





In this issue:

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

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Foreword



Dear readers,

We present another issue of the Voice of Asia digest, which covers the most significant developments and events within CICA in the first quarter of 2023.

As you know, the activities of the Kazakh Chairmanship are aimed at developing CICA as an important player in international relations, facilitating increased connectivity on the Asian continent and promoting the common interests of the region.

On 22 February 2023, the CICA Secretariat signed a road map of specific actions to achieve the goals set by the Chairmanship, the main of which is the transformation of the Conference into a full-fledged international organization.

The document covers various areas of interaction, including the incremental implementation of the CICA transformation process, institutional development of the Conference, practical implementation of the Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures, substantive part of the Business and Youth Councils, cooperation with CICA Observers and Partners, establishment of contacts with interested international organizations, capacity building of the CICA Secretariat, etc.

The road map provides for specific steps to implement the initiatives of President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev announced at the Sixth CICA Summit (13 October 2022, Astana), which include the creation of the CICA Council on Sustainable Connectivity, transformation of the CICA Finance Summit into a permanent platform, organization of the High-level CICA Conference on Environmental Issues in 2024 in Astana, hosting the Rally of the Volunteer Movement Leaders of the CICA Countries under the auspices of the Youth Council in 2024 in Astana, creation of the Partnership Network of the Leading Universities of the CICA Member States.

As a first step towards achieving our mission, as well as in accordance with the Astana Statement on CICA Transformation, the Chairmanship, with the support of the Secretariat, has developed a draft Road Map on CICA Transformation, which will be discussed by the Member States at various levels this year.

At the same time, the Chairmanship focuses on establishing cooperation with international and regional organizations, as well as strengthening cooperation with CICA Observers and Partners.

We will assist the Secretariat in carrying out activities aimed at increasing CICA visibility at the international level.

The Kazakh Chairmanship counts on close cooperation and active support of the Member States in the implementation of the plans and is open to discussing proposals and ideas for the further development of CICA.

I am confident that through joint efforts we will achieve great results in strengthening CICA and consolidating Asia's international role in global processes.

Yours sincerely, Kanat Tumysh, **Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs** of the Republic of Kazakhstan



January



CICA Secretary General delivers lecture at Academy of Public Administration under President of Kazakhstan

The Institute of Diplomacy of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan held a lecture of CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay titled "CICA: relevant issues of activity and development prospects" on 13 January 2023.

Graduate students and the faculty of the Academy had a unique opportunity to delve into the history of CICA, its progressive development from an idea to an effective platform for security dialogue and cooperation in the Asian region.

The Secretary General elaborated on the major development milestones of the CICA process and the Organization's key activities in the five dimensions of interaction.

Kairat Sarybay placed special emphasis on the activity of CICA institutions in 2021-2022 – the Business Council, Youth Council, and Think Tank Forum.

The Secretary General focused on the key achievement of the Kazakh Chairmanship – the historic decision of the sixth anniversary CICA Summit held last October in Astana to transform the Conference into a full-fledged international regional organization – and shared the priorities of the Kazakh Chairmanship for the next two years.

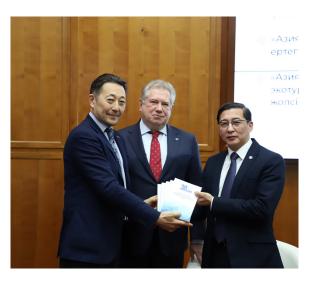
In this context, Ambassador Sarybay highlighted the initiatives of the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Tokayev presented during the CICA Summit to establish the Council for Sustainable Connectivity, transform the CICA Finance Summit into a permanent platform, hold the High-Level Conference on Environmental Issues in CICA countries in Astana in 2024, hold the Rally of Leaders of the Volunteer Movements of the CICA countries under the auspices of the Youth Council in 2024, and create a partnership network of leading universities of the CICA Member States.

