broad declarations to formalize environmental responsibility as a core pillar of regional cooperation. Consequently, CICA is transitioning to systemic regional policies that ensure long-term sustainability and security.







Building on the foundation of the 2024 CICA Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues, Member States reaffirmed their commitment to implementing high-level pledges regarding biodiversity, glacier preservation, and sustainable water management. The framework established by the 2024 High-Level Statement remains the primary action guide for deepening regional environmental cooperation.

Underlining that CICA's consensus-based model is essential for regional cooperation, Member States unanimously recognized the organization as the premier platform for bridging national environmental priorities with global sustainable development goals.

This collective recognition was further evidenced by China showcasing its green transition while announcing its plans to host CICA Roundtable on Urban Ecological Security in late 2026. Similarly, Kyrgyzstan complemented this schedule of regional dialogue by inviting Member States to the Second Global Mountain Summit in Bishkek next year, framing the event as a key milestone of the country's UN-designated initiative "Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions"

As a vital "bridge" for Asian perspectives, CICA is synchronizing regional priorities with the UN 2030 Agenda to convert political commitments into practical cooperation across its 28 Member States. Following the outcomes of COP29 and the 2025 glacier preservation event in Dushanbe, CICA is now synchronizing a unified regional voice for a series of upcoming global milestones: the UNCCD COP17 in Mongolia this August, followed by the 2026 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 31) in Türkiye in November, and the UN Water Conference in the UAE in early December 2026.



# CICA Headquarters in Astana Hosts Spring Charity Bazaar Celebrating Cultural Diversity and Solidarity

Astana, 26 April 2026 – The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) hosted the Spring Charity Bazaar on 26 April 2026.



The event, held at the CICA Headquarters in Astana, served as a vibrant venue for dialogue and engagement, bringing together the diplomatic corps – represented by the Embassies of CICA Member States and Observer States and beyond – alongside the academic community from Nazarbayev University, volunteers from KMG Volunteers and Assembly of People of Kazakhstan's, and representatives of the Kazakhstani small and medium enterprise sector.

In his opening remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay emphasized that the Secretariat launched the Spring Charity Bazaar to encourage generosity, civic responsibility and volunteerism. While the CICA Secretariat has established a strong tradition of cultural and sports events, this initiative further

integrates people-to-people connections, showcasing the cultural richness of participating countries.

Secretary General Sarybay noted that this initiative is also aimed to strengthen the organization's public standing in the lead-up to the Secretariat's 20th anniversary in Astana this June. Furthermore, it serves to enhance CICA's visibility as a multifaceted platform, creating positive momentum for the Seventh CICA Summit in Baku in October 2026.







Translating social responsibility of diplomatic community in Astana into concrete action, the proceeds from the Bazaar are directed to the Center for Special Social Services in the city of Akkol in Akmola region. Specifically, the raised funds will finance the modernization of the Center's "Rassvet" (Sunrise) summer camp, providing comfortable and modern recreational facilities for children.

The event featured a vibrant cultural programme, allowing visitors to experience the rich heritage of different countries through a series of traditional dances, musical performances, and a national clothing show.



Beyond the performances and charity sales, visitors engaged in an interactive quiz with engaging questions about CICA's history, milestones, and core mission designed to raise public awareness and foster a closer connection with attendees.

The first edition of the Spring Charity Bazaar fostered meaningful interaction between international partners and the public. Inspired by the season of spring and the spirit of Nauryz, recently celebrated across the region, the Bazaar embodied values of balance and mutual respect, strengthening the culture of philanthropy and regional cooperation.





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# CICA Targets Institutional Expansion and Transformation during Consultations in Seoul



Seoul, 13 May 2026 – The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay visited Seoul to discuss institutional transformation of the organization and South Korea's continuous engagement within CICA.

At the Foreign Ministry, Secretary General Kairat Sarybay met with Deputy Minister for political affairs Ms. Eui-hae Cicilia Chung and explored ongoing evolution of the organization under the current Azerbaijani Chairmanship. Ahead of the 7th CICA Summit, to be held in Baku in October 2026, the talks highlighted CICA's development into a full-fledged regional structure well-equipped with permanent institutions and advisory mechanisms. Secretary General Sarybay outlined the work of Finance Summit, Women Council, Youth Council, Business Council and Partnership Network of Leading Universities and invited Korea to expand its participation across these emerging platforms. Additionally, Secretary General encouraged the Korean side to utilize the potential of the CICA Fund to promote its international cooperation and assistance efforts.



Furthermore, Secretary General Sarybay expressed appreciation for Korea's continuous support of CICA's multilateral efforts and its regular voluntary financial contributions, which remain essential to the effective work and ongoing activities of the Secretariat.

Turning to sectoral interaction and implementation of confidence building measures, Secretary General Sarybay commended Korea's leadership as a coordinator in the priority areas of Energy Security and Information Technology. Recognizing ecological issues as a growing concern uniting shared responsibility, the conversation also covered the recent high-level meeting on climate change and sustainable development in Astana.

Continuing the focus on expanding CICA's institutional mechanisms, the Secretary General Sarybay held meeting with Amb. Choe Hyung-chan, Chancellor of the Korea National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA).

Highlighting the critical role of the CICA Think Tank Forum (TTF), he suggested that KNDA could officially join the network and participate in the 14th TTF in New Delhi this September. Secretary General Sarybay noted that as CICA transforms, the research and analytical support from esteemed institutions like KNDA will be essential in guiding CICA's long-term policies on sustainability, digital transformation, and regional security.

Moreover, at KNDA the Secretary General visited the Diplomatic archives exhibition depicting the most notable achievements and landmarks of the South Korean foreign service.

