

**Remarks by  
the Executive Director of the CICA Secretariat Ambassador  
K. Sarybay at the Board Meeting of the CICA Business Council.**

*31 March, 2 pm (Nur-Sultan time)*

**Distinguished Chairman of the Board Mr. Abilshaikov (Nariman Baktybaevich),**

**Distinguished Deputy Chairmen, ladies and gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to thank the leadership of the Kazakh National Chamber of Entrepreneurs "Atameken" for hosting the first Board Meeting of the Business Council on a tight schedule and amid the pandemic.

I would also like to extend my warm welcome to our co-chairs of the Board:

- **Mr. Kirill Grigorievich Sergashov (Russian Federation),**
- **Mr. Yattana Silpsarnvitch (Kingdom of Thailand),**
- **Mr. Salih Tuna Sahin (Republic of Turkey),**

coordinating and co-coordinating Confidence Building Measures in the development of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Dear colleagues, as you know, the establishment of the Business Council was initiated by the Russian Federation in 2011. The Regulations on the Business Council were adopted in 2014. So far, the Business Council has held three meetings, including in Beijing, Nur-Sultan and Moscow in 2017.

The agenda of the Fourth Meeting of the Business Council, proposed by the Chairman, is quite extensive, and it was developed upon the consultations with the agencies focused on small and medium-sized enterprises.

In this regard, it was decided to hold the **Board Meeting** of the Business Council to identify the priorities of the agenda of upcoming Business Council.

Dear colleagues, the Business Council activity belongs to the **Economic Dimension** in CICA performance, which is currently focused on **8 areas**:

- *Development of small and medium-sized enterprises.*
- *Energy security,*
- *Information technology,*
- *Tourism,*
- *Transportation corridors,*
- *Agriculture,*
- *Finance,*
- *Sustainable development.*

In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to the CICA Plan of Confidence Building Measures for 2021 in the part related to the **Economic Dimension**.

Thus, the Plan contains 20 events to be held under Economic umbrella including the following 7 in the field of small and medium-sized enterprises.

- *Meeting of the Business Council,*
- *Business Forum,*
- *Round table on digitalization of the economy,*
- *Seminar on financial technologies and investments,*
- *Finance Summit,*
- *Training course in sustainable development,*
- *Training course in development of SMEs.*

The last two events will be hosted by the **Kingdom of Thailand**, the Finance Summit – by the **People's Republic of China**; and three events – by **Kazakhstan**.

I would also like to thank **the Russian Federation** in capacity of Coordinator of Confidence Building Measures in the field of Development of Small and Medium Enterprises for holding the Round Table “Digital Economy and its Role in the Development of SMEs in the CICA States” in October last year, attended by 13 CICA Member States.

In the framework of this event, Russia presented a digital platform for SMEs as a tool to facilitate business activity in the Russian Federation.

Taking into account the effectiveness of this tool, I proposed to consider the Russian digital platform as a basis for creating a digital platform for supporting SMEs throughout CICA. If this idea is materialized, small and medium enterprises could find an access to comprehensive information about partners, possible barriers, prospects for creating joint events, etc.

I would also like to note that the meetings of the CICA Business Council are usually held back-to-back with of **the CICA Business Forums**, which were initiated by Thailand in 2009.

To date, six Business Forums have been held. Therefore, from our point of view, it would be reasonable to hold the next meeting of the Business Council back-to-back with the Seventh CICA Business Forum in the second quarter of this year, as stipulated by the Plan of Confidence Building Measures for 2021.

**Distinguished members of the Board,**

**The Sixth Meeting of the CICA Foreign Ministers** is scheduled for this October.

The Secretariat carried out meticulous analysis of three existing documents on Confidence Building Measures, namely - the **Catalogue** of Confidence Building Measures adopted in 2004, the **Cooperative Approach**, adopted in 2007, and the **Concept Paper** for the Implementation of Confidence Building Measures in the Military-Political Dimension (2014).

This work is resulted in the development of a streamlined and updated **Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures**. We propose to submit this document for the Foreign Ministers approval.

Thus, CICA will get an updated and effective tool for implementing policies aimed at deepening trust between the 27 CICA states through joint activities, including in the field of business projects.

I would also like to note that the **Russian Federation**, as the Coordinator of Confidence Building Measures in the Development of Small and Medium- Enterprises, is working on a Concept Paper for this area of cooperation and the accompanying Action Plan for its implementation for the period from 2021 to 2023. After approval, these documents will regulate the CICA activities in the business field for the period up to 2023.

**Distinguished members of the Board,**

I would like to wish you fruitful work and assure that the Secretariat will be fully supportive to all the CICA Business Council activities.