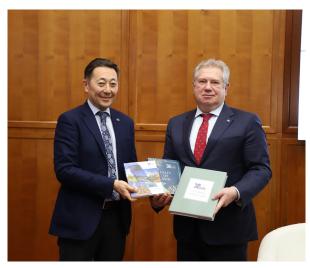




Following the lecture, Kairat Sarybay answered questions from the audience, wished it further success, and granted the compilation of fundamental CICA documents to the Academy library.

Academy Rector Yerlan Abil and Director of the Institute of Diplomacy Ambassador Alexei Volkov, in turn, thanked the Secretary General for the fruitful meeting and an important contribution to the education of the younger generation, as well as expressed hope for further interaction between the CICA Secretariat and the Institute of Diplomacy.





Meeting with Akim of Astana



On 16 January 2023, **CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay met** with Akim (Mayor) Zhenis Kassymbek in the Akimat of Astana.

The Secretary General presented a letter of appreciation to the city administration for active support and fruitful cooperation in the 30th anniversary year of the Conference, including in preparing and holding the Sixth CICA Summit.

Kairat Sarybay noted the successful project of planting the CICA Alley in the Presidential Park of Astana and announced his intention to expand the geography of similar alleys in the capitals of the CICA Member States, which would be a prologue to the development of significant potential for cooperation at the level of capitals on sustainable urbanism.

As part of further interaction, the parties discussed the possibility of holding a well-established bicycle tour in cooperation with the UN mission as part of the celebration of the World Bicycle Day on 3 June 2023, as well as organizing the first "2023 CICA Ski Run" for representatives of the diplomatic corps in order to promote winter sports and recreation in Astana.

In the course of the meeting, the parties discussed the current process of implementing the initiative of President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev on the construction of a separate building for the CICA headquarters in Astana and reached an agreement on a specific algorithm of actions.

Meeting with Minister of Ecology and **Natural Resources of Kazakhstan**

CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay paid a visit to the newly appointed Minister of **Ecology and Natural Resources of** Kazakhstan Zulfiya Suleimenova.

The Secretary General informed about the principles of interaction among the CICA Member States, the main areas and methods of implementation of the Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures. He highlighted the implementation of confidence building measures in the environmental dimension, where Bangladesh, Iran, China, Mongolia and Thailand are coordinators and co-coordinators.

Kairat Sarybay mentioned that various environmental events took place across the geographically diverse CICA region covering 90 percent of Asia, therefore the CICA Member States were extensively introducing green technologies, pursuing the ambitious goal of achieving carbon neutrality.

The Minister, in turn, stressed that the sustainable development of the state was becoming increasingly relevant and significant, and informed that the Government of Kazakhstan was stepping up measures to meet its commitments as part of global climate action, improve sustainability and decarbonize the economy, as well as was taking practical steps to advance Kazakhstan's goals to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

That is why, the Minister added, the President of Kazakhstan put forward an initiative at the Sixth CICA Summit to hold a High-level Conference on Environmental Issues in CICA Countries in Astana in 2024.



In order to effectively prepare for the event, the sides agreed to arrange a series of experts meetings of the CICA Member States to develop goals and objectives for the Conference.

Discussions of current environmental issues in the CICA region included water safety, climate migration due to natural disasters, environmental protection, adaptation and mitigation, climate vulnerability, air pollution, and food security. The importance of carbon offsets, one of the methods used to prevent or reduce carbon emissions, was also emphasized, and it was suggested that energy efficiency was an inevitable step in achieving the region's development goals.

Following the meeting, the Secretary General presented the anniversary publication "Ecotourism Guidebook of the CICA region" to the Minister and invited her to take part in the traditional tree planting ceremony in the CICA Alley at the Presidential Park of Astana.

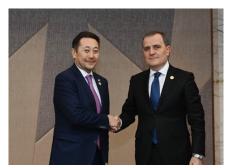


ECO Council of Ministers Meeting in Tashkent

CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay took part in the meeting of the **Council of Ministers of** Foreign Affairs of the **Economic Cooperation** Organization (ECO) held on 23-24 January 2023 in Tashkent (Uzbekistan). The event was attended by foreign ministers of the ECO Member States, as well as the leadership and representatives of international organizations.