In Seoul, Secretary General Sarybay also met with Mr. Joohyeon Baik, Special Envoy of the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and nominee to the CICA Council of Eminent Persons. The two sides exchanged views on the current regional situation and the ongoing CICA transformation process. During the conversation, both diplomats underscored the critical importance of building stronger economic ties and enhancing connectivity as key drivers for advancing confidence, security, and cooperation across Asia.

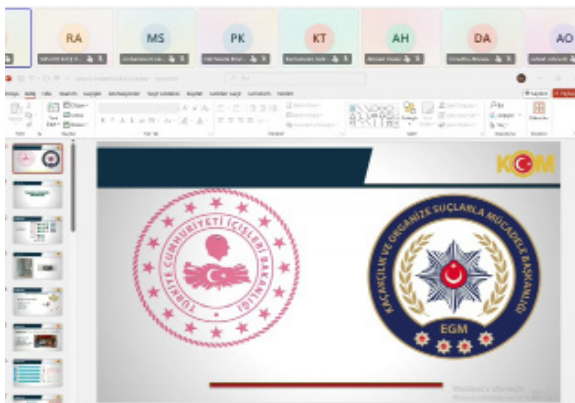




# Law Enforcement Officers from CICA Member States Enhance Anti-Smuggling Capacities at TADOC Training



11-15 May 2026 – Law enforcement officials from the Member States of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), namely Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Qatar and Sri Lanka, successfully completed an intensive online training program focused on combating smuggling and transnational organized crime, held from 11 to 15 May 2026.



Organized by the Turkish International Academy Against Smuggling and Organized Crime (TADOC) of the Turkish National Police, with the support of the CICA Secretariat, the five-day capacity-building initiative targeted officers responsible for front-line anti-smuggling operations.

Throughout the program, designed to equip participants with advanced operational tools and modern investigative methodologies, expert instructors guided officers through the complexities of the smuggling crime investigation system.

Key topics included advanced profiling and risk analysis to proactively detect illicit activities, the deployment of special investigation techniques and evidence collection, legal frameworks and modern operational planning for complex smuggling cases, as well as effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills for accurate statement taking.

As smuggling networks continually adapt their methods, continuous education and cross-border cooperation remain critical. By facilitating the exchange of expertise and standardizing investigation protocols, these initiatives continue to strengthen the operational readiness of Member States.

The Republic of Türkiye operates as the coordinator of the priority area "New Challenges and Threats (General)" within the framework of the implementation of CICA confidence building measures and has extensive experience in conducting seminars and training courses in this area. This event became another contribution of Türkiye to strengthening the capacity of law enforcement agencies of the Member States, developing practical cooperation within the CICA framework and reinforcing the shared commitment to ensuring a secure and stable Asian region.

It is expected that during the year, the TADOC will continue organizing series of training courses aimed at transferring the accumulated best practices on various topics that are of interest to law enforcement agencies of the CICA Member States.

# CICA Secretary General Attends 13th World Urban Forum in Baku, Holds Bilateral Consultations to Advance CICA Institutional Development

Baku, 18 May 2026 – The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay attended the opening ceremony of the Thirteenth Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF13) in Baku.



Addressing participants at the opening ceremony, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev highlighted country's dedication to eco-friendly urban development. He detailed Baku's transformation from a historic industrial oil center into a green metropolis, citing the cleanup of polluted zones like the "Black City" into eco-friendly spaces. President Aliyev also emphasized the rebuilding of Karabakh and East Zangezur using sustainable smart-city models.

The global urban development strategies discussed at WUF13 align with CICA's long-term objectives and commitment to fostering environmental safety and economic stability across the Asian region.

As the second-largest international event ever hosted in Azerbaijan after the COP29 climate conference, WUF13 underscored Baku's commitment to green development and sustainable urban transformation



by linking its climate action and sustainability goals on the global stage.

On the sidelines of WUF13, Secretary General Sarybay engaged in a substantive bilateral meeting with Azerbaijan's Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov to discuss advancing CICA's institutional development and promoting the priorities of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship ahead of the 7th Summit in Baku this October.

During the meeting, executives exchanged views on the negotiation process on the draft of the CICA Charter, ratification process of the Convention on Privileges and Immunities, and maintaining institutional continuity in CICA's leadership for the 2026-2028 period.



# Board Meeting of the CICA Business Council Outlines 2026 Agenda

25 May 2026 – The Board of the CICA Business Council held an online meeting to review outcomes of the activities throughout 2025 and discuss its agenda for the upcoming Ninth Plenary Session of the CICA Business Council and the Eleventh CICA Business Forum, planned for September 2026 in Baku.



In his opening remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay drew attention to the connection between modern urban development and business growth – a dynamic he observed during his recent visit to the World Urban Forum (WUF13) in Baku. He further underlined that this focus closely aligns with the Azerbaijani Chairmanship's priorities on green transformation and digitalization.

