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INFORMATION AND NEWS DIGEST

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CICA Skills Competition Concludes in Guangzhou, Fostering Trust and Regional Cooperation

CICA Fund Project Launched with Regional Youth Workshop on Nature-Based Solutions

Shusha Global Media Forum: CICA Spotlights "New-Generation Diplomacy"

President of the Lao PDR Visits CICA Headquarters, Signals Aspiration for Full CICA Membership

Advancing Regional Synergy: CICA Highlights Inclusive Partnerships and Practical Cooperation at Multi-Stakeholder SDG Forum



In this issue

In the Spotlight

4 **Towards the Seventh CICA Summit: Reflecting on Progress, Looking Ahead**
A Message from the Secretary General

7 **Special Section on Volunteerism**

July

30 CICA Reaffirms Commitment to Global Measures to Counter the Terrorist Threat

32 CICA Skills Competition Concludes in Guangzhou, Fostering Trust and Regional Cooperation

35 CICA Fund Project Launched with Regional Youth Workshop on Nature-Based Solutions

37 "CICA Talks" series continues with second lecture on the ancient Turkic Empire

40 Shusha Global Media Forum: CICA Spotlights "New-Generation Diplomacy"

42 CICA Senior Officials Committee Meeting Held in Astana Ahead of Seventh Summit

45 Sharing experiences and strengthening practical cooperation: CICA Member States hold a workshop on the sidelines of the ICT-Crime-2026 Conference

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August

49 CICA at COP17: Advancing Environmental Cooperation in Asia

September

55 Diplomacy and Culture: Bishkek Hosts SCO Plus Meeting and the 6th World Nomad Games

58 President of the Lao PDR Visits CICA Headquarters, Signals Aspiration for Full CICA Membership

60 Strengthening Financial Cooperation: CICA Finance Summit Holds Inaugural Meeting in Astana

65 CICA Heads of Ports Conference in Baku Charts a Course for Enhanced Regional Connectivity and Sustainable Growth in Asia

68 Training on Preventing the Laundering of Assets Derived from Crime (Cyber) for CICA Member States

70 CICA Contributes to Global Security Dialogue at the 13th Beijing Xiangshan Forum

72 Advancing Regional Synergy: CICA Highlights Inclusive Partnerships and Practical Cooperation at Multi-Stakeholder SDG Forum

75 CICA Secretariat Hosts Presentation of the CICA Fund for Development Assistance Agencies and Key Stakeholders Cooperation at Multi-Stakeholder

77 CICA Secretary General Pays Working Visit to New York for the 81st Session of the UN General Assembly

79 CICA Deputy Secretary General highlights the universality of human rights at Samarkand Forum

81 From Narcotics to Explosives: CICA Experts Master Advanced Forensic Techniques to Tackle Complex Crimes

83 CICA Training Programme on Digitalization and Research Capacity Building Concludes in Baku



Towards the Seventh CICA Summit: Reflecting on Progress, Looking Ahead

A Message from the Secretary General



Dear Readers,

This edition of Voice of Asia, published on the eve of the Seventh CICA Summit in Baku, offers us an opportunity to reflect on CICA's considerable progress since the Sixth Summit in Astana in October 2022.

The historic Astana Statement on CICA Transformation adopted at that Summit in 2022 set our organization on a strategic course of reforms through an inclusive, transparent and consensus-based process. The Transformation Road Map endorsed in September 2023 gave this ambition a practical framework, the crucial part of which is Cluster 1 – elaborating a CICA Charter. Whereas Kazakhstan had developed the initial draft Charter and launched the deliberations of Member States, Azerbaijan has continued to advance these negotiations since assuming the Chairmanship in December 2024 and has made this goal its central priority. Charter discussions intensified in 2026, with Member States seeking common ground on key provisions. Consensus remains essential to a framework that reflects their interests.

A number of high-level political declarations and thematic documents adopted throughout these four years have clearly demonstrated the capacity of CICA Member States to forge consensus and reach negotiated outcomes even amid challenging geopolitical circumstances.

The new Modalities of Implementation of Confidence Building Measures, adopted in December 2024, set out an updated framework governing how Member States manage, coordinate and review the implementation of CBMs. Between October 2022 and mid-September 2026, Member States conducted 94 confidence building events across all five dimensions.

Their significance lies in the professional relationships and mutual understanding they help develop.

Events on sustainable connectivity and port authorities held in Baku. Tourism related events hosted by Tajikistan, Thailand and China. Series of mine safety events in Beijing and Moscow. A side event on climate change and sustainable development in Astana, water related events in Dushanbe, sustainable land management events in Ulaanbaatar. Volunteerism rallies, youth competitions online and offline in Baku and Guangzhou. A number of events on new challenges and threats held by Turkiye. A number of SME related events hosted by Azerbaijan. Different places and hosts – yet a common purpose: building confidence through cooperation that responds to people's needs. As CICA approaches the Seventh Summit, these initiatives show how dialogue translates into practical action and can deliver tangible results.

Economic and environmental cooperation increasingly reinforce each other. Dialogue on transport corridors and logistics, Business Council activities supporting SMEs and initiatives on sustainable tourism connect regional priorities with everyday economic choices. The first CICA Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues in 2024 and Azerbaijan's Circular Green Tourism project have further strengthened this connection.

As an essential sign of the organization's maturity, our Member States have substantially expanded CICA's institutional architecture.

The Women Council, launched in Baku in April 2026, provides a dedicated platform for women's empowerment and leadership. The inaugural CICA Finance Summit in Astana in September 2026 opened opportunities for financial cooperation. The Partnership Network of Leading Universities now connects 182 universities from 13 Member States. Together with youth and volunteer initiatives, these mechanisms bring more voices and expertise into regional cooperation.

The CICA Fund gives this cooperation a tangible human dimension. Operationalized in August 2024, it supported a wheat cultivation project for 300 Afghan farmers in earthquake-affected areas. A second project, proposed by Bangladesh, is being implemented to promote youth-led climate action through nature-based solutions. These first steps demonstrate the value of partnerships and voluntary contributions in addressing concrete development needs.

CICA's legal and institutional foundations have grown stronger. The Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Secretariat, its Personnel and Representatives of Members of CICA marks another important step. As announced on 30 September 2026, ratification by Cambodia's Senate brings the number of ratifications to the required fourteen. The Convention is expected to enter into force shortly. Added to the upgraded Host Country Agreement ratified by Kazakhstan last year, these two documents substantially reinforce CICA's legal personality and its executive body - Secretariat.

The permanent Headquarters in Astana, inaugurated in July 2025 and funded by Kazakhstan, provides modern facilities for CICA's numerous bodies, including the Secretariat's operations. The twentieth anniversary of the CICA Secretariat marked in 2026 offered an opportunity to map existing multilateral structures and fora in Asia and to foster more synergies.

CICA's engagement continues to expand. Cooperation with the United Nations and regional partners, including dialogue with ASEAN, connects regional efforts with wider international objectives. During his recent historic visit to CICA Headquarters, President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic Thongloun Sisoulith announced his country's intention to move from Observer State status to full membership which has now been supported by Member States and to be finalized at the Summit in Baku — an encouraging prospect for further enlargement.

The forthcoming Summit offers an opportunity to build on these foundations and set priorities for the next stage. Charter negotiations and the further development of new advisory bodies require continued commitment. This collective endeavour extends beyond any individual tenure, sustained by the shared purpose that guides CICA's work.

As I prepare to conclude my tenure as CICA Secretary General, I extend my sincere appreciation to the Chairmanships of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan for their leadership, trust and support. I am grateful to all Member States for their commitment and dedication, material and in-kind support of the Secretariat. My thanks also go to CICA's multiple international partners for upholding the spirit of friendship and collaboration. Last but not least, my heartfelt gratitude goes to the entire staff of the CICA Secretariat for their professionalism, commitment and countless hours of work.

Serving this unique pan-Asian organization has been a great privilege. I look forward to CICA's continued development and to the opportunities it will create for closer ties among countries and communities through dialogue, trust and cooperation.

Ambassador
Kairat Sarybay,
CICA Secretary General

CHAMPIONING VOLUNTEERISM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

As the global community observes the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development 2026—proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly upon the initiative of the Republic of Kazakhstan and supported by many CICA Member States —we spotlight the vital role of volunteerism in driving positive change across our region.

To mark this milestone, a dedicated photo exhibition showcasing inspiring community initiatives and civic engagement across CICA Member States was hosted at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on the margins of the High-Level Political Forum, drawing international attention to grassroots solidarity. We are delighted to feature and reproduce highlights from this remarkable exhibition right here in our digest.

Building on these momentum-driven efforts, a comprehensive digital publication titled “Review of Best Practices in Volunteerism in CICA Member States” has been released in partnership with UN Volunteers (UNV). This publication highlights inspiring stories, key policy frameworks, and collaborative pathways in regional civic action, marking a vital step in bringing CICA's vision of practical cooperation to the broader international community. It is now available online for readers looking to explore the movement in depth: QR – code.



Download the electronic book from the CICA Secretariat website

By drawing on its strategic partnership with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and aligning with the UN International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development in 2026, CICA demonstrates how regional efforts to empower youth and foster solidarity contribute to global goals. This participation marks a vital step in bringing CICA's vision of practical cooperation to the broader international community.

CBMs in the Human Dimension, people to people contacts, youth participation and Volunteerism

CICA's experience proves that confidence building extends beyond traditional military concerns. Stability begins with political and economic cooperation, yet enduring peace grows from resilient human connections. This approach mirrors a vital shift in global diplomacy: moving past a strict focus on state security to prioritize human well-being, human development, and collective resilience. The CICA Human Dimension provides a framework for this endeavor, spanning a wide spectrum of issues from human rights to education and cultural development. To bridge high-level diplomacy and local communities, CICA facilitates direct interaction in science, education, sports and civil society. Through tangible initiatives like youth engagement and intercultural dialogue, the organization turns these commitments into concrete benefits for people across the region.



March 2014

The CICA Youth Council established by the decision of the Senior Officials Committee. Youth empowerment stands as a vital pillar of this framework.
CICA actively drives youth inclusion through the CICA Youth Council established to empower young leaders from Member States to share perspectives, launch joint initiatives, and directly shape the region's sustainable development. This commitment finds its most dynamic expression in volunteerism - a practical bridge between shared values and grassroots action. The spirit of community service and collective responsibility runs deep in Asia's cultural traditions. By encouraging young people to move beyond discussion and engage in direct community service, volunteerism transforms the CICA Youth Council's initiatives into a powerful engine for confidence-building, social cohesion, and sustainable development.

October 2022

The Sixth CICA Summit underscored the importance of utilizing the CICA platform to advance this objective.

September 2023

The CICA Ministerial Council adopted a Statement on Promoting Volunteerism for Sustainable Development.

October 2024

Kazakhstan hosted the First Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders.

December 2024

Senior Officials Committee recommended and Ministerial Council approved integrating volunteerism into the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures.

November 2025

The Azerbaijani Chairmanship continued these efforts in by organizing the Second Rally of Volunteers, which further strengthened youth networks and deepened professional ties across the region.
Through these milestone steps, CICA continues to strengthen cooperation among its Member States by advancing volunteerism as a cornerstone of confidence building, youth engagement and sustainable development. The following pages of our special section explore inspiring regional initiatives and showcase best practices.