In his address, the CICA Secretary General noted the importance of multilateralism in the modern world and the strengthening of partnerships among regional and international organizations. He noted the unity of the goals of CICA and ECO with regard to sustainable connectivity in the region and expressed confidence in achieving synergy of the efforts of the two associations in that area, including in the issues of transport, energy, food security, green technologies and humanitarian ties.

Secretary General Sarybay also held a number of meetings with foreign ministers of CICA and ECO Member States, including Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov, the Islamic Republic of Iran Hossein Amir Abdollahian, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Saidov. The sides discussed issues of cooperation within the framework of CICA, including the prospects for its transformation into a full-fledged international organization, which was agreed upon at the Sixth CICA Summit in Astana on 12-13 October 2022.













At the meeting with ECO Secretary Gener Khusrav Noziri, Ambassador Sarybay awarded him, as the head of a CICA Partner Organization, an anniversary medal dedicated to the 30th anniversary of CICA and discussed issues of interaction between the two organizations in the economic and humanitarian domains.

In the course of the meeting with Secretary General of the Developing-8 (D-8) Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the parties exchanged experiences on the institutional development of the two associations and the issues that CICA and D-8 face on the path of their transformation. Possible directions for future cooperation were also outlined.

The Economic Cooperation Organization was established in 1985 and has been a CICA Partner Organization since 2008. The two international structures have plenty of common ground in related areas of economic cooperation, which is an important focus of CICA activities. Today, all ECO Member States are members or observers of CICA.

Meeting with Minister of Information and Social Development of Kazakhstan



CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay met with Minister of Information and Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan Darkhan Kydyrali.

Kairat Sarybay informed the Minister about the transformation of the forum into a full-fledged international organization and elaborated on the implementation of confidence building measures in the human dimension, where the Republic of Uzbekistan is the coordinator and the Republic of India, Republic of Kazakhstan, People's Republic of China and Kyrgyz Republic are the co-coordinators.

The Secretary General briefed Darkhan Kydyrali on the current activity of the CICA Youth Council and expressed his gratitude for organizing and holding the Fifth CICA Youth Council Meeting in 2022. He mentioned that the Sixth Meeting would be held in April 2023 in Samarkand (Uzbekistan) on Dialogue of Generations, the theme proposed by President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the Sixth CICA Summit in October 2022.

Kairat Sarybay also highlighted a number of other initiatives presented by the heads of CICA Member States during the Sixth Summit, including the initiative of President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to hold the Rally of Leaders of the Volunteer Movements of the CICA Countries in 2024 under the auspices of the CICA Youth Council, stressing that at the Summit the Russian side also put forward an initiative to develop volunteering.

Minister Kydyrali, in turn, briefed the CICA Secretary General on projects the Ministry implements in the areas of volunteering, media development and information security. He gave a detailed update on the preparations for the Rally of Leaders of the Volunteer Movements of the CICA Countries. He specifically mentioned the preparatory event scheduled for June 2023 as a special panel session on Prospects for Volunteering in the CICA Countries as part of the International Volunteers Forum.

The sides agreed to continue to work together on events and projects in the CICA human dimension.



February



India holds online workshop on counter-radicalization for law enforcement officials of CICA countries

A counter-radicalization workshop was held for law enforcement officials of the Member States of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence **Building Measures** in Asia (CICA) on 2-3 February 2023. The online workshop was organized by the **Government of India** in cooperation with the CICA Secretariat. The workshop brought together over 60 participants from 20 CICA **Member States and** the Secretariat.

Radicalization, which fuels terrorism, remains a serious threat to international peace and security. The workshop aimed at discussing national approaches of CICA countries to countering radicalization and sharing best practices and knowledge in this area.

