

VOICE OF ASIA:

CICA Digest

CICA Ministerial Council Upholds CICA Founding Principles on their 25th Anniversary and Welcomes Azerbaijan as New CICA Chair

Seventh CICA Ministerial Council Meeting: Handover of Chairmanship from Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan

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Document on Improving Terms and Conditions of CICA Secretariat's Location in Kazakhstan Signed

CICA Business Community Discuss on Advancing Small Businesses for Sustainable Regional Growth

Jordan Ratifies CICA Convention on Privileges and Immunities

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Foreword



Dear readers,

As Kazakhstan concludes its four-year Chairmanship of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), I am honored to present this final digest summarizing our achievements and shared progress during this transformative period. These accomplishments reflect the collective commitment of CICA Member States to strengthening peace, security, and development across Asia.

This year marks a significant milestone—the 25th anniversary of the Declaration on the CICA Principles. Together with the 30th anniversary of CICA, celebrated two years ago, these anniversaries remind us of the CICA's vision and purpose. It is with a sense of responsibility and pride that Kazakhstan concludes its Chairmanship, reflecting on our shared achievements and progress.

The CICA, a visionary initiative of Kazakhstan, has grown into a continental platform with broad geographical reach and comprehensive objectives. With over half of the world's population and GDP, and driving two-thirds of global economic growth, the CICA region stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and mutual understanding. Amid the current challenges to global security and multilateral dialogue, our 28 Member States remain united by a shared vision of peaceful co-existence, mutual respect, and cooperative progress.

During Kazakhstan's Chairmanship from 2020 to 2024, we proposed and implemented transformative institutional reforms to drive CICA's effectiveness and resilience. Highlights of our tenure include the update of the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures and the establishment of three new standing bodies (Council of Eminent Persons, Think Tank Forum, CICA Fund). We also commenced drafting the CICA Charter and updated the Rules of Procedure to further strengthen the organization's operational framework.

Kazakhstan's tenure saw over 170 events covering all five dimensions, including the inaugural Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues and Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders. At the Seventh CICA Ministerial Council we launched the Partnership Network of Leading Universities, an initiative designed to enhance academic and scientific collaboration among CICA Member States.

The growth of the CICA family during Kazakhstan's tenure has been another major milestone, with Kuwait joining as a member in 2022, and Turkmenistan (2021) and Saudi Arabia (2023) joining as observers. Moreover, Kazakhstan has worked to enhance CICA's interaction with multilateral organizations, including the UN, SCO, ECO, and the Eurasian Economic Union.

As Kazakhstan's Chairmanship concludes, it is an honor to hand over this responsibility to the Republic of Azerbaijan. I am confident that Azerbaijan will continue to guide CICA's transformation and achieve new milestones, culminating in the Seventh CICA Summit in Baku in 2026.

Transforming CICA into a full-fledged organization for security and development cooperation is essential for addressing the challenges of the 21st century. This transformation will require investment not only in human resources and funds, but also in confidence in CICA as one of the pillars for shaping a future configuration of pan-Asian security architecture. By fostering partnerships and promoting mutual respect, CICA has the potential to catalyze connectivity and logistics, to tackle issues of climate change and water-energy-food security, and to act as a platform for sharing technological advancements and addressing challenges of the digital age.

In closing, I extend my deepest gratitude to all CICA Member States for their steadfast support and invaluable contributions throughout Kazakhstan's Chairmanship. I also express my sincere appreciation to the Secretariat for its tireless work in advancing CICA's mission. Kazakhstan as the CICA initiator, will remain a steadfast partner to the incoming Chairmanship and Member States, supporting all efforts to advance CICA's role as a cornerstone of multilateral cooperation in Asia. Let us move forward together, building on our shared achievements to realize the full potential of CICA in shaping a brighter future for our region and the world.

Alibek Bakayev
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Kazakhstan



CICA Ministerial Council upholds CICA founding principles on their 25th anniversary and welcomes Azerbaijan as new CICA Chair

Baku, 17 December 2024 — The Seventh Meeting of the Ministerial Council (MC) of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), hosted online by Azerbaijan, took stock of CICA achievements under the leadership of Astana and welcomed the handover of the CICA Chairmanship in the next biennium from Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan.



In his opening address, Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Murat Nurtleu highlighted key accomplishments of the four-year-long Kazakh Chairmanship, such as institutional reforms to drive CICA's effectiveness and resilience, expanding the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), launching three new standing bodies (Council of Eminent Persons, Think Tank Forum, CICA Fund), beginning the drafting of the CICA Charter and updated Rules of Procedure, as well as amending the CICA Host Country Agreement to strengthen the CICA Secretariat's international status.

The outgoing Kazakh Chair emphasized: "We held over 170 events covering all five CICA dimensions, including the inaugural Ministerial Conference on Environmental

Issues and Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders. Today we will launch the Partnership Network of Leading Universities as yet another Kazakh initiative." "We are pleased to note that practically all priorities outlined under the Kazakh Chairmanship have been successfully implemented" – concluded the outgoing Chair.

Minister Murat Nurtleu stated: "Transforming CICA into a full-fledged organization for security and development cooperation will bolster its role in addressing 21st century challenges. Therefore, we need to invest not only in human resources and funds, but also confidence in CICA as one of the pillars for shaping a future configuration of pan-Asian security architecture." Noting CICA's capacity to promote partnerships and mutual respect, he stressed that



"global challenges can be most effectively addressed by fully utilizing potential of multilateral fora and exclusively through diplomatic solutions." Minister Nurtleu further emphasized CICA's potential to become a catalyst for improving connectivity and logistics, to tackle issues of climate change and water-energy-food security, and to act as a platform for sharing technological advancements and addressing challenges of the digital age.

The new CICA Chair, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov, expressed appreciation to Kazakhstan for its invaluable contribution to the development of the organization and to all Member States for entrusting the role of CICA Chair to Azerbaijan. He stressed that Azerbaijan is strongly committed to promoting peace, security, stability and prosperity in Asia. Minister Bayramov stated that "Azerbaijan's CICA Chairmanship comes at a pivotal moment not only in CICA's history but also in the evolving geopolitical and economic landscape of Asia and the world", adding that "CICA, as the region's most inclusive platform for dialogue, is uniquely positioned to foster this cooperation and address the challenges we face".

He further noted that the CICA Chairmanship of Azerbaijan will be grounded in the theme of "Stronger CICA, Connectivity, Digitalization and Sustainable Growth in Asia" and will prioritize three overarching issues: (1) CICA's transformation and institutional development, (2) sectoral cooperation through implementation of CBMs and (3) promoting synergy between CICA and other international and regional organizations. Minister Bayramov underlined that Azerbaijan's Chairmanship marked a moment of opportunity and responsibility and is oriented to making impact on security, development and well-being of our states and population through stronger CICA.





CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay reported to the MC on the activities of the CICA Secretariat since the 2022 CICA Summit, highlighting the special focus on fulfilling the strategic tasks set by the Summit in the Astana Statement on CICA Transformation, and significant analytical and expert assistance to the Chairmanship in developing and implementing the transformation roadmap. The Secretary General also provided an account of the CICA Secretariat's support to the work of CICA governing and advisory bodies and implementation of CICA CBMs, and reported on the organization's external cooperation and financial and human resources.

The main political outcome of the meeting was the adoption of the MC Statement on the 25th Anniversary of the Declaration

on the Principles Guiding Relations among the CICA Member States. In the statement, the CICA Member States reaffirmed their commitment to all principles enshrined in this founding document of the organization adopted on 14 September 1999 in Almaty at the First CICA Ministerial Meeting.

The ministerial statement also declared the CICA Member States' strong resolve to further enhance their cooperation within CICA and their pledge to work together to ensure that CICA remains a relevant and effective platform for addressing the challenges of the twenty first century. As stated by the new CICA Chair, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov, "the adoption of this significant political statement reflects our unity and demonstrates the strength of the CICA spirit".



Another key result of the MC meeting was the adoption of the updated CICA Catalogue of CBMs – the main CICA document guiding the core area of operational activities of the organization since 2004. The Member States included a new CBM within the human dimension on promoting volunteerism as an important aspect of civic engagement, and adopted a comprehensive document on modalities of CBM implementation, which will significantly enhance their effectiveness and practical impact. These decisions, along with the most recent update of the Catalogue in 2021, are considered a breakthrough in CICA confidence building activities and another evidence of CICA's growing relevance for its Member States.

Last but not least, the MC adopted the Memorandum on Establishment of the Partnership Network of Leading Universities of the CICA Member States (PNLU). This new CICA mechanism is designed to facilitate cooperation in the education field and academic and scientific exchanges between Member States, and thereby further advance CICA human dimension activities. The proposal to establish the PNLU was put forward by President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev in 2022. To date, 175 universities from CICA Member States expressed intention to join the network.