Volunteering in CICA Member States: A Photo Exhibition on Advancing Sustainable



At COP29 volunteers participating in a tree-planting initiative

Azerbaijan, 2024



"Volunteers of Great Return" in support of the post-conflict return, reconstruction and restoration

Azerbaijan, 2024



Emergency food relief in Kurigram during the floods, standing with communities in crisis

Bangladesh, 2019

Volunteers are wading through waist-deep water to ensure aid reaches every corner of the community,during the flood in Feni

Bangladesh, 2024





Volunteer serving nutritious Iftar to underprivileged people during Ramadan in Dhaka

Bangladesh



Supporting persons with disabilities assessment of a beneficiary's mobility needs, Battambang Province

Cambodia, 2026

Volunteers conducting river water quality monitoring



China



Volunteers participating in a tree-planting initiative

China



Young volunteers supporting elderly care and promoting intergenerational solidarity through community service

India



Volunteers contributing to environmental sustainability through "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" tree-planting initiative

India



Krembo Wings volunteers promoting inclusion and friendship

Israel



Krembo Wings volunteers participating in an inclusive community trip

Israel



Volunteers planting saxaul trees on the bed of the Aral Sea, Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan



Volunteers of the nationwide "Taza Kazakhstan" environmental movement,

Kazakhstan, 2026



Participants of the Volunteer Forum marking the 2026 International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development

Kazakhstan, 2026



Red Crescent volunteer providing care and support to children

Kyrgyzstan



Volunteers contributing to environmental protection through tree planting

Kyrgyzstan



Volunteers promote inclusivity and community engagement through social and national initiatives

Qatar



Volunteering in Qatar fosters the participation of the younger generation and strengthens the spirit of solidarity within Qatari society

Qatar



Volunteers delivering and distributing humanitarian assistance to people affected by emergencies

Russia



Volunteers supporting animal welfare initiatives at an animal shelter

Russia



Volunteers cleaning the Anapa coastline following an oil spill in the Black Sea-

Russia, 2024-2025



"A Ripple of Kindness" volunteers promoting solidarity and the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development

Thailand, 2026



Public awareness campaign promoting the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development

Thailand, 2026



"The Power of Diverse Volunteers" Run Together for Inclusion initiative bringing together persons with disabilities and volunteers

Thailand



Inclusive activities promoting friendship and equal participation among children

Türkiye



Volunteers bringing joy and support to children through youth centre activities,

Türkiye



Young volunteers promoting community engagement and social initiatives

Uzbekistan



Youth volunteers supporting awareness and engagement through

Uzbekistan

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 in achieving sustainable growth.

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 sys-

temic 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 “Rupee-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.















Volunteering best practices of CICA Member States showcased at the UN Headquarters

New York, 15 July 2026 – On 13 and 14 July, the United Nations Headquarters hosted a series of events to showcase the impact of civic engagement across the Member States of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA).



Held on the margins of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), the two-day programme was organized by the Republic of Kazakhstan, supported by the Azerbaijani Chairmanship and CICA Secretariat in cooperation with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV).

The events began on 13 July with the official opening of the photo exhibition dedicated to Volunteering in CICA Member States. The visual impact of the exhibition provided a foundation for the discussions that followed on 14 July, when the distinguished panel of delegates gathered for the side event on “Best Practices in Volunteerism in CICA Member States” and presentation of a new e-publication “Review of Best Volunteerism Practices in CICA Member States” developed in cooperation with UNV.

Delivering opening remarks, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the UN Mr. Kairat Umarov underlined the growing global recognition of volunteerism as a key driver of the 2030 Agenda. He particularly noted the significance of the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026) – an initiative put forward in the UN by Kazakhstan's President H.E. Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and supported by 10 CICA Member States, as well as CICA Observer State Turkmenistan.

Describing volunteering as an expression of solidarity that transcends borders, Ambassador Umarov expressed confidence that the region's shared best practices would meaningfully contribute to the global goals.

In his welcome remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay highlighted the evolution of volunteerism within CICA tracing its path from initiation as track at the 2022 CICA Summit to the



2023 Ministerial Council's Statement on Promoting Volunteerism. He underscored that volunteerism has become an essential part of its Human Dimension and now serves as practical tool for confidence building among Member States, notably through its inclusion in the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures in 2024.

He noted that, while photo exhibition gives a human face to the initiatives by showcasing an inspiring dedication of volunteers, the presented publication is set to drive the cross-enrichment of knowledge, allowing Member States to build partnerships and launch joint initiatives.

Ms. Indira Hajiyeva, Deputy Minister of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan, delivered remarks on behalf of the CICA Youth Council. She expanded the human-centric approach by focusing on the role of youth engagement, social cohesion and people-to-people contacts. To translate focus on youth into concrete initiatives, she proposed establishment of a standing CICA Youth Volunteer Exchange mechanism, which would allow Member States to second young volunteers to each other's flagship events.



The dialogue featured support from the United Nations system with Mr. Haoliang Xu, UN Under Secretary General - UNDP Associate Administrator and Ms. Lotta Tähtinen, Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development (OISC) at UN DESA, delivering remarks on the importance of integrating volunteer efforts into broader sustainable development frameworks.

Mr. Narendra Mishra, Policy Specialist for Volunteerism Integration at the UNV, shared data about 2.1 billion people volunteering every month worldwide. He praised Kazakhstan for its successful national tracking of volunteer data and warmly welcomed CICA's focus on volunteerism as a vehicle for peace and resilience.

As part of the exchange, the Azerbaijani Chairmanship, guided by the theme "A Stronger CICA: Connectivity, Digitalization, and Sustainable Growth in Asia", emphasized its priority to deepen cooperation between CICA and the United Nations to advance sustainable development and youth empowerment.

The event provided a platform for Member States to share their practical achievements, highlighting a powerful movement of 21 million volunteers in Russia, Kazakhstan's comprehensive strategies to promote volunteerism agenda on the global stage and volunteer practices across urban and rural areas in Bangladesh. With the international community actively observing IVY 2026, the events demonstrated important role of volunteers in driving sustainable development and solidarity.








ENGLISH
FRENCH
NARMIN AHANGARI
INDIRA HAJIYEVA


LOTTA TAHTINEN




SPANISH
KAIRAT SARYBAY
HAOLIANG XU
LOTTA TAHTINEN






NARMIN AHANGARI
INDIRA HAJIY



Minister of Youth and Sports of Azerbaijan visited the CICA headquarters in Astana

Astana, 29 July 2026 – Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay met with Farid Gayibov, Minister of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Azerbaijan, who arrived in Kazakhstan to attend the opening ceremony of the Games of the Future 2026 international multi-sport tournament.

The talks focused on advancing the youth agenda during Azerbaijan's current Chairmanship. Expressing appreciation to the Azerbaijani side for the excellent organisation of the Ninth Meeting of the Youth Council in Baku this June, the CICA Secretary General underscored that the debate tournament and robotics competition held on its margins had set a fine example of practical engagement among young people from CICA countries.

With the Games of the Future 2026 under way in Astana, the two sides discussed sport as an effective tool for bringing young people together. Noting the unifying potential of sport and Azerbaijan's experience in hosting major international events, Secretary General Sarybay invited the Azerbaijani side to consider an initiative to hold the first CICA Youth Sports Games. A delegation of volunteers accompanied Minister Gayibov on his visit to Astana.

During the conversation, the young delegates showed keen interest in the prospects for international exchanges and the role of volunteerism in global diplomacy. Answering their questions in the context of the International Year of Volunteers, Secretary General Sarybay shared the outcomes of the recent CICA side event at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, noting that the presentation of best volunteering practices of the Member States had shown how the CICA region contributes to global development and to support for volunteer initiatives.

The delegates from Azerbaijan toured the Headquarters building and visited the library and the museum, where they viewed souvenirs and gifts from the Member States, kept at the Secretariat as a symbol of friendship and of the cultural diversity of the CICA region.



CICA volunteerism Agenda Presented at the First CIS Volunteer Forum in Astana as a Confidence Building Tool

Astana, 20 August 2026 – Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay took part in the First Volunteer Forum of the Commonwealth of Independent States.



The opening ceremony began with a welcoming address by President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, read out by Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Culture and Information Aida Balayeva.

In his message, the President of Kazakhstan noted the symbolic significance of holding the Forum during the International Volunteer Year for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026), declared by the UN General Assembly at the initiative of Kazakhstan. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev emphasized that Kazakhstan regards volunteering as a vital instrument of people-to-people diplomacy and confidence building, state support for which is now enshrined in the country's new Constitution.

In his address, Secretary General Sarybay drew attention to how closely the theme of the Forum – Unity through Volunteering: Partnership, Trust, Development – resonates with the mission of CICA, which is aimed at building sustained dialogue and an atmosphere of good-neighbourliness across the Asian continent. He noted that volunteerism has moved swiftly from a political initiative to-



genuine practical engagement. This was facilitated by the inclusion of volunteerism in the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures in 2024 as a priority area under the Human Dimension.

Forum participants were briefed on the successful CICA events held on the margins of the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York this July, which featured a side event and a photo exhibition, along with the presentation of an e-publication on best practices of the CICA Member States, available on the official website of the CICA Secretariat.

Secretary General Sarybay underscored the potential of the global volunteer movement, which today brings together more than two billion people worldwide, and called for the momentum of the International Volunteer Year to be used to move from sharing experience to joint practical action and to transform individual initiatives into long-term sustainable partnerships. Later the same day, Secretary General Sarybay met with Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers Toily Kurbanov at the CICA Headquarters. The two sides reviewed the implementation of joint initiatives under IVY 2026 and noted the importance of sustaining the momentum gained once the Year concludes.

During the conversation particular attention was given to the e-publication on best volunteering practices of the CICA Member States, presented at the United Nations Headquarters on 17 July this year. Recognizing the importance of promoting volunteer initiatives, the two sides agreed to jointly promote the publication, making active use of the information resources of both organizations.

The meeting outlined new prospects for cooperation between CICA and the United Nations Volunteers, in particular, joint work on the substantive content of a round table on volunteering in Asia, which the Ministry of Culture and


SEMAINE SUR LA
LUTTE CONTRE LE
TERRORISME
COUNTER-TERRORISM
WEEK

July

CICA Reaffirms Commitment to Global Measures to Counter the Terrorist Threat

New York, 29-30 June 2026 – Deputy Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Mr. Farid Damirli addressed the Fourth UN High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter Terrorism Agencies organized during the Counter Terrorism Week under the theme “A Future Free From Terrorism: Consolidating the Global Commitment to Multi-Stakeholder Approaches to Counter-Terrorism through Member States' Leadership and Action”.



The conference opened with a keynote address by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, who called for reinforced global solidarity and a renewed international focus on the causes of violent extremism. This call to action was further underscored by while Acting Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism Alexandre Zouev with emphasizing the essential role of regional organizations and multilateral organizations in implementing these strategies on the ground.

Aligning with the vision of the UN leadership, in his statement during the thematic working session “Strengthening Coordination and Coherence Through Networked Multilateralism”, CICA Deputy Secretary General Damirli highlighted the importance of multilateral efforts in combating the evolving threat of global terrorism. He outlined CICA’s active collaboration with a wide network of global partners aimed at expanding the reach across 28 Member States, highlighting successfully established cooperation frameworks with key international bodies.

Deputy Secretary General Damirli reaffirmed CICA’s steadfast commitment to partnering with the United Nations in counter-terrorism efforts and praised the expanding collaboration with the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), building upon the formal partnership established between the two organizations in April 2024. This cooperation is set to be further institutionalized through a proposed Memorandum of Understanding aimed at creating new avenues for joint operational projects and reinforcing the shared commitment.

He further underlined that practical co-operation among Member States is driven by the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures, where “Combating Terrorism” serves as one of the priority areas within the "New Challenges and Threats" dimension.

Deputy Secretary General Damirli recalled that the initial commitment was forged at the First CICA Summit in 2002 with the adoption of the Declaration on Eliminating Terrorism and Promoting Dialogue among Civilizations, and later culminated in a milestone at the Sixth CICA Summit in Astana in 2022, when CICA Member States adopted the CICA Plan of Action on the Implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, a document he underscored as the most comprehensive regional framework of its kind in Asia.

This year’s conference served as the flagship event of the Fourth Counter-Terrorism Week, bringing together international leaders, regional organizations and civil society to strengthen multilateral cooperation and advance the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.





The forum concluded with a forward-looking focus on the upcoming ninth review of the Strategy, emphasizing the critical need for inclusive, coordinated, and sustainable approaches to address the shifting global threat landscape.

CICA Skills Competition Concludes in Guangzhou, Fostering Trust and Regional Cooperation

Guangzhou, 3 July 2026 – Fostering regional cooperation and technical excellence, the CICA Skills Competition officially concluded in Guangzhou, China. Themed “Trust & Skills, Craft our Future” and hosted by the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, Guangzhou Municipal People’s Government and Guangdong Lingnan Institute of Technology, the event provided an effective platform for advancing technical exchange and building mutual trust.



During the closing ceremony on July 3, representatives from the Foreign Ministries of China and Azerbaijan, Guangdong Province, Guangzhou Municipality and the ACFTU marked the successful conclusion of the competition, noting its impact in fostering people-to-people connections, inclusion and social cohesion.

Speaking on behalf of the organizers, Ms. Ma Lu of the ACFTU, underscored that CICA serves as an important multilateral mechanism for elevating professional standards across the continent. She noted that the event provided a unique opportunity for workers from CICA Member and Observer States to demonstrate their high-level technical skills, underscoring that national development relies on such high-quality labor.