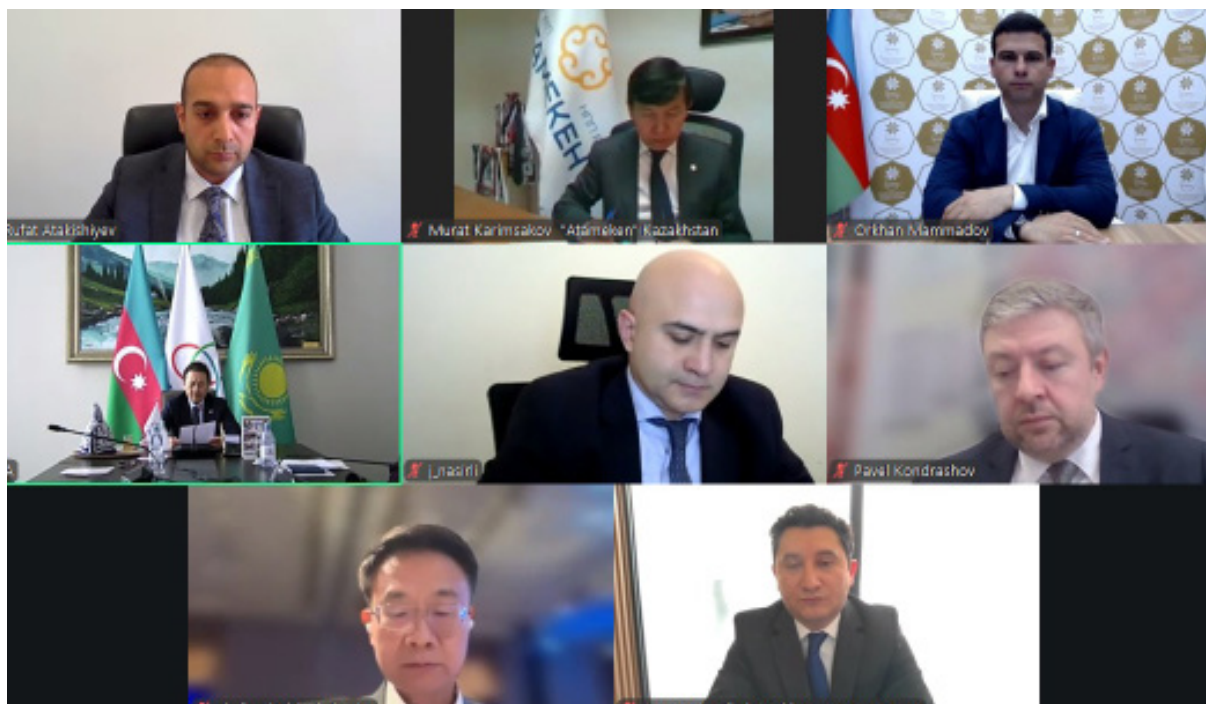
To strengthen CICA's role as a platform for practical economic cooperation, Secretary General Sarybay advocated for a comprehensive approach, noting that the recently launched CICA Women Council and the CICA Youth Council could serve as vital platforms for empowering women in business and advancing youth entrepreneurship through mentoring programmes, incubators and innovation centers.

He also suggested that engaging international financial and development institutions in the upcoming events would complement the discussion under the Business Council. The expertise of these organizations can be instrumental in translating the Council's best practices into concrete, action-oriented, and financially viable projects.



CICA Business Council Chairman Orkhan Mammadov presented the proposed theme for 2026 – “Entrepreneurial Ecosystems for Competitive and Inclusive SME Growth in the CICA region” and emphasized that the Council's agenda is designed to provide a broader, more supportive business environment for youth, women, and innovative enterprises. He noted, the September events will act as a platform, bridging the gap between startups, academic expertise, and the investment community.

During the meeting, Board members actively contributed to shaping the upcoming agenda in Baku. To ensure the events deliver direct, tangible benefits to the business community across the region, participants jointly proposed enriching the discussions with highly practical topics, particularly the advancement of SME digitalization and development of international industrial cooperation to build strong B2B ties.



# Advancing Global Water Agenda: CICA Delegation Participates in Dushanbe High-Level Conference

Dushanbe, 25-28 May 2026 – The Deputy Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ms. Zhang Ling participated in the 4th High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028” held in Dushanbe.



**4<sup>TH</sup> HIGH-LEVEL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION  
«WATER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT»  
2018-2028**

Hosted by the Government of Tajikistan in cooperation with the United Nations as part of the Dushanbe Water Process, the Conference brought together senior officials, representatives of international and regional organizations, financial institutions, academia and civil society to discuss practical approaches to advancing sustainable water management and strengthening international cooperation in support of Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6).

During the Conference's inaugural session, President of the Republic of Tajikistan H.E. Emomali Rahmon proposed the establishment of the “Dushanbe Water Process Framework Programme”. This ambitious initiative aims to consolidate global efforts toward the practical implementation of the water agenda beyond 2030.

To draw attention to regional challenges, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic Erlis Akunbekov highlighted the growing impact of climate change and glacier melt on Central Asia's water security and called for strengthened and coordinated regional cooperation. Senior United Nations leadership and the Minister of Energy and Water Resources of Tajikistan further reinforced this call, underscoring a unified commitment to confronting shared environmental challenges.

Delivering remarks on behalf of CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay during the high-level plenary session, Deputy Secretary General Zhang Ling emphasized that water-related challenges are increasing as a critical test of multilateral diplomacy. Noting that CICA's 28 Member States face mounting pressures from climate change, glacier melt, and water scarcity, she underlined the critical need for consensus-based regional cooperation and shared climate resilience.



Ms. Zhang Ling also highlighted CICA's expanding Environmental Dimension as part of its broad agenda. She further noted that sustainable water management has been present prominently on the CICA agenda since the adoption of the High-Level Statement of the 2024 Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues. As the next step in CICA Member States' cooperation on water-related issues she highlighted key takeaways from the 2025 Dushanbe side event under the Azerbaijani Chairmanship, as well as the high-level CICA meeting within the framework of the Regional Ecological Summit in Astana on 23 April 2026.

Throughout the session, contribution of Tajikistan to the global water agenda was widely acknowledged, with participants emphasizing the country's sustained efforts to promote multilateral dialogue and practical cooperation in the framework of the International Decade for Action on the road toward the 2028 United Nations Conference, which will mark the final comprehensive review of the Decade.



Prior to the plenary session of the conference, CICA delegation joined the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 2026 UN Water Conference convened by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Dushanbe on 25 May 2026.