One of the important topics of discussion was the phenomenon of social media and its misuse to spread terrorist propaganda and recruit foreign terrorist fighters. Terrorists use organized propaganda on the Internet, including social media, quite effectively as a means of ideological radicalization as well as covert communication. The law enforcement agencies of all countries need to respond to this new challenge in a timely and effective manner.

A significant part of the discussion focused on measures taken to prevent radicalization and address target groups and socially vulnerable segments of the population.

In general, the participants expressed the need for appropriate training of law enforcement officers to build capacity in this area and for the international exchange of best practices to jointly counter the existing threats of radicalization.

The workshop on counter-radicalization organized by the Bureau of Police Research and Development of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of the Republic of India aroused great interest and positive responses among the participants of the event.

The Republic of India has taken the initiative to hold this workshop as the coordinator of the priority area of combating terrorism within the implementation of CICA confidence building measures, which was supported by all Member States.

CICA: current operational issues and development prospects



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CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay visited the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies (KazISS) under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, where he met with KazISS **Director Yerkin Tukumov** and the research team of this leading think tank in Kazakhstan.

Secretary General Kairat Sarybay delivered a lecture to the KazISS staff on CICA activities and its achievements during its 30-year history of development from a concept to a well-established and effective international forum.

Given the profile of the audience, the major emphasis was on accomplishments in the institutional development of CICA during the 2020-2022 Kazakh Chairmanship in CICA and the priorities for the coming biennium until 2024.

Yerkin Tukumov noted that throughout its history, comparable in time to that of CICA, KazISS had provided substantial support to the government authorities of the Republic of Kazakhstan in order to facilitate the development and strengthening of the Conference. In recent years, the expertise of KazISS has been significantly enhanced with the support of the Kazakh leadership, which provides new opportunities for using it to ensure further development of CICA and the implementation of priorities set by the Chairmanship.

Representatives were particularly keen to learn about the opportunities for interaction between the Institute and the CICA Think Tank Forum (TTF). Possible forms and areas of engagement of KazISS in the TTF activity were considered.

Potential information and analytical interaction between the CICA Secretariat and KazISS as the leading think tank of the country chairing in CICA were also discussed.

Meeting with President of Nazarbayev University Mr. Shigeo Katsu



CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay held a meeting with Mr Shigeo Katsu, President of Nazarbayev University, to discuss possible areas of cooperation in international higher education.

> Ambassador Kairat Sarybay informed Mr Katsu about the initiative of President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to create a partnership network of leading universities of the CICA Member States, which he presented at the Sixth CICA Summit in October 2022.





The Secretary General thanked the President of Nazarbayev University for new ideas and expressed hope for further interaction.



CICA Secretary General pays visit to Prime Minister of Kazakhstan

CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay paid a visit to Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan Alikhan Smailov.

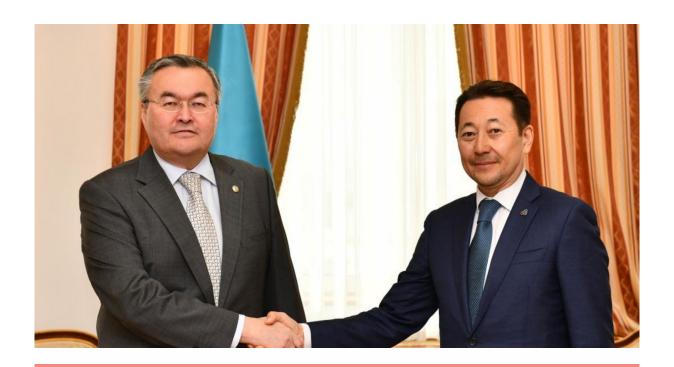
The Secretary General spoke about the key achievements of CICA under the Kazakh Chairmanship in 2020-2022, the launch of the process of transforming the forum into a full-fledged international organization and presented the Chairmanship's priorities for the coming biennium until 2024.