Highlighting the ACFTU’s 100th Anniversary in 2025, an occasion marked by President Xi Jinping’s call to enhance worker talent for international outreach, Ms. Ma Lu reaffirmed the federation’s commitment to these goals by intensifying efforts to foster professional talent, promote technical excellence and expand practical cooperation across CICA.

Addressing the participants, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay noted that professional skills today ex-

tend beyond technical expertise, acting as drivers of innovation, social advancement and long-term sustainable growth. He further emphasized that with technological change and digitalization reshaping the global economy, vocational education and technical excellence have become essential pillars for economic integration and regional resilience.

Navigating these complex shifts demands continuous learning and strengthened international cooperation. In this context, Secretary General Sarybay highlighted China's commitment as an active Member State to contributing its expertise to support CICA's shared goals. He concluded that initiatives like Skills Competition in Guangzhou are instrumental in advancing CICA's ongoing transformation into an action-oriented organization, directly fostering regional trust through meaningful practical cooperation.

Mr. Javid Nasirli, Deputy Director of the Regional Security of Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry, stressed that the Azerbaijani Chairmanship's firm commitment to advancing the organization's agenda and emphasized that practical engagement at various level plays a crucial role in strengthening regional cohesion and implementing confidence building measures.

Ambassador of the MFA of China Mr. Yan Wenbin emphasized the growing international role of CICA, reaffirming China's steadfast support for the organization. He noted that China's commitment to the CICA process is a long-standing priority, dating back to its two terms as Chair. Building upon this legacy of leadership, all initiatives championed by Beijing, including this competition, are designed to strengthen dialogue and multifaceted cooperation.

In this spirit, Mr. Zhang Guang, Director General of the China Workers' Center for International Exchange of the ACFTU, unveiled the "Initiative on CICA Worker Skills Exchange", aiming to foster talent development and deepen practical collaboration across the continent.

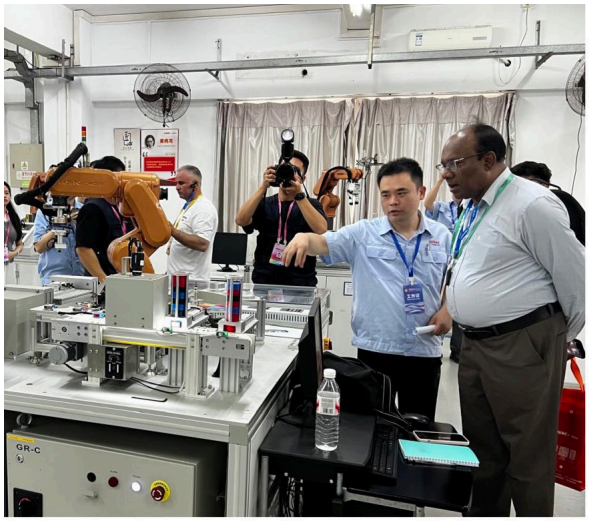
The discussion on China's significant contribution to the CICA process was further continued on the sidelines of the event during Secretary General Sarybay's meeting with Ambassador Yan Wenbin. Secretary General Sarybay expressed his deep appreciation for Beijing's financial and human resource contributions, as well as its proactive engagement in implementing confidence building measures. The sides also reviewed the current CICA agenda, including preparations for



the upcoming CICA Summit in Baku. CICA Skills Competition brought together 73 participants from 18 Member States and 5 Observer States. Contestants demonstrated their expertise across three specialized disciplines, including bricklaying, UAV assembly and the intelligent operation and inspection of high-voltage cables. A total of 41 contestants earned medals, with first-place medals awarded to participants from China and Mongolia in bricklaying, China and Uzbekistan in UAV assembly, and China and Pakistan in high-voltage cable operation.

Beyond the competitive events, the program emphasized innovation and knowledge exchange through thematic seminars and technical visits. Participants visited leading Chinese enterprises and vocational institutions, such as XPENG Motors' intelligent manufacturing base, China Southern Power Grid Science and Technology Exchange Center and Guangzhou GSK Vocational Training Institute. Thematic seminars explored Guangdong's approach to vocational education and industrial competitiveness, alongside practical applications of drone technologies for intelligent infrastructure inspection.

To commemorate the competition, contestants from the bricklaying category combined their skills to construct a special commemorative wall on the campus of Guangdong Lingnan Institute of Technology.









CICA Fund Project Launched with Regional Youth Workshop on Nature-Based Solutions

July 7, 2026 — The Online Regional Training and Co-Learning Workshop on Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) was successfully convened, serving as the official launch event for the CICA Fund's project "Empowering Youth of CICA Member States for Climate Action through Nature-Based Solutions (NbS): Building a Climate-Resilient Society through Enhanced Regional Co-operation". Jointly organized by Community Development for Peace (CDP), Bangladesh and BRAC University, this online workshop initiated the project's mission to foster regional climate resilience across CICA Member States.



During the opening part, Mr. Muhammad Ferdaus, Executive Director of CDP, emphasized that climate change has long transcended purely environmental concerns, evolving into a profound socio-economic issue that demands a collective response. He noted that the project is designed to establish a collaborative regional platform where young leaders can integrate scientific approaches with traditional knowledge to create sustainable ecosystem solutions.

Ms. Zhang Ling, CICA Deputy Secretary General, in her opening remarks noted that climate governance in the CICA region requires more inclusiveness, as young people, despite their innovative thoughts and deep connection with local communities, remain largely excluded from decision-making processes. She emphasized that this CICA-funded project seeks to bridge that gap by empowering young leaders to drive practical, nature-based solutions through innovation. She expressed confidence that the workshop would equip participants with the essential tools to successfully present their ideas at the upcoming Hackathon and gain valuable, hands-on experience during the planned field visit.

Representing the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Mr.

Md. Shakil Sahrior, Director of the Regional Organizations Wing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, delivered special remarks and highlighted the efforts of Bangladesh in investing in ecosystem restoration and wetland conservation, anchored by the Sundarbans mangroves which protect millions from cyclones. He stressed the urgency of scaling nature-based solutions (NbS) in national strategies, noting that the CICA framework offers an ideal platform to share innovation, technology and financing across its Member States.

The workshop's agenda focused on providing practical tools for field implementation. Dr. Imon Chowdhooree, Associate Professor at BRAC University and Executive Director of CARSHA, delivered a keynote on blending ecological preservation with development planning. Following this, Mr. Tasfin Aziz, Senior Lecturer at BRAC University and former IUCN Bangladesh technical lead, conducted a training session on identifying and scoring nature-based solutions using the IUCN Global Standard and its self-assessment tool.

The event sets the stage for a multi-phase regional roadmap designed to translate theoretical knowledge into hands-on action. The participants will also compete in the online CICA Youth NbS Hackathon, followed by an online mentoring and evaluation session with international experts. The initiative will culminate with an in-person field visit to Bangladesh, where participants will get hands-on experience with community-led climate solutions supported by CDP.



"CICA Talks" series continues with second lecture on the ancient Turkic Empire

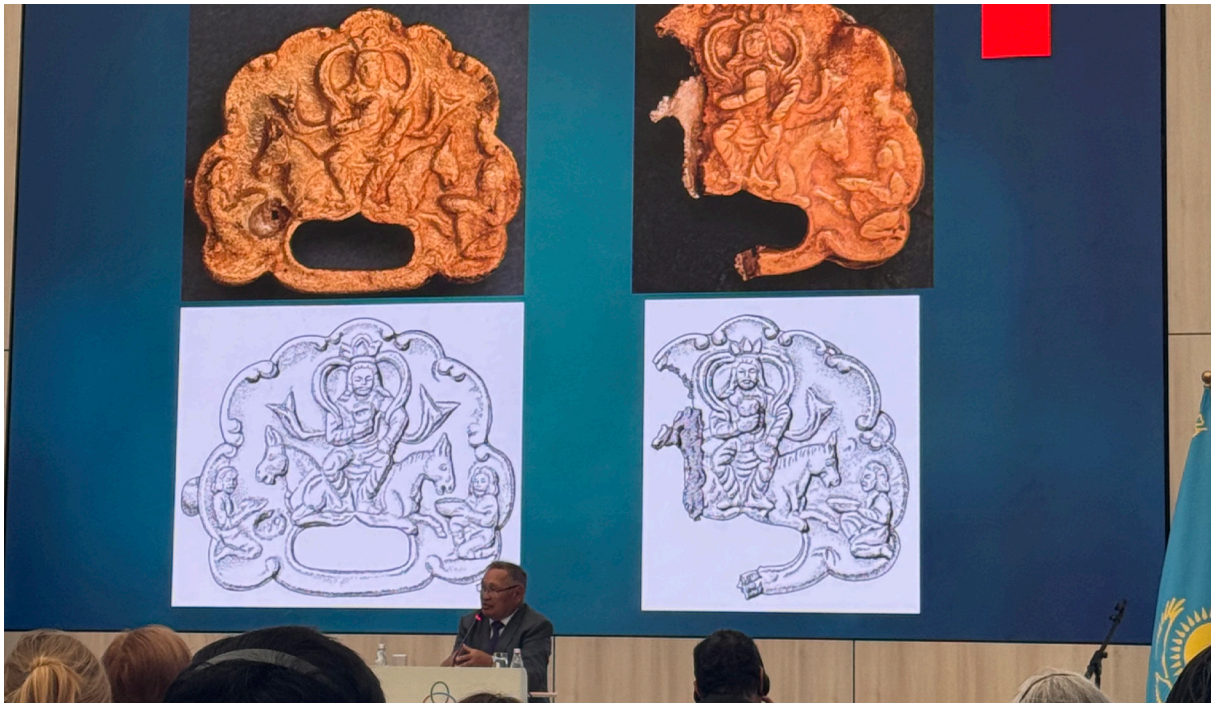
Astana, 8 July 2026 – The "CICA Talks: History and Heritage of Asia" lecture series continued with its second event, providing diplomatic corps in Astana with a platform to explore the Asian region's rich history through expert-led lectures. Hosted at the CICA Headquarters, lecture featured a presentation by Dr. Zaynolla Samashev, a leading Kazakhstani archaeologist, Doctor of Historical Sciences and founder of the Astana branch of the Margulan Institute of Archaeology.



Opening the lecture, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay emphasized that this initiative, launched in May as part of a broader series of events commemorating the 20th anniversary of the CICA Secretariat, is united with other Secretariat's activities by a single purpose to build trust and strengthen dialogue.

In this regard, he noted that while the era of ancient empires and early states has long evolved into the modern international system, the fundamental pursuit of peace, stability and cooperation remains as unifying force for the region today. Secretary General Sarybay stressed that learning from the past helps diplomats better understand the common values that continue to shape regional diplomacy. During the lecture, Dr. Zaynolla Samashev presented key findings from his research group's excavations at the 8th-century Eleke Sazy cult-memorial complex in East Kazakhstan. He explained that the layout and architectural scale of the complex provide archaeological proof of a developed state system. The site closely mirrors the famous imperial monuments discovered along the Orkhon River (in present-day Mongolia), which underscores a unified political tradition and structural continuity across the Turkic Khaganate.

The presentation focused on the organization of this memorial complex



that confirms the supreme status of the ruler. Dr. Samashev demonstrated that the elite artifacts found at the site, such as gold imperial emblems with the Khagan's image, served as official state symbols to reinforce the ruler's political legitimacy and divine mandate.

The lecture further transitioned into a Q&A session with the diplomatic audience, reflecting the event's aim to encourage meaningful discussions through direct engagement with leading historians, researchers and experts to complement diplomatic work with broader cultural and historical perspectives. During the exchange, participants discussed development of academic contacts and networks between research institutes across nations.

Dr. Samashev outlined different formats for cross-border scientific interaction. He specifically noted the sponsorship funding provided by international organizations for certain joint research projects. This collaborative dynamic reflects with CICA's core vision of building bridges and establishing multifaceted ties between Member States and regional organizations across various fields of mutual interest.










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CICA Deputy Secretary General Participates in the 4th Shusha Global Media Forum, Highlights Media as "New-Generation Diplomacy"

Shusha, 14 July, 2026 – To explore “The Mission of the Media in Promoting Peace: Restoring Truth and Rebuilding Trust” Azerbaijan’s cultural capital hosted the 4th Shusha Global Media Forum.