Discussions at the ESCAP session centered on transboundary cooperation, climate resilience, financing, and disaster risk reduction, ensuring regional alignment ahead the UN Water Conference 2026 to be hosted by the UAE (Abu Dhabi) and co-hosted by Senegal in December 2026.

The participation of the CICA Secretariat delegation in the 4th Dushanbe Water Conference reaffirmed the organization's continued engagement in promoting dialogue and cooperation on environmental and sustainable development issues across Asia. The visit also contributed to strengthening contacts with international partners and advancing exchanges on regional approaches to addressing shared water and climate-related challenges.



# Foreign Minister of Belarus visits CICA Headquarters in Astana

Astana, 28 May 2026 – CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay held a meeting with Mr. Maxim Ryzhenkov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, who became the first Foreign Minister of a CICA Observer State to visit the new CICA Headquarters in Astana.



During the meeting, the parties discussed the current CICA agenda. The Secretary General highlighted the continued expansion of CICA's geographical reach and touched upon issues related to cooperation with Observer States.

Particular attention was paid to the CICA transformation process and the priorities of the current Azerbaijani Chairmanship in the lead-up to the Seventh CICA Summit, scheduled to take place in Baku in October 2026.

During the subsequent exchange of views on the work of the CICA advisory mechanisms, the Secretary General also shared the latest developments in the implementation of confidence building measures across the five dimensions of cooperation reflected in the Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures.

In turn, Minister Ryzhenkov called for more active engagement with Observer States. Given the growing trade and economic ties between Belarus and CICA Member States, he expressed Minsk's interest in strengthening substantive cooperation across all five dimensions of CICA cooperation, as well as with its institutions.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Foreign Minister of Belarus shared his vision of the key ideas underpinning the "Eurasian Charter of Diversity and Multipolarity in the 21st Century" and invited the CICA Secretary General to participate in the Fourth Minsk International Conference on Eurasian Security, to be held in November 2026.



# Integration without Barriers: CICA Advocates Consolidation of Efforts by Regional Organizations



Astana, 28 May 2026 – CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay took part in the Fifth Eurasian Economic Forum, held under the theme “The EAEU in the Global Digital Race: Betting on Artificial Intelligence”. The key message of his statement during the session “Integration without Barriers: Dialogue among Regional Organizations to Strengthen Economic Ties” was the need for synergy among multilateral frameworks.



K. Sarybay emphasized that this is particularly relevant for the Asian part of Eurasia: amid growing economic interdependence and the emergence of new growth hubs, it is crucial to prioritize the pooling of capabilities rather than competition. CICA, the EAEU and other regional organizations, despite different mandates, jointly cover key areas of economic cooperation. Their concerted efforts can provide a powerful boost to Asia’s prosperity and the sustainable development of the entire Eurasian continent.

CICA plays a special role in this process as one of the most inclusive pan-Asian platforms. During the transformation of the organization, the significance of its bridging function is becoming particularly evident.

Kairat Sarybay recalled that practical interaction within CICA is based on the implementation of the Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures across five dimensions. This work is supported by the activities of the advisory mechanisms – the CICA Business Council, Finance Summit and Fund – which help channel political dialogue into specific initiatives.

The Secretary General placed special emphasis on connectivity. Amid vulnerabilities in global supply chains, he highlighted the importance of sustainable connectivity across the CICA region – a priority of both the current and previous chairmanships of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan – as well as the need to develop transit and transport corridors, digitize logistics and introduce cutting-edge technologies, including artificial intelligence.

The Secretary General underlined that CICA’s potential is fully realized when interaction with other organizations is built on mutual consideration of mandates and the tangible contribution of each organization.

As specific examples of such synergy, K. Sarybay highlighted prospects for CICA interaction with the EAEU, the SCO and ASEAN. Thus, established ties with the EEC allow CICA to be used as a broad dialogue platform for synchronizing EAEU initiatives in trade, logistics and AI implementation with the interests of other Asian states.

In conclusion, the Secretary General noted that, as a practical step in this direction, CICA offers its platform for direct dialogue. On 17 June, as part of the celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of the CICA Secretariat, an informal roundtable discussion will be held involving UN entities and regional organizations working on the Asian agenda. K. Sarybay expressed confidence that the meaningful exchange of views during this event would help further strengthen partnerships among multilateral organizations, many of which are represented on the margins of the current Forum.





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## Bringing a Comfortable Summer to Children: Proceeds from Spring Charity Bazaar Donated to Children's Centre in Akkol

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29 May 2026, Akkol, Akmola Region – A delegation from the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) visited the Centre for Supporting Children in Need of Special Social Services under the Department of Education of the Akmola Region.