Members of the MC held an extensive exchange of views on the prospects for further institutional development of CICA, welcomed the first practical outcomes on the path of CICA transformation, appreciated the role of Kazakhstan as the initiator of CICA, its host country, the driver of the transformation process and outgoing Chair, and expressed full support to the incoming Chairmanship of Azerbaijan.





October

Astana hosts Seventh CICA Youth Council Meeting on the role of volunteerism in sustainable development of Asia



On 3 October 2024, Astana hosted the Seventh Youth Council Meeting of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA). The meeting was devoted to the importance of volunteerism in society and its role in the sustainable development of Asia. The CICA Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders was held under the auspices of the Youth Council.

The event brought together officials of the agencies in charge of volunteering and youth policy of the CICA Member States, representatives of diplomatic missions, as well as leaders of volunteer organizations and active volunteers.

This meeting of the Youth Council launched a series of events within the framework of the first CICA Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders, which was initiated by President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the Sixth CICA Summit in October 2022. This initiative was also supported by the CICA Ministerial Council, which at its meeting on 21 September 2023 in New York adopted the Statement on Promoting Volunteerism for Sustainable Development. The main objectives of the Rally include uniting efforts and sharing knowledge, experience and best practices in the field of volunteering, as well as stimulating and developing the volunteer movement in Asia, in particular through training sessions and workshops for participants.

In his welcoming remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay noted that the Youth Council, founded in 2014, has become an effective platform for discussing



such important issues as youth employment and entrepreneurship, the role of youth in achieving the SDGs, preventing radicalization of youth and their involvement in extremist activities. Special attention was paid to volunteering as a new area of CICA activities initiated by the heads of state at the Sixth CICA Summit in October 2022. Secretary General also welcomed the proposal of the Kazakh Chairmanship to adopt the recommendations of the Youth Council as a guideline for future CICA work in the field of volunteerism and to incorporate

relevant provisions into the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures.

On behalf of the Chairmanship, Deputy Minister of Culture and Information of Kazakhstan Ms. Aizada Kurmanova pointed out the active development of the volunteer movement in Kazakhstan, citing the adoption of the Law on Volunteer Activity and the creation of the International Award “Volunteer of the Year” as examples. She also acknowledged the support of President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev for volunteerism at both national and international levels. The Deputy Minister proposed developing joint educational programmes, organizing international volunteer camps and considering the establishment of a CICA certificate of appreciation for volunteer community representatives.

During the discussion, the heads of national delegations highlighted the advancement of volunteering in their countries, expressed support for relevant international initiatives and shared ideas for joint projects to enhance cooperation in the volunteering sector.



The meeting concluded with the adoption of recommendations for the joint development of volunteerism in the CICA area. Specifically, the Youth Council recommended that volunteering be included in the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures and that the CICA platform be utilized for the comprehensive promotion of volunteering and the exchange of knowledge and experience in this field.

Particular emphasis was placed on the recommendation to support activities in 2026 as part of the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development proclaimed by a UN resolution at Kazakhstan's initiative. The Secretary General suggested planning a CICA side event for 2026.



Additionally, the meeting featured an award ceremony for the winners of the essay contest among the youth of CICA Member States, centred on the theme “The Future of Asia We Want: Ideas for the CICA Region”. The winners from Bahrain, Bangladesh and Kazakhstan received certificates from the CICA Secretariat along with cash prizes.



CICA Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders 2024: Uniting efforts through volunteering

Astana, 3-4 October 2024 — the Republic of Kazakhstan, under the auspices of the Youth Council of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), hosted the CICA Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders. Proposed by President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev during the Sixth CICA Summit in October 2022, the event brought together over 450 delegates from among the leaders of volunteer organizations and active volunteers. Diplomats and senior officials in charge of volunteering and youth policy from 21 CICA Member States also attended the Rally.



On the first day of the Rally, the Seventh CICA Youth Council Meeting was held on the topic “The Importance of Volunteerism in Society: Discussion on the Role of Volunteerism in Promoting Sustainable Development in Asia”, which resulted in the approval of a set of recommendations for promoting volunteerism within CICA. Panel sessions were also organized to discuss the role of volunteerism in healthcare, addressing environmental challenges, responding to emergencies and promoting social and inclusive volunteerism.

Second day of the meeting started with a plenary session attended by State Counsellor of the Republic of Kazakhstan E.Karin, Minister of Culture and Information of Kazakhstan A. Balayeva and CICA Secretary General Ambassador. An extended discussion was held on the topic “Global Unity: the Role of Volunteers in the International Arena.”

As part of the Rally, a volunteer eco-action was organized to plant the Alley of the Youth of Asia. In addition, cultural events included excursions to Astana’s landmarks and a visit to the “Bakhchisaray Fountain” theatre production at the Astana Opera.

The Rally has become an important platform for developing intercultural understanding, establishing people-to-people contacts and building confidence among CICA countries. The main objectives of the event included uniting efforts in the field of volunteerism and promoting peaceful coexistence and cooperation. Participants were provided with a platform to share knowledge, experience and best practices in the field of volunteerism. Training and workshops were organized providing an opportunity to share experiences and create networks of future cooperation.



Celebrating the CICA Day – 32nd Anniversary of the pan-Asian organization

Astana, 5 October 2024 — The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) hosted a reception on the occasion of the CICA Day, marking the 32nd anniversary of CICA. The event, which has become a tradition, brought together Ambassadors and representatives of the diplomatic corps in Astana, government officials, including the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, as well as members of the public and business community.



In his opening remarks, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay expressed profound gratitude to Member States for their comprehensive support and contributions for the CICA process. He praised the Kazakh Chairmanship under President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev for its significant progress over the past four years and emphasized the goal of transforming CICA into a full-fledged international organization, a process initiated at the Sixth CICA Summit in 2022. He highlighted ongoing efforts to amend the Host Country Agreement, enhancing the international status of the CICA Secretariat. The Secretary General also noted that the alignment of the Youth Council meeting and the Rally of volunteer



movements with the CICA Day celebration symbolizes CICA's commitment to connectivity across generations.

First Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Akan Rakhmetullin highlighted Kazakhstan's achievements as the founding state and current Chair of CICA. He discussed the

ongoing transformation process initiated by President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and highlighted the institutional development of the organization by establishing three new permanent bodies. He also mentioned the successful CICA Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues, which adopted a high-level statement. In conclusion, he emphasized the importance of the new CICA headquarters in Astana, to be constructed by July 2025, for the organization's future as a full-fledged international organization.

During the reception, the Secretariat demonstrated a video highlighting the history of the organization's development and achievements under Kazakhstan's Chairmanship since 2020.

The 32nd anniversary of CICA was marked by the continued institutional development of the organization and reflects the commitment of CICA Member States to strengthen regional cooperation in Asia.





CICA Expert Meeting discusses institutionalization of Finance Summit

Astana, 8 October 2024 — Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC) together with the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) hosted an online CICA experts meeting devoted to discussing the initiative of Kazakhstan on institutionalization of the CICA Finance Summit.

The meeting opened with remarks from CICA Deputy Secretary General Ms. Zhang Ling, who provided an overview of the history and evolution of the CICA Finance Summit. Initially launched by the People's Republic of China during its Chairmanship from 2014 to 2018, the Finance Summit has played a crucial role in fostering financial cooperation, with prior summits held in Chengdu, Nanning and Jinan. Ms. Zhang Ling underscored the importance of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's 2022 proposal to institutionalize the Finance Summit as a permanent platform to strengthen cooperation among financial sectors of CICA Member States.

This meeting marked the launch of a series of meetings dedicated to the discussion of the objectives, structure, and operational modalities for the institutionalization of CICA Finance Summit.

The meeting was followed by a panel session held on 6 September 2024, at the Astana Finance Days Forum, where representatives of financial institutions and diplomatic missions from CICA Member States, as well as the leadership of the AIFC and the CICA Secretariat, engaged in a preliminary exchange of views on the initiative.

CICA Deputy Secretary General attends meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government in Islamabad



Islamabad, 15-16 October 2024 — Ms. Zhang Ling, Deputy Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), attended the 23rd meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), held in Islamabad under the chairmanship of Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif. The event brought together the heads of government of the SCO member states, observer states, as well as representatives of international organizations.

During the meeting, participants discussed the organization's current activities, achievements and prospects for deepening cooperation in light of the new realities. Special attention was given to trade and economic cooperation, the development of the digital economy, the environmental agenda, transport connectivity, green development and the fight against poverty. Following the tradition, the SCO CHG approved the budget for the coming year, as well as made decisions on further intensification of cooperation in key areas.

CICA and the SCO share common goals of maintaining peace, stability and security in the region, promoting a multilateral approach and enhancing dialogue. In 2014, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the organizations' secretariats, ensuring regular invitations to high-level meetings.