Demonstrating its growing global appeal, the event brought together over 160 participants from 54 countries to drive effective networking across the media community, government agencies, and international entities. This dynamic gathering united communications experts with representatives from 30 international news agencies, more than 60 leading media organizations, and 10 international bodies.

During the first day of the Forum, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev engaged with the participants in a broad, high-level dialogue. His insights into pressing geopolitical issues, regional connectivity and the wider peace agenda provided a comprehensive framework for the Forum's expert panel sessions. On the second day, 14 July, the official opening ceremony featured welcoming remarks by Mr. Hikmat Hajiyev, Assistant to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Head of the Foreign Policy Affairs Department of the Presidential Administration. Noting that the information space and media are increasingly utilized as tools of influence, he underscored Shusha's significance as a platform for generating new perspectives on today's complex global realities. To effectively navigate this landscape, Assistant to President Hajiyev highlighted Azerbaijan’s comprehensive modernization of its media environment, emphasizing that digital innovation must advance alongside digital responsibility, with the well-being of the younger generation

placed at the center of policymaking.

Echoing this call for responsible journalism, the first panel discussion explored media's role in encouraging dialogue, supporting public discourse and contributing to peacebuilding. This was followed by the second session, where speakers focused on media's responsibility in reporting on post-conflict recovery and urban renewal narratives.

Speaking at the third panel on media diplomacy, CICA Deputy Secretary General Ms. Zhang Ling emphasized media's role in political and public dialogue and its mission to build trust and enhance mutual understanding among people. To gain greater public understanding and support, she encouraged journalists to focus more on the broad agendas of international organizations in addressing global challenges, calling for impartial and comprehensive coverage of their work.

Reaffirming CICA's mission to transform dialogue into actionable cooperation, Deputy Secretary General Zhang urged the media to spotlight CICA Member States' practical collaboration, particularly in transportation connectivity, sustainable green development and women's empowerment.

Beyond the main panels, the Forum's agenda also included one-on-one discussions and dedicated side events. These specialized formats tackled emerging industry challenges, exploring topics such as coordinated media responses to disinformation, growing influence of artificial intelligence on visual storytelling and social media ethics, future of the radio industry and the importance of cross-border media solidarity in the digital environment.

Since its launch in 2022 by the Media Development Agency (MEDIA), the Shusha Global Media Forum has emerged as an international platform dedicated to navigating new challenges in the global information space, fostering mutual understanding and the restoration of public trust.









CICA Senior Officials Committee Meeting Held in Astana Ahead of Seventh Summit

Astana, 22 July 2026 – The Republic of Azerbaijan chaired the regular meeting of the Senior Officials Committee (SOC) of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA).



In his opening remarks, Mr. Azer Musayev, Director of the Department of Regional Security of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, emphasized the importance of the meeting ahead of the Seventh CICA Summit, scheduled for 15 October 2026.

The meeting focused on reviewing draft documents to be proposed for adoption by the Heads of State at the Baku Summit. Delegates held extensive discussions on the draft CICA Charter. The Azerbaijani Chairmanship emphasized that its adoption remains one of the priorities aimed at further institutional strengthening of CICA and the implementation of the Astana Statement on CICA Transformation and the corresponding Road Map.

Delegates paid particular attention to the draft Baku Declaration of the Seventh CICA Summit. The Chairman noted that the draft Declaration reflects the theme of the Chairmanship – “Stronger CICA: Connectivity, Digitalization and Sustainable Growth in Asia”. He further noted that the Declaration underscores the progress made in the institutionalization of CICA, in particular, the establishment of the Women Council, the Finance Summit and the launch of the practical activities of the Partnership Network of Leading Universities.

It was highlighted that the document covers a broad range of priorities of the CICA Member States – from confidence building measures, regional connectivity

and SME support to environmental issues, energy cooperation, digitalization, and the development of artificial intelligence and innovation. In addition, it underscores the importance of enhancing CICA's partnership with the UN and other international institutions.

Delegates also reviewed the draft CICA Statement on Cooperation in the Field of Work Safety and Health, jointly initiated by the Azerbaijani Chairmanship and China.
On the topic of external relations, participants discussed progress on the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the CICA Secretariat and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and expressed hope for its successful finalization.
As part of efforts to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity, the Committee reviewed the draft updated Staff Matrix and other personnel-related matters.

During the meeting, the Committee heard brief reports on the organization's current agenda. Secretary General Kairat Sarybay informed delegates of the Afghan side's interest in resuming its participation in CICA activities. In this regard, reference was made to the first CICA Fund project on the provision of humanitarian assistance to farmers from the provinces of Central Afghanistan. The project was jointly funded by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS), the Republic of Türkiye, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) and CICA.

In his remarks, the CICA Secretary General also called on the Member States to expedite the ratification of the Convention on Privileges and Immunities.
Ambassador Kairat Sarybay further informed delegates of the events dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the Secretariat, among which he particularly highlighted the Round Table of Executive Structures of Regional Organizations in Asia. Noting the substantive nature of the discussions and the shared determination to translate political commitments into practical cooperation, the Secretary General outlined a number of recommendations developed at the meeting. These included enhancing the partnership between the UN and regional organizations, consolidating interaction in Asia with a view to avoiding duplication of efforts and promoting the diplomacy of trust. In addition, the participants recommended holding the Round Table on a regular basis and establishing a regional observatory for monitoring connectivity.

The Committee received an update on the CICA Fund's current project activities. The launch of a special section on the CICA website was also announced, which will feature research and analytical materials from participants of the CICA Think Tank Forum.

As part of the review of new information products, particular attention was drawn to the publication Review of Best Volunteerism Practices in CICA Member States, recently unveiled in New York, as well as to the updated version of the e-publication SME Landscape in Asia,



the revised content of which will be presented at the Business Forum in September 2026.

The exchange of views enabled the Member States to continue drafting documents for consideration at the Seventh CICA Summit and confirmed their commitment to further strengthening dialogue, cooperation and confidence building measures in Asia.

















Sharing experiences and strengthening practical cooperation: CICA Member States hold a workshop on the sidelines of the ICT-Crime-2026 Conference

St. Petersburg, 23-24 July 2026 – The Third International Conference on Countering Crimes Committed Using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) – ICT-Crime 2026, held under the auspices of the Interagency Organizing Committee, brought together representatives of federal authorities, the Russian business community, as well as academic and public circles.



This year, the forum reaffirmed its role as a recognized platform for dialogue, with its relevance continuing to grow rapidly amid global digital transformation and new cross-border challenges.

Speaking at the forum's opening ceremony, Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay emphasized that digital transformation offers unprecedented opportunities for innovation, economic growth and improved quality of life, while also giving rise to new, multidimensional and cross-border challenges. In this context, Kairat Sarybay underscored the key role of the synergy of efforts at all levels, noting that effective action against cybercrime is impossible without concerted efforts by states, international organizations, the expert community and the private sector.

During the plenary session, participants held a substantive discussion on countering crimes committed using ICTs and developing practical measures to improve the effectiveness of international information exchange and inter-



governmental cooperation in this area. Building on the tradition established last year, the Russian Federation, as coordinator of the priority area "Security of and in the use of ICTs", organized a workshop on the margins of the ICT-Crime 2026 Forum with the participation of CICA Member States to further exchange experience in countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes. The event was moderated by Deputy Director of the Department of International Information Security of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a member of the Conference's Interagency Organizing Committee Ernest Chernukhin.

Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for International Cooperation in the Field of Information Security and Director of the relevant department at the Russian Foreign Ministry Artur Lyukmanov stressed that Russia is consistently promoting the information security agenda at both the global and regional levels. The speaker described strategic cooperation with international partners as an important element of this multifaceted work, noting that one of the practical manifestations of this has been the recent establishment of the Artificial Intelligence Coalition, a global alliance aimed at the joint development and regulation of AI technologies. This is complemented by another key development in global security – the UN General Assembly's approval by consensus of the Convention against Cybercrime, developed at the initiative of the Russian Federation.

The discussion on strengthening international cooperation was continued by CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay. Addressing the forum, he stressed that amid global cyber challenges, trust plays a significant role in ensuring security, and that the activities of CICA, bringing together 28 states and covering 90 per cent of Asia's territory, have been guided by this principle for more than three decades.

The Secretary General highlighted the inextricable link between regional efforts and the global security architecture. He noted that CICA's activities naturally complement the UN agenda and are aligned with such steps by the international community as the adoption of the Convention against Cybercrime and the launch of the Global Mechanism on developments in the field of ICTs, the first substantive session of which is being held concurrently at the UN Headquarters in New York.

Kairat Sarybay commended Russia's efforts as coordinator of the priority area "Security of and in the use of ICTs" under the new challenges and threats dimension of CICA. As an example of successful work, he cited the CICA Leaders' Statement on Cooperation in the Field of Security of and in the Use of ICTs, the draft of which was prepared by the Russian side and adopted at the Sixth Summit in 2022.

Kairat Sarybay pointed out that the

endorsement of such approaches first within CICA and subsequently through the adoption of the relevant Convention by the UN suggests that the regional format has the potential to project its influence onto the global level.

The topic of international cooperation was further explored by UNODC expert Markus Stemeseder. He briefed the participants on the current status of the Convention against Cybercrime, which was opened for signature in Hanoi in October 2025 and has already been joined by more than 75 countries. The expert called on states to engage in substantive work to ensure the practical implementation of the document. Discussions during the workshop's four thematic sessions confirmed the high level of interest among CICA countries in deepening practical partnership: the participants exchanged experiences in responding to cross-border cyberattacks, discussed ways to harmonize legislation and improve digital literacy, and addressed challenges related to the use of artificial intelligence for terrorist purposes.

The workshop reaffirmed the relevance of CICA as an effective multilateral platform that facilitates the exchange of experiences, the strengthening of professional ties and the promotion of practical cooperation among Member States.





August

CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay Promotes Regional Environmental Cooperation at UNCCD COP17 in Ulaanbaatar

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia – 24-25 August 2026 – Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay attended the Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP17) in Ulaanbaatar upon the invitation of the Government of Mongolia.



Opening the high-level segment, H.E. Mr. Ukhnaa Khurelsukh, President of Mongolia, called for immediate unified action backed by scientific innovation and financial commitment to combat desertification and drought as an existential threat affecting 3 billion people. Outlining Mongolia's COP17 presidency priorities, anchored in nature-based solutions and integrated land management, President Khurelsukh underscored that bridging traditional nomadic wisdom with modern innovations like AI is crucial to protecting our shared future.

On the sidelines of COP17, CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay held a bilateral meeting with the COP17 President, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia H.E. Ms. Battsetseg Batmunkh. Secretary General Sarybay briefed the Foreign Minister on CICA's key achievements under the Azerbaijani Chairmanship and ongoing preparations for the 7th CICA Summit in Baku. The sides reviewed progress on CICA's institutional track, including the growing network of its advisory bodies with newly established Women Council and Finance Summit.

Highlighting Mongolia's dual role as COP17 President and coordinator for the Environment Protection priority area under the CICA Environmental Dimension, Secretary General underscored that the country's efforts perfectly bridge regional

cooperation with global objectives, unlocking vital synergies between CICA and the UN to tackle shared climate challenges.

As part of the UNCCD COP17 framework, CICA Secretary General Sarybay joined the Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries on Land Degradation, Desertification and Drought to advance action on land restoration, drought resilience, water, rangelands and food systems.

Commending Mongolia's leadership as COP17 host, he noted that the country brings direct national experience of the interconnection between land degradation, drought, livelihoods and sustainable development.



Secretary General Sarybay emphasized that for landlocked countries, true connectivity extends beyond transit corridors, expanding on the concept of sustainable connectivity by highlighting that infrastructure and ecology must support each other. He further highlighted CICA initiatives, including the upcoming CICA Conference of Heads of Ports in Baku, which will focus on promoting green transport and environmental sustainability.



Concluding his remarks with the message that "landlocked should never mean disconnected", Secretary General Sarybay underlined that regional platforms like CICA complement UN efforts by connecting national, subregional and global processes to translate dialogue into practical cooperation, ensuring that environmental resilience becomes an integral part of connectivity and development across the continent.

Against this backdrop of pressing global challenges, CICA aligned regional efforts with the objectives of UNCCD COP17 through a joint panel session hosted at the Türkiye Pavilion by the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change of the Republic of Türkiye with the support of the CICA Secretariat.