Kairat Sarybay informed about the CICA Youth Council meeting in Samarkand scheduled for April 2023, the Business Council meeting and the Business Forum on food security, green finance and renewable energy to be held in June, which are planned back-to-back with the Astana International Forum.

The meeting discussed promising projects for further development of the Organization, including the establishment of the CICA Council on Sustainable Connectivity and the Partnership Network of Leading Universities of the CICA Member States, the institutionalization of the CICA Finance Summit, the preparation of the High-level Conference on Environmental Issues in Astana in 2024, the launch of the new CICA Fund and other priority areas of activity.

The Prime Minister congratulated the Secretary General on the success of the Sixth CICA Summit and assured of the full support and assistance of the Government of Kazakhstan in implementing the CICA Chairmanship's priorities for the next few years.

Meeting with Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan



CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay held a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mukhtar Tileuberdi.

The Secretary General presented the CICA Secretariat's proposals on the elements of a road map for the transformation of the forum into a full-fledged international organization. The sides discussed the implementation of the objectives set forth in the document and the progress made regarding forthcoming meetings of the CICA governing and working bodies in 2023, including the Informal Ministerial Meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, as well as events to be held as part of the CICA institutions - the CICA Youth Council meeting in Samarkand scheduled for April 2023, the Business Council meeting and the Business Forum on food security, green finance and renewable energy in June, which are planned back-to-back with the Astana International Forum.

The meeting also discussed promising projects for further development of the Organization, including the establishment of the CICA Council on Sustainable Connectivity and the Partnership Network of Leading Universities of the CICA Member States, the institutionalization of the CICA Finance Summit, the preparation of the High-level Conference on Environmental Issues in Astana in 2024, the launch of the new CICA Fund and other priority areas of activity.

Minister Tileuberdi also highlighted the issues of financial stability in CICA's operation, as well as the coordination of Kazakhstan's government authorities in preparation for the upcoming events.

The Kazakh Foreign Minister expressed his general support for the proposed draft road map of transformation and approved an implementation procedure.

CICA and International Organization for Migration prepare joint event on travel document examination

The first coordination meeting for the CICA Specialized Meeting on The Document Examination Support Center: Link Between Irregular Travel Statistics and Interception at Borders was held online on 10 February 2023.

The Specialized Meeting is included in the CICA Plan of Implementation of Confidence Building Measures and Provisional Calendar of CICA Governing, Working and Advisory Bodies for 2023 and is scheduled for the second half of the year in Kazakhstan. The event will be organized both by the CICA Secretariat and the International Organization for Migration.

The coordination meeting held by the International Organization for Migration brought together representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Immigration Bureau of the Kingdom of Thailand, the offices of the International Organization for Migration in Kazakhstan and Thailand, and the CICA Secretariat. The participants of the coordination meeting discussed the event modalities and agreed to hold the second coordination meeting tentatively this March. By this time, it is planned to outline a draft agenda for the CICA Specialized Meeting on the Document Examination Support Center and develop proposals on the dates and venue of this event.

The initiative of the Document Examination Support Center, developed by the International Organization for Migration, today unites more than 20 states of South, Southeast and East Asia. Six participating states of the Center (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand) are members of CICA and are ready to share their experience in examining travel documents and identifying fake passports and visas. This area of activity corresponds to the objectives of the CICA Plan of Action on the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted at the Sixth CICA Summit on 13 October 2022.

The International Organization for Migration has observer status in CICA. The Memorandum of Understanding between the CICA Secretariat and the Administration of the International Organization for Migration was signed on 25 August 2008.





Viet Nam makes voluntary financial contribution to CICA

CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay received Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the Republic of Kazakhstan H.E. Mrs. Pham Thai Nhu Mai on 14 February 2023 to acknowledge the voluntary financial contribution by the Vietnamese side to the CICA Secretariat budget.

Secretary General expressed his sincere gratitude to the Government of Viet Nam for this significant gesture as it is the first time Viet Nam, which joined CICA in 2010, is making voluntary contribution to the Secretariat's budget.