Twelfth CICA Think Tank Forum highlights Asia's role in a multipolarizing world



Shanghai, 24-25 October 2024 — The 12th Meeting of the CICA Think Tank Forum (TTF) convened under the theme “Asia’s New Role in a Multipolarizing World.” Hosted by the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS), the event brought together diplomats, scholars, and researchers from CICA Member States, alongside representatives of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

CICA Secretary General, Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, delivered opening remarks, emphasizing the importance of Asia’s growing influence in shaping global dynamics. He noted that the region’s rapid economic growth and geopolitical significance position it as a key player in the emerging multipolar world. He also praised the CICA TTF as an invaluable platform for intellectual exchanges that enhance regional



cooperation, encouraging participants to explore new research initiatives and support collaborative projects.

The Secretary General underscored the special significance of this year’s meeting, which coincides with the 25th anniversary of the Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations Among CICA Member States. Ambassador Sarybay reaffirmed CICA’s commitment to these principles as the foundation for peace and stability in the region.

Throughout the two-day event, panel discussions focused on key topics such as regional cooperation, security and peace, connectivity, finance, climate change and epidemiology in the



context of achieving global sustainable development. Participants engaged in active discussions on CICA’s role as a multilateral mechanism, exploring its unique advantages and the wider concept of forging a new collective Asian identity.

Following the main panel sessions, President Chen facilitated a brainstorming session with TTF members to discuss the draft of the 2025 Annual Action Plan. Ideas shared included proposals for the venue of next year’s annual meeting and strategies for implementing inter-sessional activities, reinforcing the collaborative spirit of the Forum.



The CICA TTF garnered significant media attention, with the Secretary General and Professor Dr. Chen Dongxiao, President of SIIS, giving an exclusive interview to The Paper, Shanghai’s largest digital media outlet.

The Twelfth CICA Think Tank Forum marked another milestone in CICA’s continued efforts to foster cooperation and intellectual engagement across Asia, laying the groundwork for future collaborations that contribute to peace, stability, and development in the region.





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November

CICA Secretary General participates in Second Minsk International Conference on Eurasian Security



Minsk, 31 October-1 November 2024 — Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay took part in the Second Minsk International Conference on Eurasian Security in Minsk.



Speaking at the high-level session “Paradigm shift in the world order: from monocentrism to multipolarity”, CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay outlined the importance of the organization in establishing a new Eurasian security architecture. He emphasized that “the future of Eurasia lies precisely with such associations as CICA, which serve to erase dividing lines and create new areas of interaction”.

Ambassador Kairat Sarybay noted that building a comprehensive security architecture and transitioning

from competition to cooperation can only be achieved through genuine multilateralism and confidence building measures. He welcomed the fact that the global community is becoming more aware of the need for a sustainable approach that includes economic and social development, addresses humanitarian issues and takes civilizational and cultural aspects into account to ensure security. K. Sarybay also stressed the importance of CICA initiatives, including the Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues, where the Member States reaffirmed their commitment to work together on climate change, as well as youth and educational programmes such as the Rally of Volunteer



Leaders and the Partnership Network of Leading Universities aimed at building trust among the Member States.

The event was opened by President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko. The plenary session was attended by Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia Aleksandar Vulin, Foreign Ministers of Russia Sergey Lavrov, Hungary Péter Szijjártó, Syria Bassam al-Sabbagh, Special Representative of the Government of the People's Republic of China Li Hui, Union Minister of Myanmar U Ko Ko Hlaing, heads of international organizations – CICA, CSTO, CIS, SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure, as well as the Union State of Russia and Belarus.

The conference participants, including leading international experts, discussed topics such as regional and global security challenges, economic and energy security, interaction among international and regional structures, principles of the future architecture of Euro-Asian security based on multipolarity and diversity.



CICA Workshop on Safety in Mining Industry: best practices and innovations in industrial safety

Moscow, 6-7 November 2024 — The Federal Environmental, Industrial and Nuclear Supervision Service of the Russian Federation (Rostekhnadzor), with the support of the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), successfully held a two-day workshop titled “Safety first. Safety regulation in mining industry, innovative technologies”. The event brought together top specialists and representatives from relevant supervisory agencies of nine CICA Member States, as well as experts from industrial companies and scientific institutions.

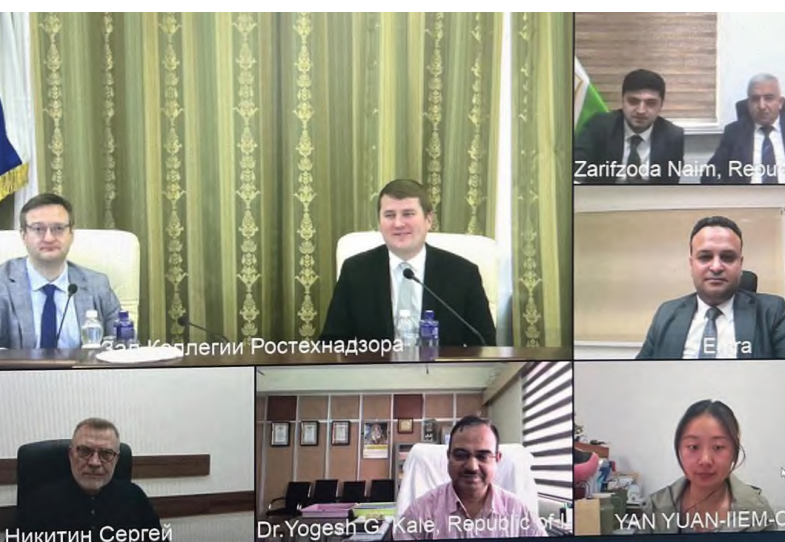
The workshop aimed to discuss current issues and share experiences to boost safety and improve the efficiency of control and supervisory activities in the mining industry. The workshop covered a wide range of topics, including emergency response management, interaction between regulatory bodies and industrial companies, as well as the use of innovative and digital technologies to enhance the accident-free production system.

While welcoming the participants, the representative of the CICA Secretariat thanked the Rostekhnadzor team for the excellent organization of the event, highlighting the Russian Federation's active role in implementing confidence building

measures and expressing appreciation for its ongoing support for the CICA process as a whole.

The workshop included presentations by heads and specialists from the supervisory services of Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Egypt and Azerbaijan, who shared their experiences in promoting a safety culture at industrial facilities.

The event underlined the importance of international cooperation and knowledge-sharing in industrial safety, in line with the “Natural disaster management” priority area (coordinated by Iran) under the CICA Environmental Dimension.



Iran hosts 4th CICA webinar on harm reduction interventions in drug use disorders

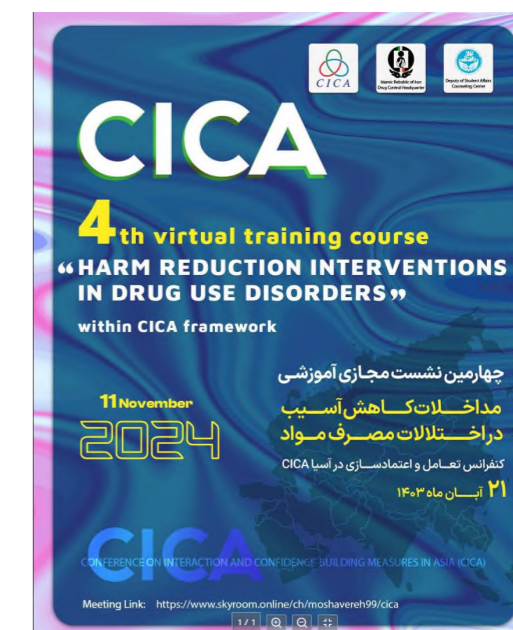
Tehran, 11 November 2024 — The Islamic Republic of Iran organized the 4th CICA webinar on harm reduction interventions in drug use disorders, bringing together experts from nine CICA Member States. This annual webinar, held by Iran's Drug Control Headquarters in partnership with the University of Tehran since 2021, serves as a platform for advancing strategies within the “Combating Illicit Drugs” priority area under the CICA framework.



The webinar focused on recent developments in harm reduction techniques, presenting participants with the latest scientific achievements and looked at new plan strategies for treatment of various types of drug addiction. Key topics discussed included psychosocial interventions, the role of new technologies in supporting individuals with substance use disorders. Moreover, such important aspects as effective methods of control of drug-use related infectious diseases, especially HIV/AIDS, and opioid substitution therapy were touched upon.

CICA's commitment to combating illicit drugs is one of the 18 priority areas of the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures. Iran, as the coordinator in the area of “Combating Illicit Drugs”, is currently actively working with Member

States to develop a Concept Paper on cooperation in this critical sphere.



CICA Secretary General attends UN Climate Change Conference in Baku

Baku, 11-13 November 2024 — CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay participated in COP29 hosted by the Government of Azerbaijan in collaboration with the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This global conference gathered heads of state and government, other high-level officials, heads of international organizations and climate advocates from 196 countries to address pressing issues and take actions related to climate change.