Entitled "Sustainable Land Management and Ecosystem Restoration in the CICA Region: Why It Matters", the panel brought together international experts, researchers and representatives of Member States to exchange practical solutions on drought resilience, rangeland management and land degradation neutrality, reinforcing CICA's commitment to sustainable development and ecolog-

ical security across the Asian continent.

In his welcoming remarks, Secretary General Sarybay emphasized that despite diverse Asian landscapes, CICA Member States share a common understanding of interconnected environmental threats, including climate change, land degradation, biodiversity loss and drought.

Positioning CICA as a bridge between UN frameworks and regional action, he noted that CICA Member States unite their efforts to translate shared experience into practical cooperation. He underscored CICA's advancing environmental agenda, which builds on the first-ever CICA Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues of 2024, Azerbaijan's COP29 legacy and the corresponding priorities of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship, paving the way for further engagement in major environmental fora of this year, such the UNFCCC COP31 in Antalya and the UN Water Conference in Abu Dhabi.

The panel featured diverse perspectives on combating land degradation and other related topics within the panel's theme. The event was addressed by the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Mongolia Mr. Almas Seitakynov who outlined several national priorities in this area.

The discussion covered diverse approaches to ecosystem restoration, with experts providing a comprehensive overview of how targeted and resilient practices can safeguard ecosystems across the region.

Mr. Burak Avcıoğlu, International Forestry Specialist representing the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations, presented on Central Asian initiatives and land degradation monitoring. Turkish representatives Mr. Muhammed Ali Özderya from General Directorate of Forestry and Ms. Zehra Kavaklı Karataş from General Directorate of Combating Desertification and Erosion shared national experiences in forest and rangeland restoration, while Dr. Abdelaziz Hajjaji Programme Manager of the Secretariat of the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS), highlighted drought resilience and rangeland well-being as vital factors for food security.




Türkiye
Türkiye




COP17
Türkiye
Türkiye


UZBEKISTAN
NATIONAL PAVILION


Government of India
INDIA
UNCCD-COP 17
COP17
ULAANBAATAR, MONGOLIA


RUSSIAN FEDERATION
PAVILION


UZBEKISTAN
NATIONAL PAVILION
UZBEKISTAN
NATIONAL PAVILION


CHINA


MONGOLIA


VOICE of
the desert
KYRGYZSTAN
MONGOLIA
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«ШКУ ПЛЮС» ЖОЛУГУШУУСУ
2026-жылдын 1-сентябры, Бишкек
"上海合作组织+"会议
2026年9月1日，比什凯克
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ВСТРЕЧА «ШОС ПЛЮС»
1 сентября 2026 года, Бишкек
«SCO PLUS» MEETING
September 1, 2026, Bishkek

September

CICA Secretary General Takes Part in SCO Plus Meeting and Opening of the 6th World Nomad Games in Bishkek

Bishkek, 1 September 2026 – Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay paid a working visit to Bishkek to take part in the "SCO Plus" meeting held within the framework of the 26th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, chaired by President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Zhaparov.



The event, held to mark the 25th anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, was attended by the leaders of the SCO Member States, the Observer State Mongolia, the Dialogue Partners Azerbaijan, Armenia, Egypt, Laos and Türkiye, the guests of the Chairing State Vietnam and Togo, as well as the heads of the executive bodies of the United Nations, the CIS, the CSTO and the EAEU.

The central focus of the discussions, held

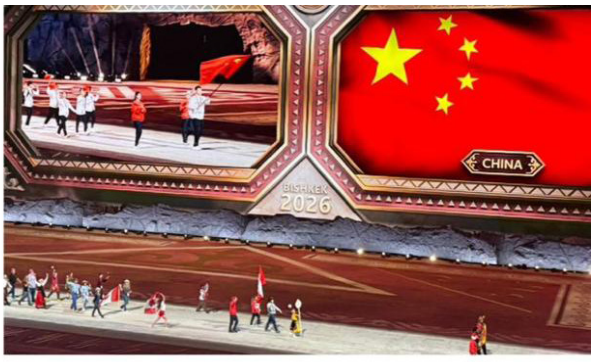
under the main theme of the event – The United Nations as a Key Element of a Just World Order: The Contribution of States and Regional Associations to Shaping a Multipolar World – was the constructive role of the United Nations. The approaches of the meeting's participants to strengthening multilateralism and the primacy of the UN Charter fully reflect the vision of CICA, which has consistently advocated for the development of inclusive dialogue and practical confidence building measures across the Asian continent.

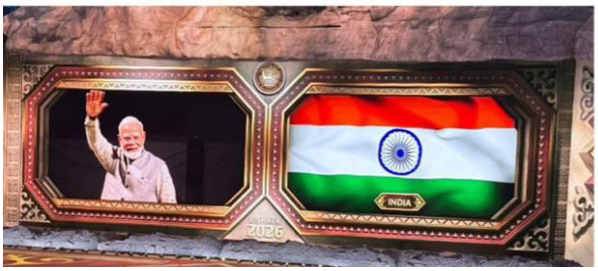
The discussion further underscored the need for close interaction between the United Nations and regional formats, as well as the need to strengthen synergy among multilateral structures in the interests of developing collective solutions. For its part, CICA contributes to the practical implementation of this approach: an important step in strengthening dialogue was the Roundtable of Executive Structures of Regional Organizations in Asia, held on 17 June 2026 and aimed at aligning efforts in the interests of the region's sustainable development.
It is symbolic that the current and incoming SCO Chairs – Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan – play an active role in CICA. For SCO and CICA, which have been partner organizations since 2014, the overlapping membership of States serves as a natural connecting link, while also underscoring the relevance of synergy whereby multilateral institutions do not duplicate, but rather complement one another in ensuring security and stability in the region.

On the margins of the SCO meeting, Secretary General of CICA Kairat Sarybay held a bilateral meeting with Vice President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Ms. Võ Thị Ánh Xuân. During the conversation, the sides held a thorough discussion of the CICA agenda ahead of the upcoming 7th Summit in Baku. Secretary General Sarybay expressed appreciation to Vietnam for its firm commitment to the principles of multilateralism and its support for the institutional development of CICA.

The day before, on 31 August, at the invitation of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Zheenbek Kulubaev, Secretary General Sarybay took part in the official opening ceremony of the 6th World Nomad Games, held at the Bishkek Arena stadium.










KAZAKHSTAN
BISHKEK
2026


MONGOLIA
BISHKEK
2026


RUSSIA
BISHKEK
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TAJIKISTAN
BISHKEK
2026


TÜRKIYE
BISHKEK
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UZBEKISTAN
BISHKEK
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REPUBLIC OF KOREA
BISHKEK
2026


KYRGYZSTAN
BISHKEK
2026

President of the Lao PDR Visits CICA Headquarters, Signals Aspiration for Full CICA Membership

Astana, 4 September 2026 – H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith, President and General Secretary of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, visited the Headquarters of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in Astana marking a historic milestone in the engagement between the Lao PDR and CICA.



President Thongloun Sisoulith noted that the multifaceted challenges of today's world demand enhanced cooperation among nations. In this context, he commended CICA as a driving force that successfully advances mutual trust and stability, both among its Member States and within the broader global community.

Emphasizing the profound relevance of the organization's multidimensional approach, particularly across political, economic and social, President Sisoulith stated that Laos deeply values CICA's practical activities. Recognizing the importance of CICA, President signaled Laos's aspiration to elevate its status to a full-fledged Member State, noting that this intent aligns with the foreign policy priorities of the Lao PDR.

Looking ahead to the 7th CICA Summit, President Sisoulith conveyed his strong interest in participating in the upcoming high-level meeting in Baku.

In his remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay outlined CICA's progress from its initiation by Kazakhstan in 1992 to becoming pan-Asian intergovernmental platform uniting 28 Member States and 10 Observer States. He highlighted CICA's ongoing transformation into a full-fledged international organization, currently being advanced under the Chairmanship of Azerbaijan.

Secretary General Sarybay further recalled negotiations with H.E. Mr. Thongsavanh Phomvihane, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Laos during the first-ever visit to Vientiane in April 2026 and expressed deep appreciation for the country's commitment to the CICA process as an Observer State since 2017.

Expanding on the organization's broader regional focus, Secretary General Sarybay emphasized the importance of strengthening CICA's engagement with Southeast Asia and developing dialogue with ASEAN. He underlined that CICA and ASEAN share much in common in their approaches to regional cooperation, including a shared commitment to dialogue, consensus, respect for diversity and practical cooperation. Secretary General highlighted practical steps toward this cooperation including talks with ASEAN Secretary General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn in Jakarta earlier this year and the first CICA-ASEAN online consultations in May 2025.
Pointing to the potential for closer synergy between the two organizations,



CICA Secretary General emphasized the unique bridging role of Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam through their dual membership.

Accompanied by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan H.E. Mr. Mukhtar Tleuberdi, President Thongloun Sisoulith's visit to the CICA Headquarters served as an integral part of his official visit to Kazakhstan.



Strengthening Financial Cooperation: CICA Finance Summit Holds Inaugural Meeting in Astana

Astana, 8 September 2026 –The inaugural meeting of the Finance Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) held in Astana under the chairmanship of the Astana International Financial Centre Authority JSC (AIFC).



Welcoming participants to the inaugural meeting, Chairman of the Management Board of the AIFC Authority Mr. Bakhtiyar Tleubekov underlined that the AIFC approaches the Finance Summit as a results-oriented mechanism aimed at linking institutions, expertise and capital to drive cooperation across the CICA region. Highlighting the existing solid foundation with over 5200 registered companies from CICA Member States, he noted that the AIFC is ready to lead the platform focusing on cooperation among regulators, exchanges, banks and development institutions.

Reflecting on the early steps to strengthen practical cooperation of the CICA Member States in the financial sector, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay highlighted China's initial efforts to institutionalize this cooperation, that provided a foundation for its further development as initiative to establish the CICA Finance Summit put forward by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, at the Sixth CICA Summit in 2022. In a true spirit of continuity, this vision was Implemented under the CICA Chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan guided by its central slogan – "Stronger CICA: Connectivity, Digitalization and sustainable Growth in Asia".

Secretary General Sarybay emphasized that CICA is actively expanding practical cooperation among its Member States and advancing a cross-dimensional approach based on synergy. He highlighted the

existing practical platforms – Business Council and Business Forum – foster investment, trade partnerships and SME development. Noting that economic cooperation is also becoming more inclusive and future-oriented, he pointed to the Women Council and Youth Council, which promote women's economic empowerment and youth entrepreneurship.

Highlighting the connection between sustainable development and finance, he noted that a resilient financial architecture is essential for implementing long-term economic goals. To build such an architecture and support the ongoing regional efforts, the launch of the Finance Summit reflects this institutional growth – successfully complementing interconnected efforts of CICA advisory bodies and creating additional space for regional dialogue and coordination.

Representing the CICA Chairmanship of Azerbaijan, Mr. Javid Nasirli noted that Azerbaijan considers the operational launch of the Finance Summit during its Chairmanship as an important contribution to strengthening the economic dimension of CICA, serving as a timely milestone ahead of the Seventh CICA Summit on 15 October 2026 in Baku. He concluded by expressing the readiness of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship to work closely with all CICA Member States in shaping the Finance Summit into an effective, inclusive and action-driven platform.

Representatives of 16 CICA Member States engaged in comprehensive discussions aimed at addressing shared financial and economic challenges. The dialogue centered on priority areas for future collaboration, including financial connectivity, development financing, sustainable and inclusive finance and digital financial technologies.

China expressed readiness to leverage equity investment to support livelihood projects, such as new energy and water supply, while proposing to foster cooperation in technological empowerment through artificial intelligence, big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT).

To support CICA countries, China expressed readiness to leverage the China-Eurasian Economic Cooperation Fund – an equity investment platform established by China during the SCO Summit in Dushanbe in 2014. Highlighting that 23





CICA Member States are simultaneously SCO Members, Observer States or dialogue partners, China emphasized the strong potential for regional synergy. Through the Fund, China aims to engage in essential livelihood projects in the areas of new energy, water supply and healthcare, while fostering cooperation in technological empowerment through artificial intelligence, big data and the Internet of Things (IoT).

India shared its experience in building open, population-scale digital public infrastructure through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), processing about 825 million transactions daily6 supported by a comprehensive cybersecurity and Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) framework. India offered the capabilities of the State Bank of India (SBI) to collaborate on digital payments, cybersecurity, cross-border trade finance, and specialized training programs for international bankers across CICA member states.