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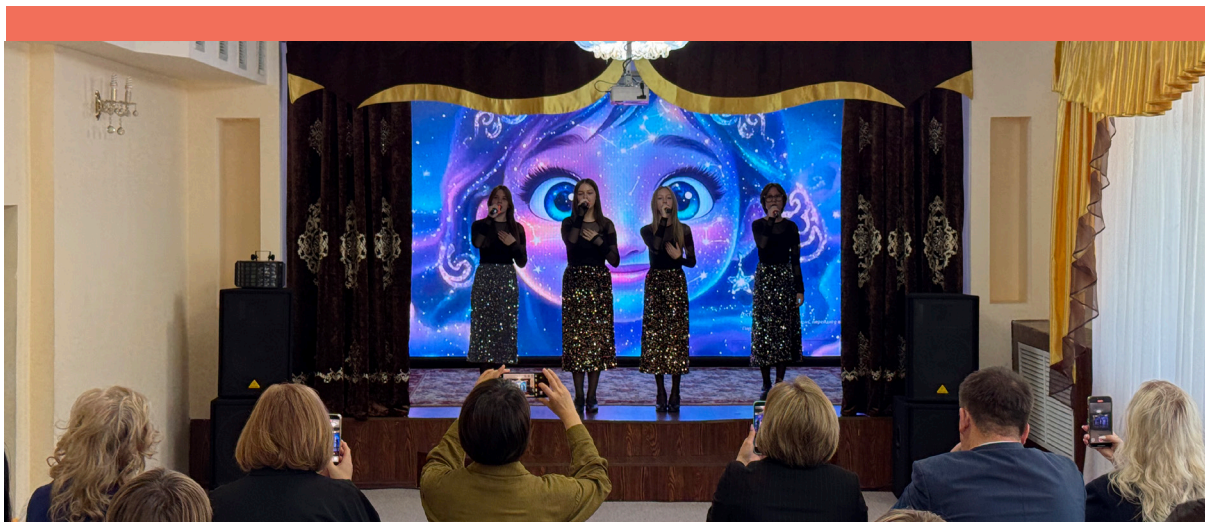
During the visit, a ceremony was held to hand over the funds raised at the Spring Charity Bazaar on 26 April 2026 at the CICA Headquarters in Astana. The initiative represented a logical continuation of the organization's mission. By bringing together the diplomatic community, international partners and the public around a common noble cause, CICA helps foster mutual trust not only at the intergovernmental level, but also among peoples, demonstrating people-to-people diplomacy in action.

Speaking at the ceremony to hand over charitable funds, CICA Deputy Secretary General Zhang Ling noted that the charity drive was made possible thanks to the solidarity of the diplomatic community in the capital. The initiative received broad support from the embassies of Azerbaijan, China, India, Russia, Tajikistan, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Serbia, Thailand, North Macedonia, Indonesia and Turkmenistan. Significant contributions were also made by international organizations, including the Islamic Organisation for Food Security, the business community, financial partners and volunteers.

Deputy Secretary General Zhang stressed that support for the summer camp had been chosen to deliver a tangible result that would bring joy to the children as early as this season. She also expressed hope that the Bazaar would become a cherished tradition and expand the reach of its support across Kazakhstan year on year.

For its part, the Department of Education of the Akmola Region expressed appreciation for the constructive partnership with the CICA Secretariat. It was emphasized that the successful collaboration, initiated during preparations for the Bazaar, resulted in tangible support that is bringing real benefits to the children.





Director of the Centre Botagoz Kazbekova noted that CICA's assistance made it possible to address the important task of improving the Centre's grounds. She added that, alongside upgrading living conditions, the allocated funds would also help strengthen the summer camp's security perimeter. The implementation of these measures will become an important step in preparing for the summer season, ensuring that the Centre's students can enjoy a full summer break.

During their visit to the Centre, the CICA delegation learned about its activities, explored an exhibition of creative works and attended musical performances by the children.







# JUNE

# CICA Secretary General Outlines Vision for Asian Connectivity at Termez Dialogue in Uzbekistan

Tashkent, 3-4 June 2026 – During a working visit to Tashkent, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay joined high-level delegations from 17 CICA Member States and international organizations at the Second Meeting of the Termez Dialogue to drive the Asian connectivity agenda forward.



The event featured CICA Plenary Session "Political Dialogue and Economic Connectivity as Foundations for Sustainable Development in the CICA Region" supported at the highest level by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev and hosted by the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies (ISRS).

Opening the forum, Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies Eldor Aripov underlined that the Termez Dialogue has evolved into an effective mechanism for advancing mutual benefit, good neighborliness, and preventive diplomacy.

ISRS Director emphasized that the dialogue's agenda prioritizes political cooperation and economic connectivity, which were central topics of the plenary session held in partnership with CICA. He noted that this partnership is rooted in a shared approach, as the Termez Dialogue aims to strengthen stability through progress and constructive engagement, values that directly align with the mission of CICA.







Building on the foundation of regional cooperation, Secretary General Sarybay addressed the participants and outlined CICA's vision to transform the diversity of its 28 Member States into a shared strength for Asian connectivity. Guided by the Azerbaijani Chairmanship, the organization is advancing a practical framework to strengthen transit links, secure supply chains, and coordinate digital logistics.

He highlighted the unique geographical opportunities for landlocked and transit nations and emphasized that uniting platforms of the Termez Dialogue, the upcoming Conference of Heads of Ports and the first meeting of the Finance Summit will translate dialogue into practical cooperation and build the groundwork for a modern Silk Road.

To witness these connectivity efforts in action, the forum's agenda included a dedicated study tour to Termez on June 5. Participants inspected trade infrastructure driving regional integration, including the Termez Cargo Terminal and the Airitom International Trade Hub.

As part of his working visit to Tashkent, Secretary General Sarybay held bilateral meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan Mirvohid Azimov. During the conversation, Secretary General outlined the progress achieved under the current Azerbaijani Chairmanship toward the Seventh CICA Summit in Baku on October 15. The Deputy Minister reaffirmed Tashkent's support for the CICA process and its ongoing institutional transformation, while expressing confidence in the success of the upcoming meeting of heads of state.

The discussion then focused on the CICA agenda, including activities of the CICA Business Council, Youth Council, Think Tank Forum and Partnership Network of Leading Universities, as well as the recently established Women Council and the Finance Summit and special mechanism - the CICA Fund.

Secretary General Sarybay emphasized that Uzbekistan's leadership in the Human Dimension provides excellent opportunities for the country to engage in shaping the agendas of these platforms and to host their future sessions. He also welcomed Uzbekistan's initiative to host CICA High-Level Human Rights Forum in Tashkent this September.