On 12 November 2024, the CICA Secretary General represented CICA at the High-Level Roundtable on Energy: Advancing Climate Mitigation Action, co-hosted by Azerbaijan and the International Energy Agency, on the margins of the World Leaders Climate Action Summit. He highlighted CICA's unique and comprehensive security framework, which integrates five dimensions of cooperation: military-political, new challenges and threats, human, economic and environmental. Underscoring the role of enhancing climate change resilience and shared responsibility of CICA Member States, the Secretary General emphasized crucial outcomes of the first-ever CICA Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues held on 28 August 2024. The ministerial-level



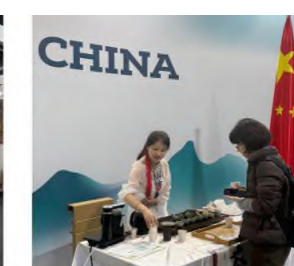
statement adopted by the conference reflects commitment of Member States to advance climate adaptation, preserve biodiversity and improve water resource management. Secretary General also welcomed Azerbaijan's upcoming CICA Chairmanship in 2024-2026, expressing optimism about its proactive leadership. He also highlighted the initiative of the Kazakh Chairmanship to establish a CICA environmental council, an advisory body to focus on sustainable development, collaborative action and environmental cooperation across the CICA region.



On 13 November 2024, as a panelist on Adverse Impacts of Climate Change on the Decline of Water Basins, Secretary General addressed the urgent need for sustainable water management in the face of escalating climate impacts. He spoke about the profound consequences of recent environmental crises, such as extensive flooding across Asia, which threaten regional security. The Secretary General reaffirmed CICA's support for water conservation initiatives, calling for joint efforts to strengthen water management practices and mitigate climate-related risks. He also

announced CICA's upcoming side event on the margins of COP29, Pathways to Sustainable Connectivity, scheduled for 20 November 2024, which will explore sustainable solutions for green transportation networks in Asia.

In his engagements at COP29, the Secretary General reiterated CICA's commitment to a multilateral approach to strengthening climate change resilience, emphasizing the organization's role as a collaborative platform to unite Asia in pursuit of an environmentally sustainable and prosperous future.



Promoting secure and sustainable transport: CICA Member States gather at CICA Side Event at COP29



Baku, 20 November 2024 — Regional experts and government officials gathered to explore sustainable and climate-resilient transportation corridors across Asia in a CICA event held on the sidelines of the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29). Hosted by the Port of Baku and the CICA Secretariat, the event “Pathways to Sustainable Connectivity: Efforts of CICA and its Member States, and Regional Organizations in Asia for Secure, Effective and Climate-Resilient Transportation Corridors” highlighted the critical role of connectivity in promoting sustainable development, climate resilience and resolving challenges facing the CICA region.

The event brought together high-level speakers from CICA Member States and international organizations to discuss innovative strategies, share best practices and forge collaborative solutions for sustainable transport infrastructure in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). CICA Deputy Secretary General Mrs. Zhang Ling presented CICA as a unique pan-Asian forum to promote peace, security and stability in Asia. She highlighted the initiative of President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev

to establish a CICA Council on Sustainable Connectivity, which is now being discussed by the Member States with the aim of promoting secure, effective and climate-resilient transportation corridors.

Participants focused their discussions on the interconnectedness of transportation and climate resilience, exploring how CICA Member States can collaborate to enhance infrastructure, reduce carbon emissions and address the region’s climate vulnerability.

Ms. Natavan Aghayeva, International Relations Manager of the Port of Baku, underlined the critical position of the Port of Baku in promoting the trade and connectivity between Asia and Europe. Mr. Qiu Xinli, Counsellor from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, discussed the importance of international cooperation in the development of secure and climate-resilient transport corridors. Mr. Nurlan Kenessov, Director of the Transport Policy Department of Kazakhstan’s Ministry of Transport, outlined Kazakhstan’s national efforts to enhance regional connectivity and encouraged CICA Member States to continue discussions on the establishment of the CICA Council on Sustainable Connectivity. Mr. Burak Aykan, Director General of EU Affairs and Foreign Relations at Türkiye’s Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, emphasized Türkiye’s role in facilitating cross-border transportation and promoting green infrastructure. Mr. Jun Jie Bi, President of Zhonghongwang Culture Media Co., LTD, provided insights into the integration of digital solutions in transportation networks. Mr. Hurshid Rustamov, Senior Coordination Officer at the UN Azerbaijan Office,

shared the United Nations’ perspective on integrating sustainable development goals into transportation infrastructure. Mr. Olivier Oudin, Investment Officer at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, discussed financing models for sustainable transport projects. Mr. Jie Guo, Director of the Transport Knowledge Sharing Center in China, presented the latest low-carbon research on sustainable transport practices. Dr. Elnur Safarov, Environmental Expert and Oceanographer at the Port of Baku, addressed the environmental impact of transportation infrastructure and the need for climate-conscious planning.

The event underscored the importance of establishing secure, efficient and sustainable transport corridors as a means of fostering economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection.





Document on improving terms and conditions of CICA Secretariat's location in Kazakhstan signed

Astana, 15 November 2024 — Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Murat Nurtleu and CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay signed the Protocol on Amendments to the 2007 Host Country Agreement between the Government of Kazakhstan and the CICA Secretariat regarding the Terms and Conditions of the Secretariat's Location in the Territory of Kazakhstan. The document was developed as part of the implementation of the road map for transforming CICA into a full-fledged international organization, following the decision of the Sixth CICA Summit in Astana on 13 October 2022.



The main aim of the amendments is to boost the international standing of the Secretariat in line with the practices of United Nations organizations, align working conditions with global standards and internationalize the Secretariat's staff.



The signing of this Protocol represents a significant contribution by Kazakhstan to the development and strengthening of CICA as an international organization focused on dialogue, cooperation and regional stability in Asia.

Republic of Korea makes another voluntary financial contribution to CICA



Astana, 19 November 2024 — CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay received Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of Kazakhstan H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-ick on the occasion of the latest voluntary financial contribution by the Republic of Korea to the CICA Secretariat budget.

The Secretary General expressed his sincere gratitude to the Korean Government for its strong support and commitment to CICA through steadfast financial contribution.

Secretary General highlighted Republic of Korea's leadership in implementing CICA confidence building measures in the priority areas of information technology and energy security and the outcomes of his recent visit to Seoul, where potential joint projects with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Korea National Diplomatic Academy were discussed.

The Republic of Korea reaffirmed its dedication to supporting the long-term sustainability of the CICA Secretariat and advancing regional stability in Asia through enhanced cooperation and multilateral engagement within CICA.

Republic of Korea is the fourth largest contributor to the CICA budget following Kazakhstan, China and Türkiye.

CICA Business Council and Business Forum 2024: Advancing small businesses for sustainable regional growth

Astana, 20 November 2024 — The National Chamber of Entrepreneurs “Atameken”, in collaboration with the CICA Secretariat and the Chamber of International Commerce of Kazakhstan, successfully hosted the Seventh Plenary Session of the CICA Business Council and the Ninth CICA Business Forum, gathering over 140 representatives from all 28 CICA Member States. These high-level events underscored the vital role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in fostering sustainable economic growth across the CICA region, with focus on leveraging AI for SME development, enhancing cross-border trade through e-commerce advancements, addressing challenges in logistics and infrastructure, empowering women in SMEs across the CICA region and prioritizing sustainable development within SMEs.

The plenary session served as a platform for Member States to share insights and foster collaboration. Raimbek Batalov, Chairman of Atameken and the CICA Business Council, emphasized Kazakhstan's achievements during its chairmanship and highlighted USD 82 billion in trade with CICA countries in 2023 and the presence of over 36,000 companies with investments from CICA nations. Reflecting on past challenges, he underscored progress in digitalization and food security.

CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay highlighted CICA's achievements under Kazakhstan's Chairmanship, including the adoption of the Astana Statement on Transformation, the CICA Transformation Road Map and the establishment of new CICA structures: the Council of Eminent Persons, the CICA Think Tank Forum and the CICA Fund. He also pointed to Kazakhstan's initiatives, such as the CICA Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues, institutionalizing CICA Finance Summit and establishing a Council on Sustainable Connectivity to address supply chain challenges.



Secretary General expressed optimism about the future Azerbaijan's leadership, with Orkhan Mammadov, Chairman of Azerbaijan's Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA), set to assume the Chair in December 2024. Mr. Mammadov outlined Azerbaijan's strategic vision prioritizing a green economy, ESG principles, and the Baku Climate Coalition Declaration for SMEs' Green Climate Transition, aiming to actively involve SMEs in tackling climate change and pursuing environmentally friendly business practices.



Dr. Qiang Xiaoyun of the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS) emphasized the critical role of research in shaping SME policies in the CICA region. She highlighted China's robust framework for SME support while identifying challenges such as data transparency and coordination among Member States. SIIS, in cooperation with the CICA Secretariat and Member States, plans to develop an e-book on SME policies within the CICA framework.