Kairat Sarybay noted that Viet Nam has been a continuous proponent of the CICA process, sharing its experience and wisdom with other Member States, and expressed confidence that it will further contribute to the development of CICA and its gradual transformation into a full-fledged international organization.

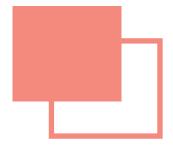
Ambassador Pham Thai Nhu Mai commended the successful 6th CICA Summit held in Astana last October, emphasized that 30 years of CICA cooperation has brought evident benefits to its all Member States and reassured Secretary General that Viet Nam is looking forward to working closely with Secretariat and Kazakhstan's Chairmanship in implementing its priorities for 2022-2024.

Workshop on economic cooperation and integration in Turkic world



CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay took part in a workshop on economic cooperation and integration in the Turkic world, designed to discuss development priorities and modalities for deepening economic relations among the Turkic countries.

The Conference, chaired by President of the International Turkic Academy (ITA) Shahin Mustafayev, was attended by representatives of economic policy research centers of Turkic countries, as well as representatives of the ITA and the Secretariat of the Organization of Turkic States.



In his speech, the Secretary General stressed the importance and relevance of the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures, which covers five broad dimensions of interaction, including economic cooperation. "Today about 60% of the total cooperation activity in CICA is focused on economic issues, which are closely related to environmental issues, social development and humanitarian cooperation", said the Secretary General. Moreover, he also mentioned activities of the CICA Business Council, which is responsible for promoting the development and expansion of economic operations in small and medium enterprises, as well as the CICA Think Tank Forum, which provides information and analytical support for activities within the CICA framework.

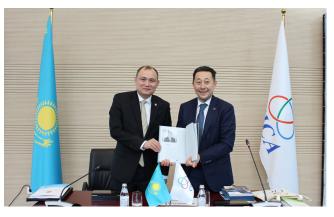
As CICA transforms into a full-fledged international organization and moves into a new stage of its development. Kairat Sarybay highlighted the initiative of the Kazakh Chairmanship, voiced by President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the Sixth CICA Summit, to establish the Council for Sustainable Connectivity. The initiative aims to strengthen the CICA economic dimension of cooperation by enhancing transport corridors and transit routes in a sustainable manner.

Ambassador Sarybay concluded his remarks by highlighting the journey that the CICA Secretariat and the Member States, including Turkic, have embarked on towards a common goal of regional stability and shared prosperity and expressed his willingness to continue their joint work



CICA Secretariat adopts Road Map for Implementation of 2023-2024 **Priorities of CICA** Chairmanship

The signing of the Road Map of the CICA Secretariat for the Implementation of the Priorities of the CICA Chairmanship for the next two-year period and presentation of the main directions of the upcoming CICA transformation took place at the CICA headquarters.



The Road Map is a regularly updated action plan for the implementation of the rich agenda of priorities of Kazakhstan's Chairmanship in CICA and all the tasks assigned to the Secretariat by the Member States of the Organization.

The document signed by CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay and consented by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Ambassador Kanat Tumysh contains, inter alia, elements of the transformation of CICA into a full-fledged international organization, which will be submitted for consideration by the Member States of the Organization.

The Road Map of the Secretariat also sets out the main directions of work on the substantive aspects and organizational matters of the CICA governing and working bodies and institutions, further institutional development of the Organization and strengthening cooperation with CICA Observers and Partners. Moreover, the Road Map incorporates the actions of the Secretariat on updating concept papers and action plans in the priority areas of the Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures and implementing events in 2023 as part of confidence building measures, as well as current capacity-building issues of the CICA Secretariat.



Deputy Minister Tumysh noted that the Sixth CICA Summit in October 2022 became the starting point for the establishment of CICA as a new actor in international relations, contributing to strengthening connectivity in Asia and promoting the common interests of the Organization's Member States. The representative of the Chairmanship expressed gratitude to the Secretary General and the staff of the Secretariat for the support of the Kazakh Chairmanship and active work on the implementation of the objectives announced by President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at the Sixth CICA Summit.