The discussion highlighted the growing connectivity of Central Asia. Both sides agreed that this expanding cooperation, driven by regional leaders, serves as an excellent model of the solidarity that CICA aims to promote across the Asian continent.





# CICA Member States Promote Best Practices in Food Loss Reduction Through Expert Workshop in Beijing



Beijing, 1-10 June 2026 – The training workshop for CICA Member States, dedicated to tackling the pressing challenges of food loss reduction and enhancing efficiency across the agri-food supply chain, held in Beijing. Organized by the Academy of National Food and Strategic Reserves Administration of China from June 1 to 10, the event served as platform for implementing CICA confidence-building measures in the priority area of agriculture.



The opening session featured remarks by Tan Bengang, President of the Academy of NAFRA, and Zhang Yan, Deputy Director General of the Department of International Cooperation of NAFRA. In his address at the opening ceremony, CICA Deputy Secretary General Mr. Farid Damirli underscored that food security is not merely a national priority, but a cornerstone for building sustainable development, social stability, and regional prosperity. He highlighted that the current global landscape, marked by climate change and supply chain disruptions, demands urgent and coordinated action.

Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Farid underlined China's commitment as the coordinator for agriculture – a priority area under the CICA Economic Dimension. He noted that Beijing's consistent focus on facilitating experience-sharing and capacity building significantly strengthens regional resilience. Furthermore, he emphasized that this practical synergy builds solid foundation for Member States to strengthen their shared capabilities in tackling common agricultural issues.

The workshop provided an intensive learning environment, guiding



participants through a comprehensive curriculum that spanned the entire food production lifecycle. The training covered the development of food industry policies and standards, advanced technologies for optimizing grain planting, harvesting and storage, as well as modern methods for loss reduction and efficiency improvement in food storage and processing. As part of the practical program, delegates engaged in high-level field visits to leading scientific platforms, including the National Engineering Research Center for Grain Storage and Transportation and the Grain and Oil Quality Inspection and Testing Center. Through these



visits, participants gained practical insights into advanced quality control mechanisms and the deployment of technologies that strengthen food supply chain resilience. More than 20 participants from CICA Member States, including government officials, researchers, academics, and policymakers from Egypt, Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Uzbekistan, shared their experiences during the workshop. Cultural activities organized as part of the program fostered interaction among participants and provided opportunities to learn about the history and culture of Beijing.





# SCO's 25th Anniversary Conference and Consultations in Dushanbe: Regional Synergy and Central Asian Security in Focus



Dushanbe, 12 June 2026 – Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay paid a working visit to Dushanbe, where, at the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, he participated in the International Conference “Central Asia – the Core of the SCO: a Space of Peace and Joint Development”. The event, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, gathered heads of delegations from SCO Member States and dialogue partners, as well as representatives of international organizations, including the UN, UNESCO, FAO, the CIS, and the CSTO.



Speaking at the Conference, Secretary General K. Sarybay drew a historical parallel between CICA and the SCO, noting that both organizations were established in response to the call of Asian countries for dialogue and have since reached a level of institutional maturity. Highlighting the role of Central Asia as a driver of stability across Asia, he called for the region to be viewed not only as a geographical centre but also as a strategic core that sets high standards for regional integration.

K. Sarybay emphasized that CICA and the SCO are capable of effectively complementing and reinforcing each other. In this regard, he called for building on the existing legal framework and moving toward practical alignment of efforts in the areas of security, sustainable development, transport and digitalization. In this context, it should be noted that the Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan in CICA attaches high priority to strengthening partnerships with international and regional organizations, fostering connectivity and promoting



As part of the visit to Dushanbe, the CICA Secretary General held talks with Tajikistan's Foreign Minister Sirojiddin Muhridin, during which the parties discussed preparations for the Seventh CICA Summit, to be held in Baku this October.

Minister Muhridin confirmed that CICA is an important instrument of regional interaction for Tajikistan, emphasizing the firm support of Dushanbe for strengthening the organization's role and influence in the Asian region.

The Secretary General commended Tajikistan's leadership in advancing the global water and climate agenda, noting that glacier conservation and sustainable water resource management are becoming a critical factor in regional security. The parties discussed the implementation of CICA confidence building measures, particularly in tourism, where Tajikistan serves as the coordinator.

Building on the topic of coordinating efforts among regional organizations discussed at the Conference,

the CICA Secretary General announced a roundtable of heads of Asian regional organizations to be held in Astana on 17 June, aimed at identifying new formats of interaction and opportunities for synergy in their activities.

On the sidelines of the SCO Conference, CICA Secretary General K. Sarybay also held a meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Andrey Rudenko, during which the diplomats discussed key aspects of the sustained process to transform CICA into a full-fledged international organization.

The Secretary General underlined the importance of Russia's participation in the implementation of CICA confidence building measures and expressed his appreciation for the successful promotion of the volunteerism agenda. The parties then discussed the upcoming CICA side event on this topic, which will take place on 14 July on the margins of the UN High-level Political Forum in New York.



# Baku Hosts CICA Conference on Circular Green Tourism to Advance Regional Sustainable Development



Baku, 23 June 2026 – Baku hosted the international conference “Circular Green Tourism in the CICA Countries”, organized by the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan under country’s Chairmanship in CICA.

The conference brought together over 120 participants, including high-level delegations from 18 CICA Member States, tourism authorities, government agencies, academia, hospitality groups, and civil society organizations.

The event featured thematic plenary panels and expert working sessions that explored circular infrastructure, business models, financial viability, and community engagement in local value chains. These high-level discussions served as a platform for advancing practical cooperation in sustainable tourism and formulating concrete recommendations for the future.