Echoing this emphasis on secure innovation, Israel also underscored that opportunities in digital payments and artificial intelligence must be accompanied by sound regulation, cyber resilience, and investor protection. Pointing to its own economic performance, including a historic surge in foreign direct investment, Israel highlighted the critical role of combining strong financial systems with dynamic capital markets and private-sector financing to overcome fragmented markets and mobilize capital at scale.

Continuing the discussion, Jordan highlighted the importance of mobilizing development and investment financing to overcome regional challenges, expressing support for developing regional co-financing mechanisms for infrastructure, green finance and Islamic finance instruments.

Noting that sustainable growth is closely linked to achieving lasting peace, Palestine called on CICA Member States to enhance economic cooperation,



support development projects, and encourage financial institutions to expand their programs in Palestine to mobilize necessary resources and strengthen the local economy.

Russia proposed working towards an increased use of national currencies and digital financial instruments in international settlements, while highlighting the importance of discussing the interoperability of digital currencies, stablecoins, and blockchains to create a stable payment infrastructure.

Türkiye placed a strong emphasis on collaborations in fintech, impact investments, and green finance, extending an open invitation to CICA Member States to participate in the upcoming COP31 action agenda, which Türkiye will host in Antalya in November 2026.

Building upon the discussions during the meeting, participants adopted the Outcome Document, establishing key priorities focused on modernizing national financial institutions, advancing green and sustainable finance, expanding the use of national currencies in mutual settlements, leveraging digital finance and modern infrastructure for cross-border connectivity, supporting capacity-building, and aligning cooperation with the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures.

The inaugural meeting of CICA Finance Summit was followed by CICA Conference titled “Strengthening Financial Cooperation for Sustainable Growth in the CICA Region” organized to facilitate high-level dialogue among government authorities, financial institutions and business representatives on key trends in the global financial sector.

Opening the conference, CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay emphasized that the conference served as a vital bridge to transform the momentum of the newly launched CICA Finance Summit into practical, on-the-ground economic cooperation.

Through dedicated panel sessions, participants exchanged best practices regarding the role of digital finance as an enabler of cross-border interaction, the promotion of green finance, and the strengthening of institutional frameworks to facilitate investment and long-term financial stability across the region.

In particular, during the session titled "Promoting Sustainable and Inclusive Financial Development," Manas Gizhduaniyev, CEO of the AIFC Green Finance Centre and moderator of the discussion, underscored that CICA economies feature diverse financial systems and development priorities, yet face many shared challenges. The discussions centered on delivering practical solutions – such as mobilizing private and cross-border capital, improving the pipeline of bankable sustainable projects, and enhancing the comparability of national frameworks without imposing a single model.




CICA

CICA Heads of Ports Conference in Baku Charts a Course for Enhanced Regional Connectivity and Sustainable Growth in Asia

Baku, 10-11 September 2026 – The high-level CICA Conference of Port Authorities brought together leaders of port authorities, transport institutions, policymakers and international experts Member States to foster resilient supply chains and deeper economic integration.



Held under the topic "The Role of Ports in Regional Connectivity and Strategic Cooperation," the two-day event was hosted by the Azerbaijani Chairmanship of CICA with the support of Ministry of Digital Development and Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan Transport and Communications Holding (AZCON), Azerbaijan Railways (ADY) and the Baku International Sea Trade Port.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, ADY Chairman Rovshan Rustamov emphasized that Azerbaijan's strategic location linking Europe and Asia strengthens its pivotal role in regional transport and logistics. He noted that the integration of the Baku Port into ADY, combined with sustainable infrastructure projects, is actively expanding transit capacity across the region through synergy-driven measures that effectively remove barriers between rail and maritime transport and enable faster seamless cargo movement.

Continuing the discussion on the broader regional dimension, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay highlighted the growing global economic and technological weight of Asia, noting that the continent's core strength lies in its diversity, markets and capacity to connect. He underscored transport connectivity within CICA as a vital practical tool for building confidence and uniting the region, with ports serving as critical strategic bridges linking maritime routes with railways, roads, dry ports, logistics hubs and industrial zones. Secretary General Sarybay further noted that port



efficiency and security shape trade costs and market access, emphasizing that reliable maritime links are especially vital for landlocked Member States to participate fully in regional and global trade.

CICA Secretary General highlighted the distinct advantage for regional cooperation provided by Azerbaijan's active role as coordinator for the priority area of developing secure and effective transportation corridors. This complements its ongoing efforts to advance transport connectivity, digital transformation and sustainability during its CICA Chairmanship, in line with the motto "Stronger CICA: Connectivity, Digitalization and Sustainable Growth in Asia".

The event featured intensive plenary sessions addressing regional cooperation and sustainable partnerships through long-term frameworks, best practices in cargo handling and innovation strategies from world-leading ports like Lianyungang and Shanghai. Discussions also focused on the strategic importance of ports and multimodal connectivity in building resilient supply chains for landlocked states, optimizing cargo flows and enhancing integration between maritime, rail, and road transport via organizations like TRACECA.

In addition to strategic panel discussions, the agenda included B2B commercial meetings alongside a high-level Roundtable Discussion among CICA Port Authorities. These specialized sessions centered on policy coordination between transport operators and culminated in the Recommendations of the Conference.

On 10 September, delegates participated in a technical site visit to the Baku International Sea Trade Port (Alat). Attendees toured the general cargo and Ro-Ro terminals and experienced live demonstrations of the port's state-of-the-art digital management and safety systems, witnessing firsthand Azerbaijan's advanced logistics capabilities.

Building on prior milestones – the Conference on the digitalization of transport corridors December 2025 and the Termez Dialogue on Central and South Asia connectivity organized in partnership with CICA in June 2026 – the Conference of Ports Authorities in Baku further advanced the collective efforts of CICA Member States in translating broader connectivity goals into tangible, sector-specific cooperation.


AQEM ÜZV DÖVLƏTLƏRİNİN LİMAN ADMİNİSTRASİYALARININ
RƏHBƏRLƏRİNİN DƏYİRMİ MASA GÖRÜŞÜ
UNDTABLE DISCUSSION: PORT AUTHORITIES OF
CICA MEMBER STATES
09-10 SEPTEMBER 2026
BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

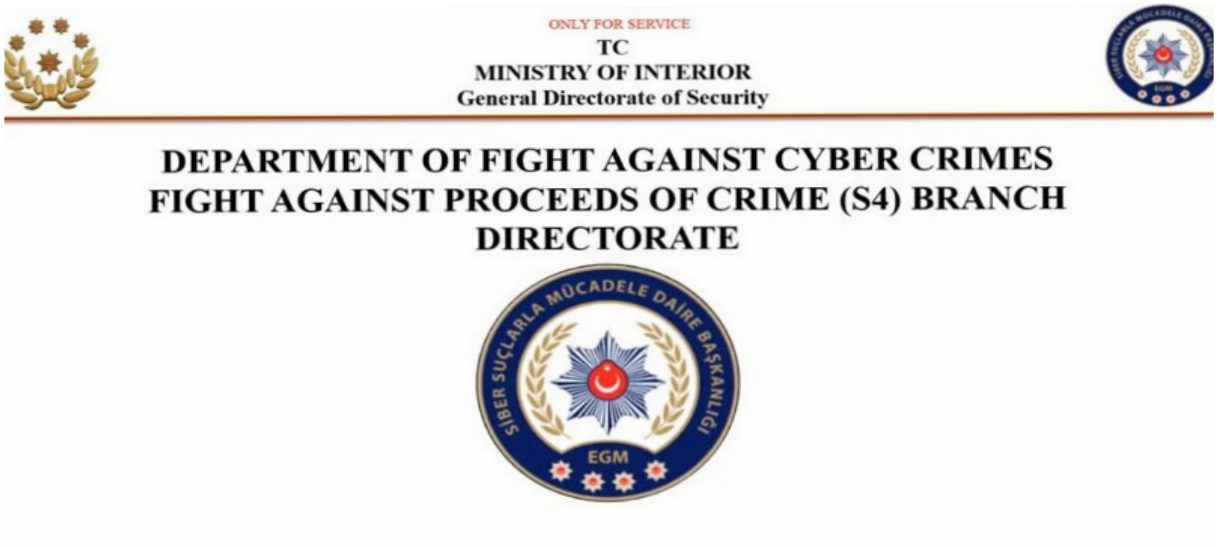



CICA



Training on Preventing the Laundering of Assets Derived from Crime (Cyber) for CICA Member States

7–11 September 2026 – The online training on “Preventing the Laundering of Assets Derived from Crime (Cyber)” was successfully held, convening representatives of relevant authorities from CICA Member States. The event was organized by the General Directorate of the Turkish National Police, with the support of the CICA Secretariat. The training was delivered by Turkish experts, who shared their professional knowledge and practical experience in combating proceeds of crime and related criminal activities.



The training aimed to develop the knowledge and practical skills of personnel working in Anti-Cyber Crime units, while strengthening their understanding of relevant legal frameworks and promoting adherence to ethical principles in their professional activities.

Over the course of five days, participants explored key aspects of combating crime proceeds and money laundering, including relevant legislation and definitions, forms and methods of money laundering, criminal proceeds analysis tools, preparation of investigation files, and operational stages of investigations. The programme also provided an opportunity to discuss investigative methods, operational procedures, financial analysis and measures aimed at identifying and preventing the laundering of illicit assets.

Particular attention was given to the evolving relationship between traditional forms of crime and modern cyber threats. With the rapid digitalization of financial transactions and the increasing use of online platforms by criminal networks, illicit proceeds can be transferred across borders and through complex financial channels. This creates new challenges for law-enforcement authorities and highlights the importance of strengthening investigative and analytical capabilities.

The training formed part of CICA’s broader efforts to promote cooperation among its Member States in addressing

emerging and transnational security challenges. The participation of experts from the Turkish National Police provided an opportunity to share practical experience and approaches developed by Turkish law-enforcement authorities in combating cybercrime, money laundering and proceeds derived from criminal activities.

CICA attaches particular importance to the continued development of practical cooperation and capacity-building initiatives in the field of security. Specialized training programmes provide an important platform for sharing expertise, discussing common challenges and strengthening the ability of national authorities to respond effectively to evolving threats.

The Secretariat of CICA expresses its appreciation to the Turkish National Police and the participating experts for their contribution to the preparation and delivery of the training programme. The Secretariat also commends the representatives of CICA Member States for their active participation and valuable contribution to the exchange of professional experience.



CICA Contributes to Global Security Dialogue at the 13th Beijing Xiangshan Forum

Beijing, 15-17 September 2026 – Deputy Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Deputy Secretary General Zhang Ling participated in the 13th Beijing Xiangshan Forum held in Beijing under the theme “Build Consensus on Stability, Advance Security Governance Together” organized by the China Association for Military Science (CAMS) and the China Institute for International Strategic Studies (CIISS).



This year, the Beijing Xiangshan Forum marked its 20th anniversary. Since establishment in 2006, the Forum has evolved from a Track II dialogue platform initiated by the CAMS into a broader Track 1.5 security dialogue platform, bringing together high-level officials of defense, representatives of military institutions, former political figures, international organizations, experts and scholars from around the world.

The opening ceremony featured a keynote speech by Admiral Dong Jun, Minister of National Defense of China, who emphasized the need for a new vision of security, stronger multilateralism, and dialogue to resolve differences. He also called for greater international coordination, mutual trust and practical cooperation in addressing common security challenges, including those in emerging domains.

The three-day Forum consists of 4 plenary sessions, leading experts' dialogue, young military officers’ seminar, series of simultaneous sessions, closed-door seminars and high-end interviews, covering a broad range of topics from major traditional and non-traditional security challenges to global governance, regional conflicts, military technology, international law and emerging security issues.

During the panel session on “The Asian Way to Address Security Challenges”, CICA Deputy Secretary General Zhang

Ling shared CICA's evolutionary journey from an idea to a pivotal platform for peace and stability of Asia and its unwavering commitment to building trust and fostering dialogue among Asian countries.

She noted that over the past 30 years, CICA has developed a number of distinctive features, some of which have proven to be among its unique strengths and sources of attractiveness, including inclusiveness and broad Asian representation, combination of principles of consensus and voluntariness and step-by-step approach.