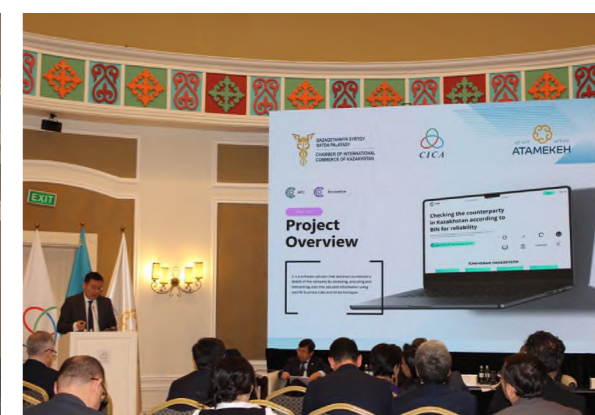
A total of 33 speakers from Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, India, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan made significant contributions to the discussions at the CICA Business Council meeting.

The Business Council adopted a forward-looking agenda for its next meeting, scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2025 in Baku, reaffirming its commitment to fostering SME growth and sustainability. The agenda includes exploring the role of SMEs in

developing smart cities and implementing national incentives; promoting industrial cooperation and enhancing SME participation in global value chains (GVCs) through digital services and platforms; supporting SMEs in achieving a green transition; driving SME growth through digitalization.

The Ninth CICA Business Forum welcomed approximately 60 participants, including representatives of the Afghan business community. The discussions centered around sustainable development of SMEs, green business practices, and leveraging AI and digital technologies to create regional and global opportunities.

Both events concluded with a shared vision to advance SMEs as catalysts for regional cooperation, sustainable development, and inclusive economic growth. The CICA Business Council reaffirmed its role as a vital platform for driving economic collaboration and innovation across the region, with a continued emphasis on sustainability, digital transformation, and inclusivity.



CICA facilitates mine safety risk prevention and control



Beijing, 19-21 November 2024 — The 2nd International Conference on Mine Safety Risk Prevention and Control on enhancing cooperation among CICA Member States successfully concluded. The event, organized by the Department of International Cooperation and Rescue, Ministry of Emergency Management of the People's Republic of China, and the Ministry's Information Institute, drew participants from eleven CICA Member States and included China's leading academicians and experts of the mining industry.

The conference commenced with a training session focused on vital aspects of mine safety, including work safety risk management, intelligent development strategies for mine safety and intelligent mining solutions. A key element of the training involved on-site observations at leading intelligent mining equipment facilities,

allowing attendees to experience firsthand the practical application of these advanced technologies and equipment.

The opening address of CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, which was read out to the participants of the event, underscored the significance of the conference and its alignment with



CICA's priorities within the environmental dimension. He stressed the importance of strong regulations and advanced technologies to mitigate the environmental footprint of mining activities.

During the sessions, participants delivered presentations and engaged in discussions centered around exchange of policies and best practices in mine safety management and risk prevention and control.

The workshop served to enhance the efforts of CICA Member States towards prioritizing the safety and well-being of those working in the mining industry while advocating for environmentally sound mining practice.



CICA Secretary General delivered remarks at the 115th Session of the IOM Council and engaged in high-level meetings to strengthen multilateral cooperation



Geneva, 25–27 November 2024 — The Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay participated in the 115th Session of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Council. He delivered remarks on the critical importance of promoting regular migration pathways in Asia, emphasizing on the conferences and training sessions held for government agencies and stakeholders from civil societies of the Member States of CICA to share their best practices in dealing with labor migration, illegal migration and human trafficking, thus, promoting stability and confidence building through dialogue and cooperation in Asia.

On the sidelines of this high-level gathering, Ambassador Kairat Sarybay met with Ms. Amy E. Pope, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The meeting focused on CICA's contributions to addressing migration challenges in Asia and explored opportunities to enhance collaboration aimed at promoting safe, orderly and regular migration in Asia and beyond. Both sides expressed their commitment to strengthening partnerships based on the Memorandum of Understanding of 2008.

As part of his visit, the CICA Secretary General held a series of high-level meetings with other prominent international organizations and

key stakeholders to strengthen multilateral cooperation and foster meaningful synergies.

Ambassador Sarybay met with Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG). During the meeting, the Secretary General provided a comprehensive update on CICA's recent achievements and key developments under Kazakhstan's Chairmanship. Discussions focused on identifying opportunities for collaboration and fostering synergies between CICA and UN entities based in Geneva.

Highlighting CICA's Human Dimension and its focus on fostering social and economic development, Ambassador Sarybay met with Mr. Gilbert F. Houngbo, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO).



Secretary General provided an overview of the activities of CICA's advisory bodies, the Business Council and Youth Council, emphasizing their efforts to promote the internationalization of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from Member States and to enhance women's and youth's participation in business opportunities.

Ambassador Sarybay also underscored the implementation of the Kazakh Chairmanship's initiative to establish the CICA Partnership Network of Leading Universities (PNLU). The PNLU has significant potential to bridge the gap between higher education outcomes and labor market demands. By aligning academic programs with market needs, it aims to contribute meaningfully to shaping regular labor migration pathways in Asia, addressing both present challenges and future requirements.

Both parties agreed to maintain a dialogue to identify potential areas of collaboration and to leverage each other's platforms for enhanced outreach efforts.

In his meeting with Ms. Magdalena Sepúlveda, Director of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), the CICA Secretary General explored opportunities for engagement in social development through the CICA Think

Tank Forum and other advisory bodies. Both sides expressed their commitment to continuing dialogue and elevating research efforts to the multilateral level.

Environmental sustainability took center stage during discussions with Dr. Bruce Gordon of UN-Water. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay provided updates on CICA's initiatives within the Environmental Dimension and key outcomes from the 2024 CICA Environmental Conference. The meeting explored potential synergies in water-related initiatives, tailored to the diverse geographical and developmental needs of CICA Member States.

Secretary General also had an in-depth discussion with Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Director of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP). The dialogue focused on contemporary challenges and opportunities for multilateralism and mediation in the evolving landscape of global security and the transition to a multipolar world.

During discussions with Mr. Pierre Krähenbühl, Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Secretary General provided an overview of CICA's goals and objectives and modalities of activities. The meeting



outlined potential areas for collaboration, including ICRC engagement in the CICA Military-Political Dimension seminars, which are annually organized by Kazakhstan as coordinator to promote awareness of international humanitarian law among CICA Member States.

Building on CICA's commitment to fostering mediation and dialogue, Ambassador Sarybay engaged with the team from the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, led by Ms. Katie Sams, Deputy Executive Director and Chief

Operating Officer. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay underscored the CICA's unique role as a pan-Asian intergovernmental forum with significant mediation potential. The discussions laid the foundation for further engagements, including capacity building activities.



DECEMBER



Jordan ratifies CICA Convention on Privileges and Immunities

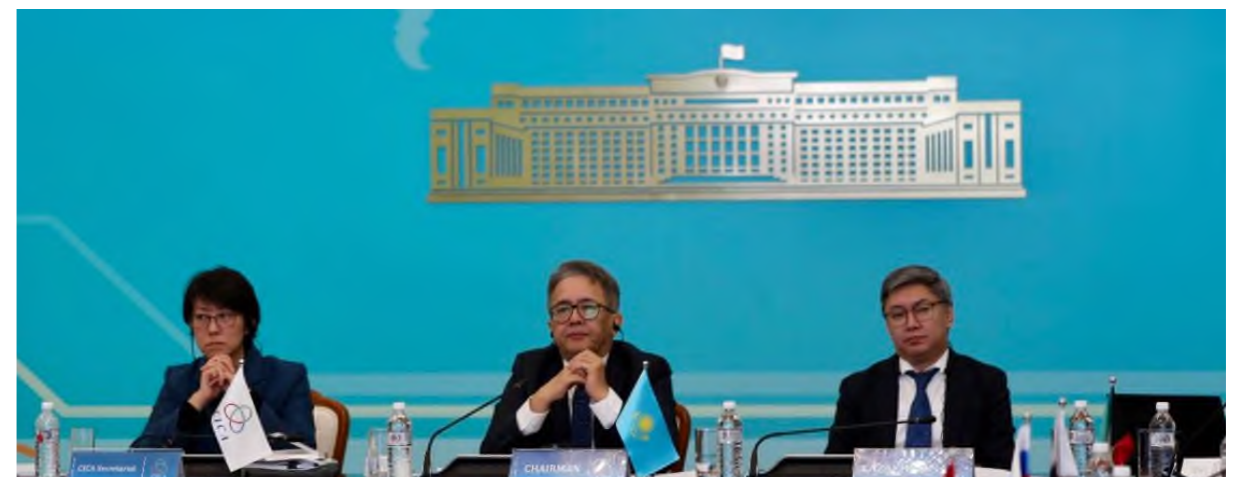
Astana, 2 December 2024 — The CICA Secretariat hosted a meeting between CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay and Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Kazakhstan Hamza Al-Omari to mark Jordan's ratification of the CICA Convention on the Privileges and Immunities. This milestone underscores CICA's efforts to enhance its institutional foundation and promote regional peace, security and collaboration across Asia.