Addressing the opening session, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay underscored that tourism serves as an integral component of CICA’s broader connectivity agenda, spanning trade, transport, investment, digitalization, and cultural diplomacy. He noted that the Azerbaijani Chairmanship has shaped its priorities around this vision and is now delivering practical results through the “Circular Green Tourism” project.

Secretary General Sarybay recalled that the initiative successfully commenced with an online kick-off event on 14 October 2025, which launched a regional discussion on sustainable, resource-efficient, and environmentally responsible tourism. This concluding conference in Baku now provides a valuable platform for CICA Member States to share best practices and formulate concrete recommendations for further cooperation.

Secretary General Sarybay stressed that sustainable tourism relies on a balance between infrastructure, investment, and the active involvement of local communities and youth. Drawing on this synergy, he linked today’s conference in Baku to the upcoming CICA Side Event on Volunteerism in New York in July 2026, where Member States’ experience will be showcased as a prime model of youth engagement and public diplomacy.



Ahead of the conference on 23 June, CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay held a bilateral meeting with Mr. Fuad Naghiyev, Chairman of the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The discussion focused on advancing sustainable tourism, regional connectivity and practical cooperation across Asia. Both sides expressed readiness to continue cooperation on the expected outcomes of the Baku Conference, including possible recommendations, knowledge-sharing formats and other practical follow-up activities. Secretary General Sarybay also reaffirmed the CICA Secretariat's readiness to maintain close coordination with the State Tourism Agency on tourism-related initiatives, including green tourism, circular tourism and community-based tourism.





# CICA Youth Dialogue in Baku Focuses on Connectivity and Sustainable Development



Baku, 26-27 June, 2026 – Organized under the Azerbaijani Chairmanship by the Ministry of Youth and Sport in partnership with the CICA Secretariat, the 9th CICA Youth Council meeting and its accompanying competitions brought together more than 120 young delegates, engineers, and government officials from 17 CICA Member States.



During the opening address, Minister of Youth and Sport Farid Gayibov highlighted that youth development is a strategic pillar for Azerbaijan, where young people make up a significant 22.5 percent of the population. Under the guidance of President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan, the country consistently drives youth potential in education, entrepreneurship and volunteerism.

In his keynote address, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay underscored that Asia's vast youth population is a vital force for a peaceful and prosperous future. He emphasized that creative and energetic young generation is uniquely equipped to drive innovation, transforming complex urban challenges into green, smart and resilient solutions.

Building on this, Secretary General Sarybay emphasized that Youth Council stands out as one of the most dynamic elements of the CICA Human Dimension. He stressed that prioritizing youth empowerment is essential to the CICA's institutional growth and its capacity to remain a forward-looking platform.

Secretary General Sarybay also highlighted the symbolic choice of Baku White City as venue for the event, describing this ambitious project as a prime example of environmental responsibility. He emphasized how transforming a former industrial site into a modern, people-centered district serves as a practical model to follow

Chaired by the Deputy Minister of Youth and Sport of Azerbaijan Ms. Indira Hajiyeva, the official session on 26 June focused closely on youth engagement in sustainable urban development. This priority directly reflects Azerbaijan's systemic policy of involving the next generation in global agendas, serving as a direct continuation of major international platforms recently hosted in Baku, including COP29 and the 13th World Urban Forum (WUF13). By fostering an inclusive dialogue, the meeting provided a dynamic platform to examine how young people can shift from policy executors to active co-authors of urban solutions, channeling their digital skills into green infrastructure, environmental protection and urban mobility.

Following the discussions, delegates adopted the Recommendations of the Youth Council aimed at enhancing youth participation in safe and smart urban growth across the region.



On June 27, the program continued with the CICA Youth Speech and Debate Competition and the robotics contest of CICA youth, held during the World Robotics Caspian Cup 2026.

CICA Youth Speech and Debate Competition was conducted following the Karl Popper international model. The competition focused on the





opportunities and future of youth in the era of artificial intelligence and human capital development. Young delegates were divided into ten international teams, debating in affirmative and negative discussions. Team “Ruppee-Manat”, representing Azerbaijan and Sri Lanka, secured first place in the Youth Speech Competition. Veronika Alimetova of Azerbaijan earned the Best Speaker award for her performance in the Debate Competition.

RoboChallenge, the CICA youth robotics competition, was held within the framework of the World Robot Caspian Cup (WRCC 2026). Young engineers and innovators aged 16 to 29 presented their practical projects in the fields of artificial intelligence, aviation, engineering, and automation. A special emphasis was placed on finding technological solutions for agriculture, demining and security, as well as addressing the decline in the Caspian Sea water level.

While in Baku, on June 26, Secretary General Sarybay held a meeting with the Minister of Youth and Sport of Azerbaijan Mr. Farid Gayibov.

Secretary General commended the leadership of Azerbaijani



Chairmanship, including the efforts of the Ministry of Youth and Sport, in advancing youth cooperation by hosting the CICA Youth Council meetings and competitions for youth population.

The parties welcomed the strong momentum in volunteerism, noting that the Second CICA Volunteer Rally in Baku provided a tangible boost to youth and volunteer cooperation across the region. Building on this success, they reviewed preparations for the upcoming CICA side event on volunteerism and photo exhibition, scheduled for July 14 at the UN Headquarters in New York on the margins of the High-Level Political Forum.

During his visit to Baku, Secretary General Sarybay met with Special Representative of the President of Azerbaijan Mr. Khalaf Khalafov to review the progress of CICA’s ongoing institutional development under the Azerbaijani Chairmanship. The parties focused on the preparations for the 7th CICA Summit in October, as well as the collaboration on the draft CICA Charter and other outcome documents.