She shared CICA's experience in promoting confidence building and practical cooperation among Member States and emphasized that Asia's diversity requires an inclusive approach to security based on respect for sovereign equality and consideration of different interests. Deputy Secretary General Zhang Ling noted that CICA always prioritizes confidence building in those areas where Member States can identify common ground and gradually develop cooperation based on their willingness, national policies and concrete conditions.

Deputy Secretary General Zhang Ling also shared CICA's comprehensive approach to security through its five dimensions of Confidence Building Measures (CBM) and further highlighted the close ties between development and security. She informed audience how CICA countries conduct CBM in Military-Political and New Challenges and Threats Dimensions, emphasizing that activities in these dimensions aim at promoting transparency, predictability and professional interaction among Member.

Speaking of the role of multilateral mechanisms in addressing common challenges in Asia, Mrs. Zhang called for enhancing synergy and joint actions of regional organizations to raise efficiency and effectiveness and bring more practical results for collective response to increasingly emerged challenges, especially in the transnational and cross-border fields.

The 13th Beijing Xiangshan Forum brought together official representatives, experts, scholars and observers from more than 100 countries and international organizations. Guided by the principles of "Equality, Openness, Inclusiveness and Mutual Learning," the Forum has continued to provide a platform for professional dialogue and in-depth discussion on international and regional security issues.



Advancing Regional Synergy: CICA Highlights Inclusive Partnerships and Practical Cooperation at Multi-Stakeholder SDG Forum

Almaty, 16-17 September 2026 — The Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) joined the Tenth North and Central Asia Multi-Stakeholder Forum on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Government of Kazakhstan.



The high level of the forum was underscored by the videomessage of the Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, who emphasized that achieving universally agreed development targets relies exclusively on joint cooperation. Highlighting the disparities in progress across North and Central Asia, she advocated for fast-tracked joint measures and stronger regional ties.

Building on the call for stronger regional partnerships, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, speaking at the opening session on September 16, highlighted the strong connection between the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and CICA's broader confidence building agenda. Welcoming the sustained engagement between CICA and ESCAP, he emphasized that this partnership is essential for aligning regional mechanisms with the global commitments of the 2030 Agenda. Secretary General Sarybay underscored that building stable and prosperous Asia requires mutual trust developed equally across political, security, economic, environmental and social dimensions.

Highlighting the central role of SDG 17, the Secretary General described partnerships as a vital bridge connecting global commitments with regional priorities. He

explained that for CICA, this means providing platforms where governments and businesses can exchange experiences and identify new opportunities. He noted that CICA actively brings SDG 17 to life through its specialized advisory bodies – such as the Business Council, Think Tank Forum, Women Council and Youth Council. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, these frameworks enable governments and commercial sectors to pursue mutual interests, help financial entities secure necessary investments and ensure that experts, women and youth play an influential part in regional sustainability.

Regional partners echoed this multi-sectoral perspective. Deputy Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Mr. Silapberdi Nurberdiyev emphasized that disparities in SDG achievement across countries call for tailored policies and enhanced regional coordination. Expanding on this perspective, Deputy Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Mr. Ahmad Saidmurodzoda pointed to the multifaceted nature of sustainable development, urging consolidated efforts in poverty reduction, educational exchanges and the transition toward green industries.

Continuing CICA's participation on September 17, Ambassador Raushan Yesbulatova, Coordinator in Economic Dimension, addressed the panel session dedicated to SDG 17 and Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships.

Ambassador Yesbulatova focused on the synergy of joint efforts, emphasizing that no single Sustainable Development Goal can be achieved in isolation. She further stressed that robust partnerships must rest on three fundamental pillars – trust, inclusiveness and practical cooperation – to successfully translate political commitments into tangible outcomes for the societies across the wider region of Asia. To illustrate this practical approach, she highlighted key CICA initiatives designed to expand economic opportunities, pointing specifically to the interactive SME guidebook and the outcomes of the inaugural CICA Finance Summit recently held in Astana.




The Tenth North and Central Asia Multi-Stakeholder Forum on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals
Almaty, Kazakhstan and online
16-17 September 2026
ESCAP
EXIT


The Tenth North and Central Asia Multi-Stakeholder Forum on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals
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ESCAP
Subregional Office
NORTH AND CENTRAL ASIA

CICA Secretariat Hosts Presentation of the CICA Fund for Development Assistance Agencies and Key Stakeholders

Astana, 17 September 2026 – The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) hosted presentation of the CICA Fund at the CICA Headquarters in Astana.



Opening the event, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay highlighted that the CICA Fund, established at the Sixth CICA Summit in October 2022, serves as a dedicated mechanism to translate political commitments into practical cooperation. He emphasized the CICA Fund's core role as a strategic partnership instrument designed to advance confidence building measures, capacity-building initiatives, humanitarian assistance and development-oriented projects across the region.

During the main presentation,CICA Economic Dimension Officer Mr. Abhishek Katiyar detailed the Fund's operational framework, guided by the core principles of transparency, voluntariness, consensus and accountability to Member States. The briefing covered project identification procedures, funding sources and the Fund's practical accomplishments. Translating its mandate into action, CICA Fund financed two initiatives – supplying high-quality wheat seeds to farmers in Afghanistan in March 2025 and advancing youth-driven climate action in Bangladesh in April 2026.

Bringing together representatives from Member States, observer organizations and leading development agencies – Rossotrudnichestvo, TIKA, KazAID, MASHAV, IOFS and UNDP – the event fostered a forward-looking dialogue. During the interactive discussion, stakeholders expressed strong readiness to build effective partnerships with the

CICA Fund.

Ambassador Nurgali Arystanov, Chairman of the Board of KazAID, reaffirmed the agency's commitment to partnering with CICA and offered KazAID's operational infrastructure to act as an implementing partner for projects approved under the Fund. Additionally, Ms. Olga Slov, representing Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation (MASHAV), welcomed the CICA Fund as practical tool for strengthening trust and shared MASHAV's openness to exploring joint projects in the area of agriculture and water management. These areas of focus align closely with the broader goals highlighted by Ambassador Berik Aryn, Director General of the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), who underscored the importance of joint initiatives that contribute to regional food security, sustainable development and enhanced resilience to global challenges.











CICA Secretary General Pays Working Visit to New York for the 81st Session of the UN General Assembly

New York, 19-25 September 2026 – The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay attended the General Debate of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly and engaged in a series of high-level bilateral meetings on the margins of the General Assembly.







During the meeting with H.E. Dr. Khalilur Rahman, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh and President of the 81st Session of the UN General Assembly, Secretary General Sarybay commended his election to the presidency and acknowledged Bangladesh's strong leadership within CICA as co-coordinator in the areas of information technology, environmental protection and disaster management. Exploring concrete avenues to strengthen UN-CICA ties and advance effective multilateralism, the two sides discussed preparations for the Seventh CICA Summit in Baku and CICA's ongoing institutional transformation. Secretary General Sarybay also highlighted Bangladesh's innovative

project initiative under the CICA Fund, which bridges youth empowerment with environmental sustainability.

Dr. Khalilur Rahman underscored CICA's vast potential within multilateral diplomacy, highlighting the important role of regional organizations in mediation efforts and bringing together diverse stakeholders at regional level.

Secretary General Sarybay met with India's Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Sibi George, to review preparations for the Baku Summit, counter-terrorism cooperation and India's interaction within CICA under the CICA Think Tank Forum and Partnership Network of Leading Universities. In a meeting with Alexandre Zouev, Acting Under Secretary General for Counter-Terrorism, discussions focused on the implementation of the CICA Action Plan for the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and joint work on Memorandum of Understanding between CICA Secretariat and UNOCT. Secretary General Sarybay and Under Secretary General Zouev reviewed progress on the draft MoU, noting the constructive role of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship in this work.

The counterparts also exchanged views on new avenues of practical collaboration, including advanced technological initiatives and early warning mechanisms.

Turning to sustainable development, talks with Li Junhua, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, centered on synergies between CICA's confidence building measures and the UN 2030 Agenda.
Mr. Li Junhua emphasized that the voices of multilateral institutions, including CICA, are significant in addressing emerging challenges and eroding trust among nations. He also assured UN DESA's readiness to provide expert support for CICA's ongoing initiatives, while commending its work in volunteerism, women empowerment and cooperation in finance.

A productive exchange with UNDP Associate Administrator Haoliang Xu highlighted CICA's recent milestones in women's empowerment and financial connectivity. Secretary General Sarybay expressed gratitude to UNDP for its valuable contribution to the CICA side event on volunteerism on the margins of the High-Level Political Forum at UN Headquarters in July 2026, which showcased best practices and the crucial role of volunteers in driving community resilience and solidarity.

The visit reaffirmed CICA's commitment to fostering mutual trust across Asia and working in close synergy with the United Nations to tackle shared challenges.





CICA Deputy Secretary General highlights the universality of human rights at Samarkand Forum

Tashkent, 29 September 2026 – Deputy Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Zhang Ling participated in the 5th Samarkand Forum on Human Rights, held under the theme “Global Partnership for Human Dignity, Equality and Sustainable Development” to mark the 60th anniversary of the International Covenants on Human Rights and the 40th anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development.



In her remarks at the high-level panel entitled “International Covenants on Human Rights, the Right to Development, and Global Solidarity: A New Vision in the Face of Modern Challenges”, Ms. Zhang Ling highlighted the interconnectedness of human security, human rights and sustainable development. She emphasized the need for broader international and regional cooperation to ensure that human dignity and human rights are further strengthened amid rapid technological progress.

Deputy SG Zhang Ling underscored that the promotion of human rights is closely aligned with the objectives of CICA and expressed appreciation to Uzbekistan, which, as the CICA Coordinator for the Human Dimension, has actively contributed to strengthening cooperation in the areas of human rights institutions, education, cultural exchange, youth and women’s empowerment.

During the parallel sessions, representatives of national human rights institutions and ombudspersons, constitutional courts and leading research and academic institutions from different countries shared their achievements, challenges and future prospects in implementing the International Covenants on Human Rights, among them many are CICA Member States, including Azerbaijan, China, Kazakhstan,

Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, Russia, Thailand, Türkiye and Uzbekistan.

Representatives of regional and international organizations also highlighted the importance of international cooperation as a foundation for an effective response to contemporary challenges and shared their perspectives on the transformation and future of international human rights protection systems.



The Samarkand Forum on Human Rights is organized biennially by the National Human Rights Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which marks its 30th anniversary this year.





From Narcotics to Explosives: CICA Experts Master Advanced Forensic Techniques to Tackle Complex Crimes

Astana, 30 September 2026 – A series of online forensic chemistry trainings was conducted for law enforcement specialists, forensic laboratory personnel, and crime scene investigators with participation of 12 CICA Member States from 21 to 30 September 2026. Organized by the Turkish National Police Forensic Department and the Ankara Regional Police Forensic Laboratory Directorate, the programme focused on strengthening practical capacities in evidence analysis, sample preparation, and advanced laboratory techniques.



REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR
Turkish National Police

ANKARA REGIONAL POLICE
FORENSIC LABORATORY
DIRECTORATE
CHEMICAL ANALYSIS BRANCH DIRECTORATE

NATURALLY DERIVED PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES
FORENSIC BRIEFING

22 September 2026

The training cycle opened on 21-22 September with a module dedicated to illicit drug analysis, where experts presented protocols for the qualitative and quantitative identification of controlled substances, including cannabis, opium alkaloids, amphetamine-type stimulants, cocaine, and New Psychoactive Substances (NPS). Discussions covered sample collection techniques, method validation, and standards for converting analytical data into court-admissible forensic reports.