The Convention, a cornerstone of CICA's legal framework, ensures institutional capacity by granting privileges and immunities to the Secretariat, its personnel and Member State representatives during CICA meetings and events.

Ambassador Sarybay thanked Jordanian side for its valuable contribution and consistent support of CICA, particularly its role in advancing the transformation of CICA into a full-fledged international organization. He highlighted the significance of early ratification in the context of ongoing reforms and called on other Member States to follow Jordan's example.

Ambassador Al-Omari reaffirmed Jordan's commitment to CICA, noting the country's active participation since 2008 and ongoing support for confidence building measures in the region. He expressed appreciation for Kazakhstan's leadership and Ambassador Sarybay's dedication to strengthening cooperation among Member States.

To date, 11 Member States, including Jordan, completed the ratification process, and three more ratifications are required for the Convention to come into force.



CICA Special Working Group advances preparations for upcoming Seventh CICA Ministerial Council Meeting

Astana, 3 December 2024 — The CICA Special Working Group, under the chairmanship of Kazakhstan and with the support of the CICA Secretariat, held a meeting at the Kazakh Foreign Ministry to discuss key documents in preparation for the 7th CICA Ministerial Council, scheduled for 17 December 2024.

Participants held a productive dialogue to reach consensus on essential documents that will further strengthen CICA's role as a pan-Asian platform for peace and cooperation. The SWG positively considered the annual plan of implementation of confidence building measures and the budget of the CICA Secretariat for 2025.

This meeting underscores the continued commitment of CICA Member States to regional stability and cooperation in Asia.

CICA Senior Officials Committee meeting held in Astana

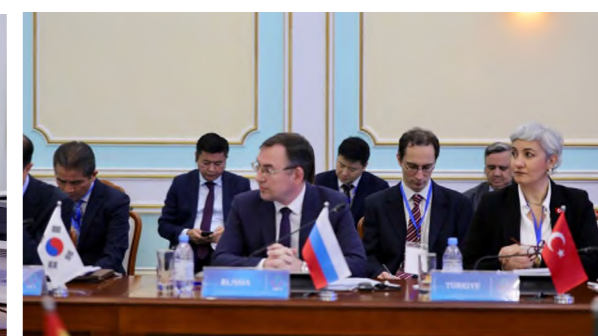
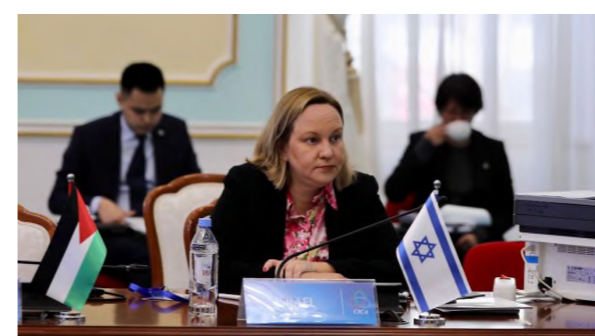


Astana, 4 December 2024 — The Senior Officials Committee (SOC) meeting was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, chaired by First Deputy Foreign Minister Akan Rakhmetullin and Ambassador-at-Large Talgat Kaliyev, with participation of CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay.

CICA Senior Officials discussed key documents for adoption by the Ministerial Council meeting scheduled for December 2024, where the CICA Chairmanship will pass on from Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan. Main outcomes of the SOC meeting included updates to the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), introducing new CBM on volunteerism to enhance civic engagement.

The Committee also approved the 2025 Plan of Implementation of CBMs and the CICA Secretariat's budget for 2025, reviewed the 2024 annual report of the Secretariat and expressed appreciation to the CICA Secretary General.

Deliberations at the SOC meeting once again reaffirmed CICA Member States' commitment to advancing cooperation and dialogue in Asia through the CICA platform and prepared the ground for discussions and decision-making at the upcoming Ministerial Council meeting. The SOC agreed to reconvene on 10 December 2024 in an online mode.



#WeAreTogether 2024: CICA strengthens cooperation in promoting volunteerism



Moscow, 4-8 December 2024 — CICA Deputy Secretary General Zhang Ling participated in the International Forum for Civil Participation #WeAreTogether 2024 as a member of the Directorate of the International Track of Prize WeAreTogether.

At the grand opening ceremony, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin congratulated the Forum's guests and participants on International Volunteer Day and expressed his gratitude to volunteers for their invaluable work and compassion for those in need.

During the award ceremony, Ms. Zhang Ling presented statuettes to nine winners of the International Track of the Prize across three categories, four of whom represented CICA Member States: Kazakhstan, India, Iraq and Uzbekistan.

Addressing the participants, the CICA Deputy Secretary General highlighted the remarkable progress of the WeAreTogether International Track this year, with an increase in foreign applications and improved project quality, reflecting the Forum's growing appeal and international reputation year after year.

Zhang Ling noted the significant growth of volunteerism in the CICA region in recent years and expressed gratitude to the

Russian side for its initiative in promoting it across the pan-Asian area. Building on this initiative and the shared vision of the leaders of the organization's Member States, the CICA Foreign Ministers adopted a Statement on Promoting Volunteerism for Sustainable Development in 2023. Additionally, a series of events were organized on this matter, culminating in the Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders this October in Astana, which brought together over 450 delegates from 21 CICA countries.

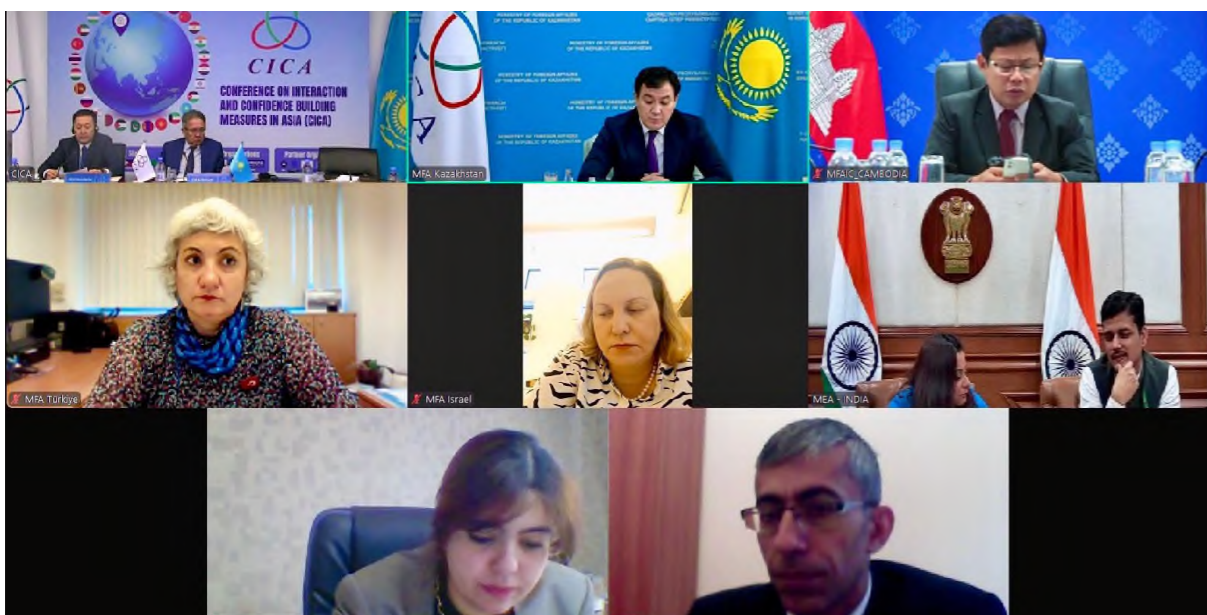
The Deputy Secretary General expressed CICA's readiness to strengthen the synergy of countries to foster the spirit and values of volunteerism, aiming to implement joint projects to scale best practices and

experiences in the pan-Asian region. She also called on all participants to join the volunteer movement to jointly celebrate the International Year of Volunteers in 2026, proclaimed by the resolution of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly at the initiative of President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

The International Forum #WeAreTogether is held annually by the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs of Russia and is timed to coincide with the International Volunteer Day. In total, 49,521 people from 142 countries applied for the prize in 2024, with 126 participants becoming finalists.



CICA Senior Officials Committee finalized preparations for the Ministerial Council meeting



Astana, 10 December 2024 — The Senior Officials Committee (SOC) convened online today, chaired by Deputy Foreign Minister Alibek Bakayev and Ambassador-at-Large Talgat Kaliyev, with participation of CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay. This meeting marked final step in the preparations for the upcoming Seventh Ministerial Council (MC) Meeting on 17 December 2024, where the CICA Chairmanship will pass from Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan.