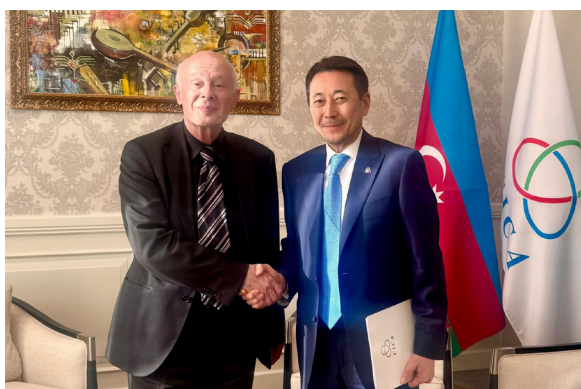




Meeting on the sidelines of the inaugural session of CICA Women Council and international conference on women's empowerment in Baku, CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay greeted Leyla Aliyeva, Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. The exchange reinforced the indispensable contribution of women in raising a peaceful and empathetic youth



Welcoming Faisal Hanef Alkahtani, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Kazakhstan, to the CICA Headquarters, Secretary General Kairat Sarybay briefed about the Organization's recent milestones and the ongoing preparation for the 7th Summit in Baku. The conversation highlighted CICA's capacity as a diplomatic bridge-builder, illustrating the strategic benefits it offers to both Observer States and prospective Member States



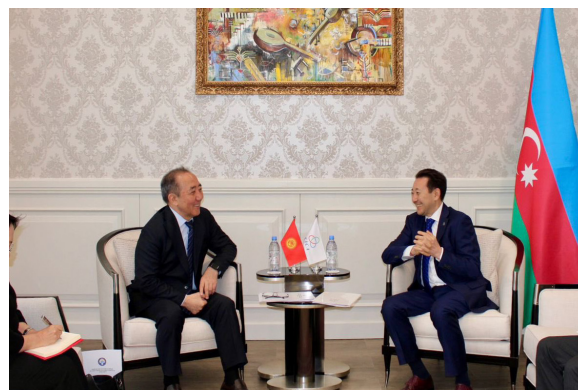
Secretary General Kairat Sarybay and Dr. Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, Director General of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), held a meeting to explore developing a formal partnership. The dialogue outlined joint initiatives through CICA's Think Tank Forum, the Partnership Network of Leading Universities (PNLU) and Women Council, alongside a shared commitment to climate diplomacy, water security and sustainable development



Talks with Eang Sophalleth, Minister of Environment of Cambodia, reflected on the key takeaways from the CICA event held on the margins of RES 2026. The officials examined the advancement of "Tree Diplomacy", proposing a new CICA Alley in Phnom Penh



Secretary General Kairat Sarybay received Kyrgyz Ambassador Kudaibergen Bazarbayev at the CICA Secretariat to discuss upcoming milestones, including the 7th Baku Summit. The meeting highlighted Bishkek's strong commitment and ongoing cooperation within the Organization



## MAY

Conversation with AIFC Governor Renat Bekturov, newly designated CICA Finance Summit Chair by the Azerbaijani Chairmanship, centered on the Finance Summit's inaugural meeting. The conversation addressed advancing financial connectivity among Member States and driving broader economic cooperation across Asia



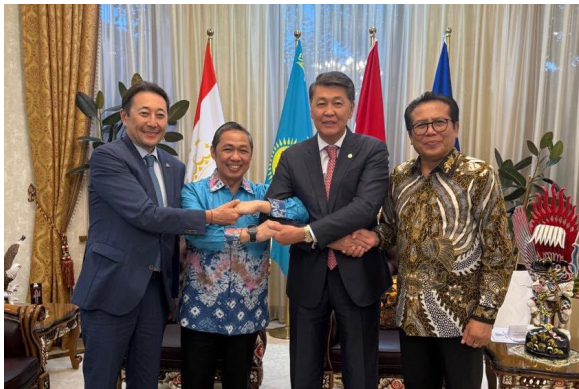
## JUNE

CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay attended the conference marking Kazakhstan's new Constitution. His address emphasized the country's dedication to peaceful dispute resolution, expressing deep appreciation for the Host Country's leadership in advancing CICA

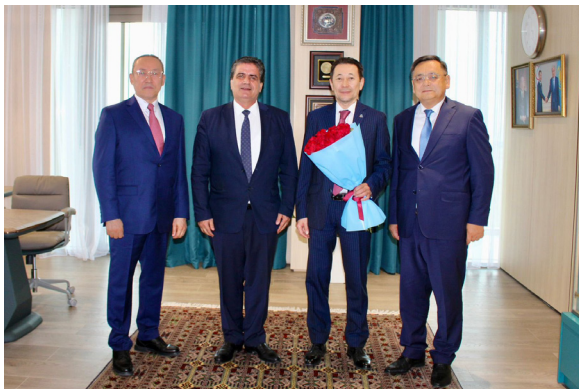


Secretary General Kairat Sarybay bid farewell to Azerbaijani Ambassador Agalar Atamoglanov, as he concluded his diplomatic tenure in Astana. The meeting recognized Ambassador Atamoglanov's strong advocacy for CICA and vital contributions to regional dialogue amidst the ongoing CICA transformation





A meeting with Indonesian Deputy Foreign Minister Anis Matta, held during his visit to Kazakhstan, centered on advancing economic connectivity and regional synergy. The discussion highlighted Jakarta's steadfast commitment to multilateralism as the host of the ASEAN Headquarters



Former CICA Executive Directors visited Kazakhstan to attend a special reception at CICA Headquarters commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the CICA Secretariat. The dialogue honored their legacy in building CICA's institutional framework and addressed strategic objectives ahead of the upcoming 7th Summit in Baku

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