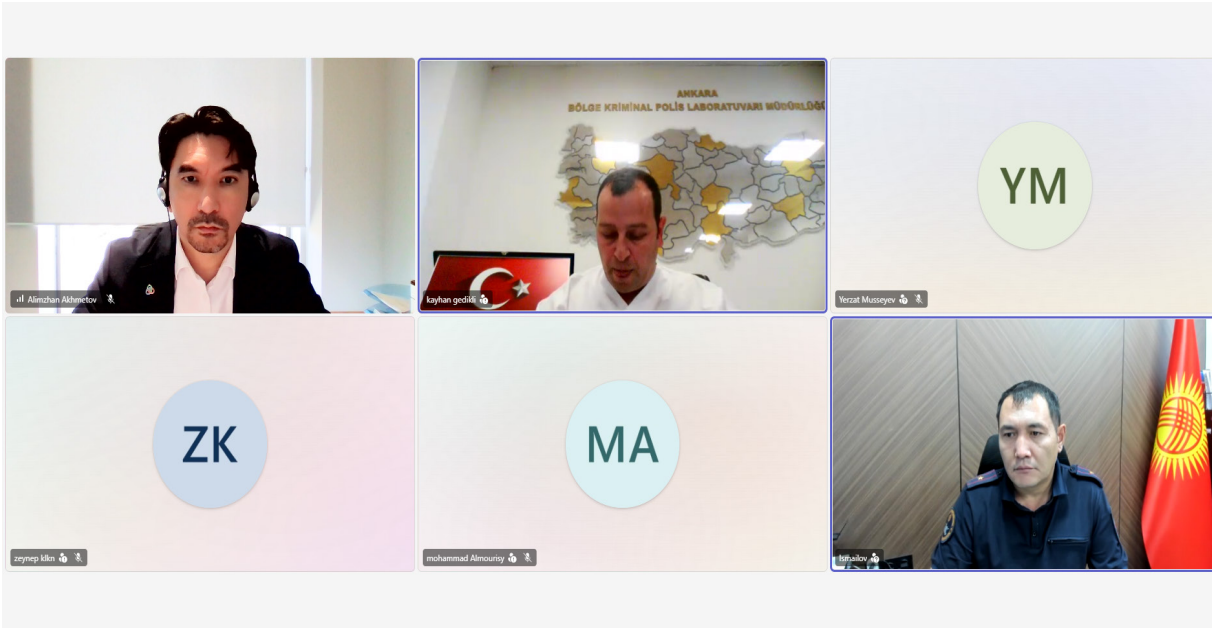
Building on these foundational analytical schemes, the second module on 23-24 September addressed the examination of commercial and improvised explosives alongside post-blast residue analysis. Participants reviewed a continuum of laboratory methods ranging from preliminary colorimetric tests and Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC) to advanced instrumental techniques, including Fourier-Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR), High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), Ion Chromatography (IC) for inorganic components, and LC-MS/MS.

The series concluded on 29-30 September with a module focused on gunshot residue (GSR) analysis and shooting distance determination. Technical presentations highlighted standardized procedures for GSR sample collection and detection using Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy (AAS) and Scanning Electron

Microscopy with Energy Dispersive X-ray Analysis (SEM/EDX), demonstrating how physical and chemical findings support scientific crime scene reconstruction.

Implemented under the CICA Plan of Implementation of Confidence Building Measures (CBM) for 2026 (Items 23, 24, and 25), the initiative reflects the active role of Türkiye as the coordinator of the priority area "New Challenges and Threats (general)" under the "New Challenges and Threats" dimension.

By providing specialized trainers and technical methodology through the Turkish National Police Forensic Department and the Ankara Regional Police Forensic Laboratory Directorate, the programme contributed directly to regional capacity building, evidence integrity, and practical confidence-building efforts among CICA Member States.





CICA Training Programme on Digitalization and Research Capacity Building Concludes in Baku

Baku, 29 September - 3 October 2026 — The Digitalization and Research Capacity Building Training Programme for Researchers and Early-Career Policy Professionals from CICA Member States successfully concluded in Baku on 3 October.



Organized by ADA University, in its capacity as Chair of the Coordination Council of the CICA Partnership Network of Leading Universities (PNLU), the five-day programme brought together researchers and early-career policy professionals from CICA Member States to strengthen their digital research skills, research competencies and capacity to support evidence-based policymaking.

The programme focused on the application of digital technologies and innovative research approaches, including artificial intelligence and digital research tools, data management and analysis, research design and methodology, academic writing, policy analysis, research communication and policy brief development.

Addressing participants at the opening ceremony on 29 September, CICA Deputy Secretary General Mr. Farid Damirli emphasized the relevance of the programme to the priorities of the Azerbaijani Chairmanship of CICA under the theme “Stronger CICA: Connectivity, Digitalization, and Sustainable Growth in Asia.” He highlighted that digital transformation within CICA should be viewed not only through the advancement of technology, but also through the development of people, knowledge and connectivity.

CICA Deputy Secretary General Damirli underscored the importance of education, science, research and innovation as practical instruments of cooperation and confidence building among CICA

Member States. He also noted that the programme contributes to the Azerbaijani Chairmanship's efforts to make confidence building measures more practical and impactful, particularly in the human dimension.

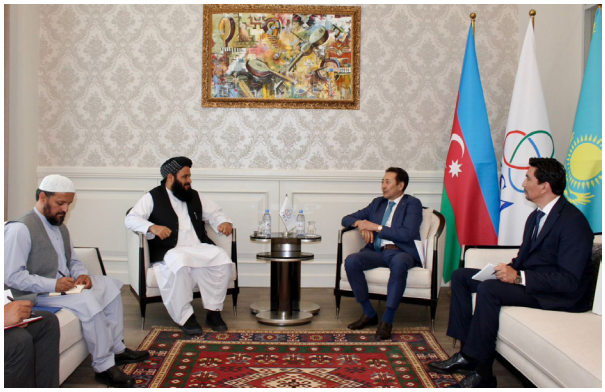
Particular attention was given to the role of the CICA PNLU in advancing academic cooperation. The PNLU currently brings together around 190 universities from 13 CICA Member States and remains open to new members.

The training programme provided a practical example of this approach by connecting researchers and young policy professionals from different CICA Member States and creating opportunities for professional networking, knowledge exchange and the development of future research cooperation.

The programme also contributed to the implementation of CICA confidence building measures in the human dimension, particularly in the areas of education and science. By linking digitalization, research and innovation with policymaking, the initiative supported the development of participants' capacity to generate policy-relevant research and contribute to evidence-based decision-making.







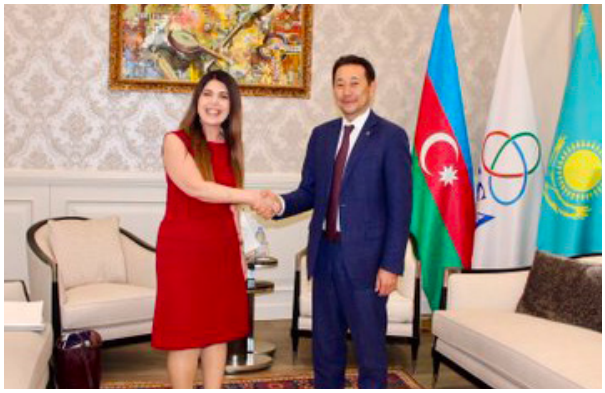
CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay met with Afghan Chargé d'Affaires R. Muhammad Ur Rehman at CICA Headquarters to discuss expanding Afghan involvement in organization activities and CICA fund projects, with both sides agreeing to explore further cooperation.



Bilateral talks at CICA Headquarters between Secretary General Kairat Sarybay and Brazilian Ambassador Marcel Fortuna Biato centered on multilateralism, sustainable development and digital cooperation, alongside an overview of the organization's principles, objectives, and observer status framework.



Awarded the Barys Order – one of the highest state decoration of Kazakhstan – by decree of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay received the distinction from Foreign Minister Yermek Kosherbayev in recognition of the CICA community's significant achievements.



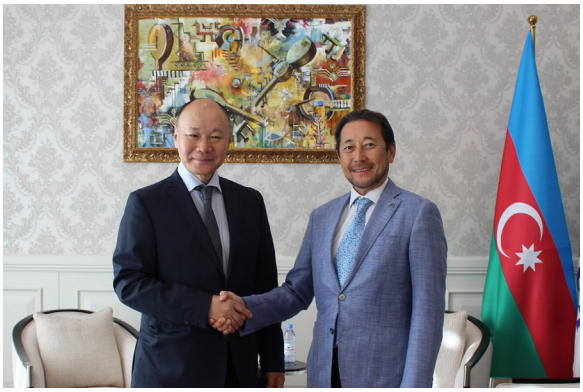
Discussions during the meeting with Ms. Nelly Shiloh, Special Representative of Israel on CICA affairs, explored the organization's ongoing evolution and activities – including the work of the Council of Eminent Persons – with the Secretary General acknowledging Israel's active participation in the CICA process.

Participating in the opening ceremony of the Games of the Future 2026 in Astana alongside the Heads of State of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay emphasized the importance of innovation and digital technologies in promoting unity through sports and strengthening international cooperation, while wishing all participants success.

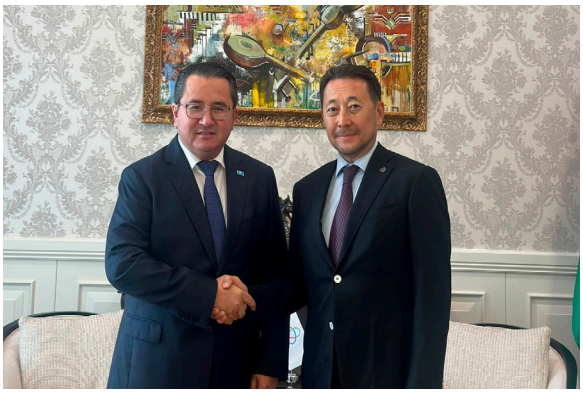


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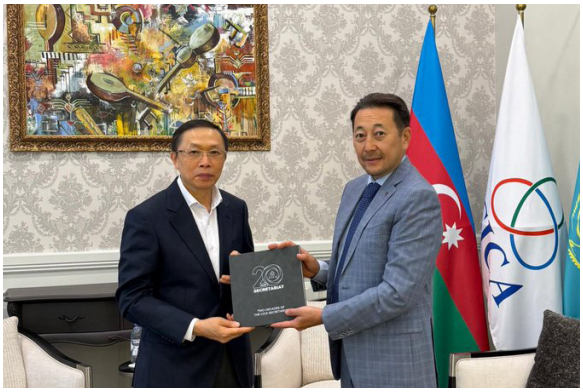
Talks at CICA Headquarters between Secretary General Kairat Sarybay and Mongolian Ambassador to Kazakhstan Gunaajav Batjargal addressed Ulaanbaatar's coordination role in environmental protection, sustainable development initiatives within the organization and preparations for the upcoming seventh summit in Baku.

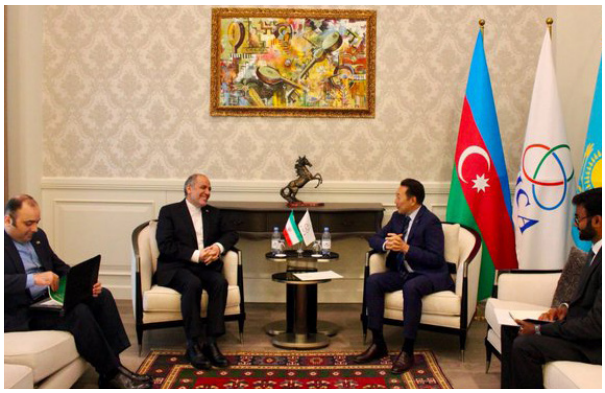


Visiting CICA Headquarters, Kazakhstan's Deputy Foreign Minister Arman Issagaliyev held constructive talks with Secretary General Kairat Sarybay to review key priorities, including institutional transformation and preparations for the seventh CICA Summit in Baku.



Welcoming the Ambassador of Laos to Russia, Mr. Siphandone Oybouabouddy, to CICA Headquarters in Astana, Secretary General Kairat Sarybay discussed preparations for the upcoming summit in Baku alongside Vientiane's engagement as an observer state since 2017, while also recalling their previous talks with Foreign Minister Mr. Phomvihane in Vientiane this April 2026 .





During a farewell meeting at CICA Headquarters with the Ambassador of Iran, Mr. Ali Akbar Jowkar, Secretary General Kairat Sarybay expressed appreciation for Tehran's strong endorsement of confidence-building and dialogue initiatives across Asia, as well as its ongoing Support of the CICA transformation process.



Welcoming the Ambassador of Kuwait to Kazakhstan, H.E. Adel Alghenaiman, to CICA Headquarters, Secretary General Kairait Sarybay briefed him on CICA's achievements under Azerbaijan's Chairmanship and discussed preparations for the Baku Summit and Kuwait's future engagement in CICA, including a donation of an art object to Headquarters.



Welcoming the new Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kazakhstan, Dr. Alimirzamin Askerov, to CICA Headquarters in Astana, Secretary General Kairat Sarybay discussed CICA's achievements under Azerbaijan's Chairmanship ahead of the Baku Summit and appreciated the Embassy's support for CICA Secretariat's engagement with the diplomatic corps in Astana.

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