In his opening remarks, Alibek Bakayev wished the Committee successful deliberations, expressing confidence that the “CICA spirit” of mutual respect and collaboration would guide discussions and ensure productive outcomes.

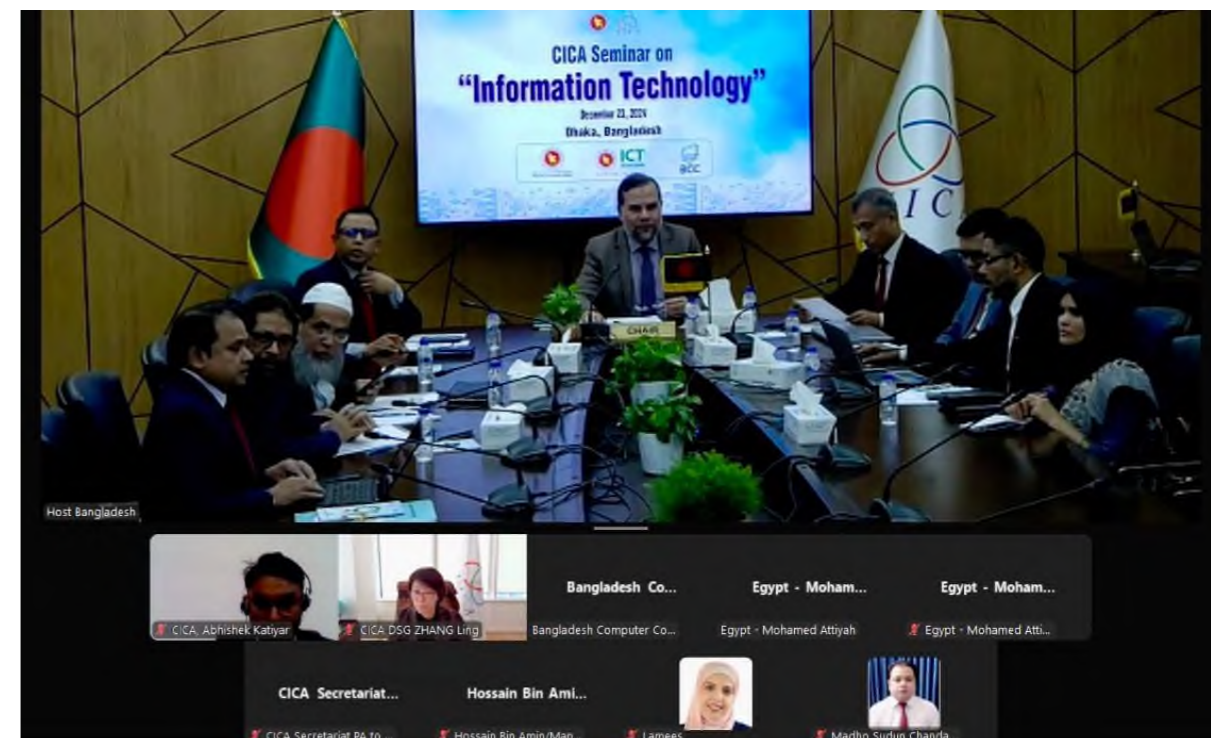
The SOC aimed at ensuring successful outcomes of the upcoming MC meeting, which will wrap up CICA achievements since the last Summit in Astana in 2022 and set the stage for 2024-2026 Chairmanship of Azerbaijan.

The senior officials achieved a breakthrough in reviewing and finalizing key documents for adoption by the ministers, in particular consensus on a draft CICA Ministerial Council Statement on the 25th Anniversary of the Declaration on the Principles Guiding Relations among the CICA Member States, which was prepared as the main political outcome of the MC meeting.

The Secretary General also briefed the SOC on organizational issues to ensure the smooth and efficient conduct of the MC meeting.

Discussions at the SOC meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment of CICA Member States to advancing multilateral dialogue and cooperation in Asia.

CICA Member States meet to address IT challenges and foster regional collaboration



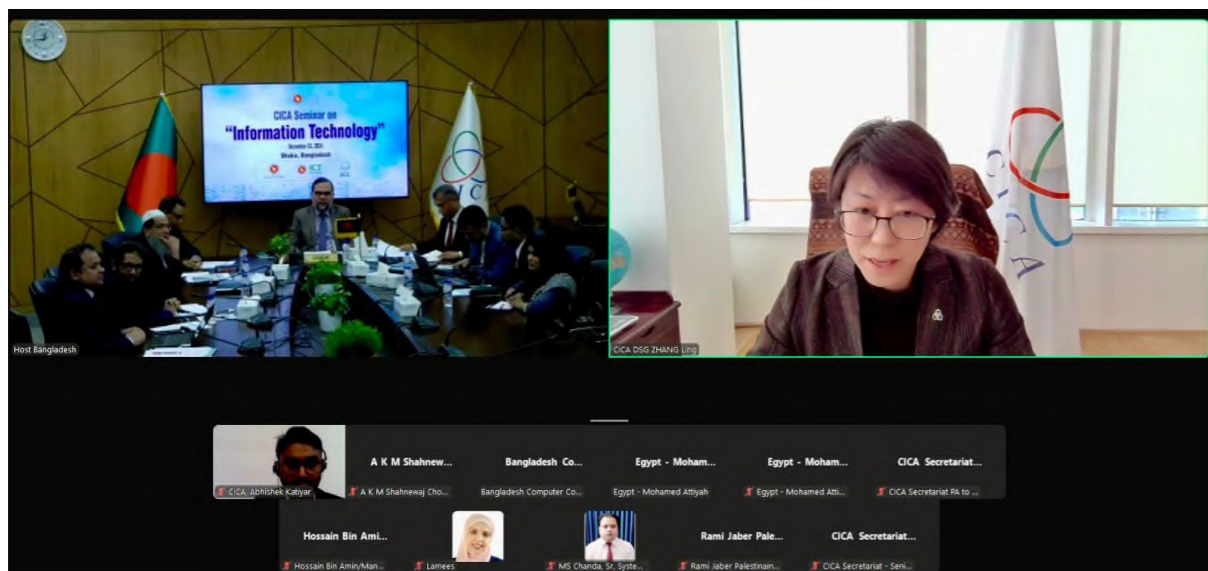
Bangladesh, 23 December 2024 — The Bangladesh Computer Council, Information and Communication Technology Division, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, with support from the CICA Secretariat, hosted the CICA Seminar on Information Technology in a hybrid format. The event brought together representatives from various line agencies and ministries of CICA Member States.

Mr. Shish Haider Chowdhury, Secretary of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division, delivered opening remarks emphasizing the role of ICT in driving national growth. He highlighted the importance of collaboration among Member States in the IT sector to address rising digital disparities and empower citizens. This unified approach to sharing knowledge and perspectives aims to build trust and foster cooperation among Member States.

CICA Deputy Secretary General Mrs. Zhang Ling underscored the significance of enhancing confidence among Member States by exchanging knowledge and expertise in the priority area of Information Technology, particularly in an increasingly dynamic and rapidly changing global landscape. She commended Bangladesh’s active role as co-coordinator of the IT priority area under CICA’s economic dimension.

Mr. Mohamed Attiyah from Egypt presented on the growth story of Egypt's IT sector. Representatives from the EDGE Project and the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunication and Information Technology of Bangladesh also shared insights through their presentations, titled Bangladesh's Success in ICT Innovation and Development: Impact on Global Cooperation and 4th Industrial Revolution: Bangladesh Perspective, respectively.

The seminar highlighted the vital role of IT in fostering regional collaboration, with CICA and its Member States, including Bangladesh, championing initiatives to bridge digital disparities and empower citizens.



The role of CICA in multilateral cooperation and the security architecture was noted in a joint statement by Presidents Tokayev and Putin. CICA remains committed to fostering dialogue and confidence building among its Member States, addressing today's global and regional challenges.



On 30 October 2024, supported by the CICA Secretariat, the Astana International Finance Centre finalized a draft to institutionalize the CICA Finance Summit as an advisory body. Initiated by China and endorsed by Kazakhstan's President Tokayev, the Summit fosters regional financial cooperation and was considered at the CICA 7th Ministerial Council Meeting in December 2024.

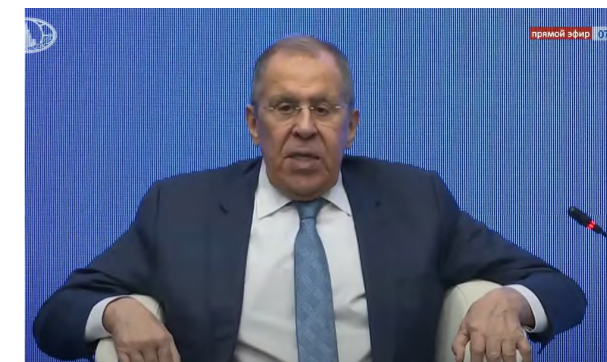


SWG sessions were held on 9-10 October, 5-6 November, and 3 December 2024, focusing on preparations for the upcoming Seventh CICA Ministerial Council Meeting in December 2024. These consultations were focused on the discussion of draft outcome documents, including updates to the annual plan of implementation of confidence building measures and the budget of the CICA Secretariat for 2025. These sessions yet again demonstrated relevance of CICA for all its Member States and their dedication to further strengthening the global role of Asia and to institutional development of CICA as unique pan-Asian organization.



The CICA Secretary General expressed encouragement following a meeting between the current (Kazakhstan), former (Tajikistan), and incoming (Azerbaijan) CICA Chairs, represented by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Bakayev, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasredin, and Ambassador Atamoglanov.

The participants exchanged views on the CICA agenda for the upcoming 7th Ministerial Council Meeting scheduled for 17 December 2024. The Secretary General welcomed the shared vision on CICA's prospects, the ongoing transformation, and the continuity of priorities.



H.E. Minister Sergey Lavrov highlighted CICA's role in shaping a new Eurasian security architecture during his address at the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan. He underscored CICA's inclusive approach, bringing together its Member States in fostering structured dialogue and enhanced regional



The CICA General Secretary welcomed H.E. Ms. Aleška Simkić, the new Ambassador of the European Union to Kazakhstan, to the CICA headquarters during her courtesy visit. The CICA SG wished her success in her new mission!



CICA Deputy Secretary General Zhang Ling with Kazakhstan's Vice Minister of Culture and Information Aizada Kurmanova awarded volunteers involved in the preparation and organization of the CICA Volunteers Rally, held under the auspices of the CICA Youth Council in Astana on 3-4 October 2024.

As an outcome, the CICA Youth Council adopted recommendations to include volunteerism in the CICA Catalogue of CBMs and to strengthen cooperation among CICA Member States in this area. The rally brought together 450 participants from CICA Member States and international organizations.



CICA Expert Ambassador Doulat Kuanyshiev met with Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General of the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad and former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, who paid a courtesy call to the CICA Secretariat.



The CICA Secretary General received a delegation from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), led by Biljana Milosevic, Head of the ICRC Regional Delegation in Central Asia, at the CICA headquarters. During the meeting, the parties discussed potential areas for collaboration within various dimensions of interaction of CICA Member States. Both sides look forward to further engagement.



The CICA Secretary General with the First Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan Ismatullo Nasredin and Ambassador Khayrullo Ibodzoda inspected the construction of the future CICA headquarters. Tajikistan's contribution to the new premises—a beautifully crafted wooden carved gate—symbolizes the collective sense of ownership among CICA Member States, and reflects the cultural richness and diversity of Asia.



CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay held a meeting with H.E. Ibtissam Rakha Hassan, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Secretary General expressed sincere gratitude for Egypt's support of CICA Transformation and other priorities of Kazakh Chairmanship. The interlocutors exchanged thoughts on some current developments in West Asia and the broader region of CICA.



On 3 December 2024, H.E. Ambassador Adel Adaileh, Expert in the CICA dimension of New Challenges and Threats, represented CICA at the 28th Council of Ministers Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Mashhad, Iran.

In his remarks, Ambassador emphasized the cooperation between CICA and ECO, highlighting their shared objective of regional socio-economic development by promoting security and stability through confidence building measures.



CICA expert Ambassador Doulat Kuanyshiev met with CICA Secretariat's good old friend, Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar, a prominent Indian diplomat and foreign policy scholar who previously served as the Indian Ambassador to Kazakhstan. They discussed ways to further strengthen CICA's institutional capacity, reflecting Asia's growing role in global affairs.



CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay welcomed Steve O'Malley, UN Resident Coordinator a.i. in Kazakhstan, to the CICA Headquarters. He briefed on CICA's CBMs, structure, and activities, with a focus on enhancing collaboration with the UN. Both parties looking forward to continuing cooperation in future.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Sergey Lavrov highlighted the potential of CICA as one of the important security structures on the Eurasian continent during his speech at the 2nd Conference on Eurasian Security in Minsk. This recognition underscores the growing importance of CICA in promoting regional stability and cooperation.



The Embassy of India in Astana organized an event to commemorate the 155th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, celebrated globally as the International Day of Non-Violence. Ambassador Dr. Nagendra Prasad and CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay addressed the gathering.

Ambassador Sarybay emphasized that Gandhi's visionary philosophy of non-violence remains critically important in today's world and aligns deeply with CICA's mission of promoting peace and cooperation.



On 19 November 2024, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay welcomed H.E. Ms. Tiina Intelmann and H.E. Mr. Jaap Ora to the CICA Secretariat. During the meeting, the Secretary General shared CICA's unique experience in advancing multilateralism across Asia and briefed Estonian colleagues on CICA's achievements under Kazakhstan Chairmanship in 2020-2024.



CICA Day Football Tournament 2024 concludes with an exciting final

Astana, 13 October 2024 — The CICA Secretariat successfully hosted the annual CICA Day Football Tournament, bringing together teams from the diplomatic missions of six CICA Member States and one international organization. This year's participants included representatives from China, Kazakhstan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan), Republic of Korea, Russia, Türkiye, Uzbekistan, and the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), alongside the CICA Secretariat.



In a highly competitive and friendly atmosphere, Uzbekistan secured third place after a well-fought match against the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan. The final showdown between IOFS and Russia kept spectators on the edge of their seats, ending in a 1-1 draw. After extra time and a dramatic penalty shootout, IOFS emerged as the winner of the tournament.

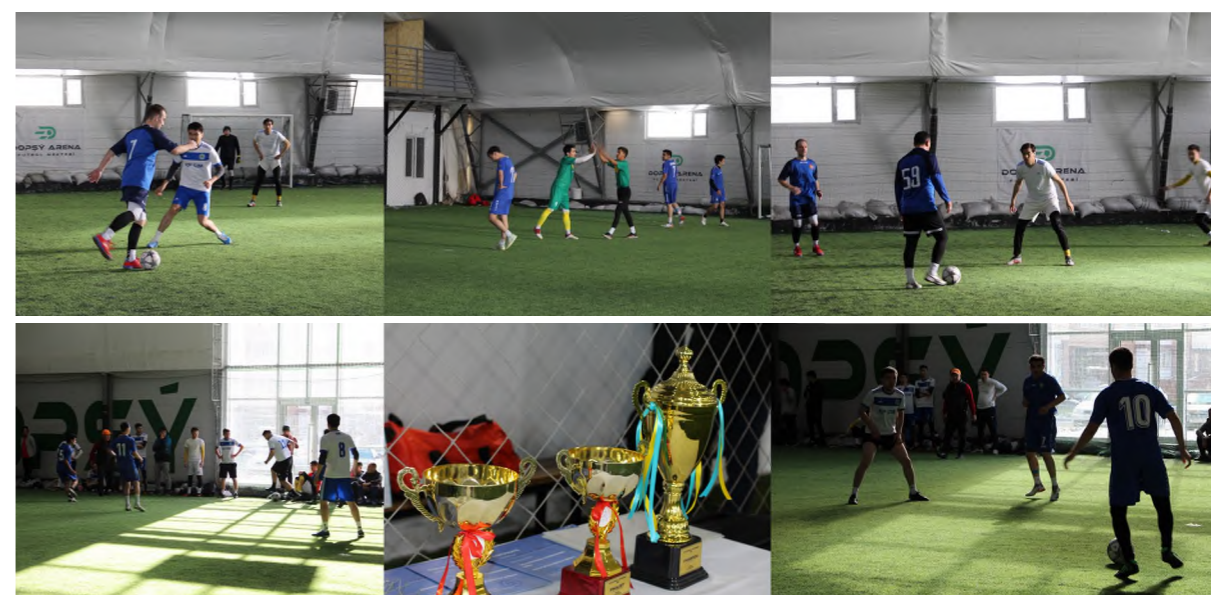


Before the award ceremony, Ambassador Doulat Kuanyshiev, speaking on behalf of CICA Secretariat, underscored the tournament's importance in bringing people together. "This tournament is a reflection of CICA's mission to encourage closer ties between our Member States through shared experiences. Events like these help foster trust and mutual respect," he said.

Ambassador Kuanyshiev congratulated the winning teams and thanked all participants for their sportsmanship and spirited competition.

The CICA football tournament has become a cherished tradition, strengthening relationships and reinforcing CICA's dedication to fostering cooperation through informal yet meaningful exchanges.

Looking ahead, the CICA Secretariat remains committed to organizing similar events that promote unity, healthy lifestyle, sportsmanship, and friendship among its Member States.



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