Ambassador Tumvsh noted that the Chairmanship will fully support the activities of the Secretariat in the implementation of the goals and priorities reflected in the Road Map. Mr Kanat Tumysh, who worked from 2010 to 2014 as CICA Deputy Executive Director, also stressed the tangible progress in the current activities of the Organization. the enhancement of the CICA process, the strengthening of the Secretariat and its increased activities, and noted with satisfaction the modern building of the CICA headquarters.

The Secretary General, in turn, informed the Deputy Minister about the current activities of the Secretariat and presented promising projects for the further development of the Organization, including the establishment of the CICA Council on Sustainable Connectivity and the Partnership Network of Leading Universities of the CICA Member States, the institutionalization of the CICA Finance Summit, the preparation of the High-level Environmental Conference in Astana in 2024. the commissioning of the newly created CICA Fund and other priority areas of activity.

Meeting with Minister of Science and **Higher Education of Kazakhstan**



As part of the initiatives of President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev announced at the Sixth CICA Summit, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay met with Minister of Science and Higher **Education of Kazakhstan** Sayasat Nurbek.

The Secretary General informed the Minister about CICA's current activities and transformation process, as well as about the implementation of the priorities of the Kazakh Chairmanship in CICA for 2022-2024.

The sides discussed fundamental approaches to the creation of the Partnership Network of Leading Universities of the CICA Member States initiated by President Tokayev at the Sixth CICA Summit.

The meeting also touched on problems of the harmonization of national qualifications frameworks, current trends in the development of academic mobility, needs of the labour market in the CICA area.

Minister Nurbek briefed the Secretary General on the Ministry's higher education projects and shared a number of specific directions to implement the initiative of the Kazakh President. The sides agreed to work closely on joint education projects.



CICA Secretariat continues tradition of cultural and sports events



The CICA Secretariat, in partnership with the city administration of Astana, organized the first ski tour with the participation of ambassadors and representatives of diplomatic missions accredited in Astana.

The event, which took place at the Astana Golf Club, marked the closing of the winter season in the Kazakh capital.

Participants, many of whom stood on skis for the first time, were offered a choice of two ski distances - 600 and 3,000 metres - covered under the able guidance of instructors from the Kazakhstan Ski Association.

Guests of the event, held in the spirit of friendship and solidarity, commended the organizers and emphasized the importance of promoting sports and a healthy lifestyle, which is a key factor in sustainable development.

Holding cultural and sports events has become a good tradition in CICA. The first-ever CICA bike tour and mini-football tournament were organized in 2022. This year, the Secretariat is planning to hold another sports event - a table tennis tournament.







March

CICA Secretary General takes part in Summit of Non-Aligned Movement Contact Group



CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay visited Baku, Azerbaijan, to attend the Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Contact Group in response to COVID-19.



The Summit chaired by Azerbaijan brought together heads of state, vice-presidents, foreign ministers, heads of international organizations, as well as other high-ranking representatives from various countries.

The Summit-level Meeting of the NAM Member States centred on overcoming the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring food security, environment protection and other pressing issues of sustainable development during the world's post-pandemic recovery.

The CICA Secretary General thanked President Ilham Aliyev and the Government of Azerbaijan for hosting the event and lauded the value of the NAM platform for exchanging information among nations and organizations on lessons learned from the pandemic, which, in his view, would be vital for collective emergency response in the future.

Ambassador Kairat Sarybay also outlined measures taken by CICA Member States in response to COVID-19, including in epidemiological safety, digitalization of small and medium enterprises, food security, and promoting sustainable connectivity.



On the sidelines of the Summit, the CICA Secretary General met with Special Representative of the Chinese Government on Eurasian Affairs Li Hui, Senior Advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia Dr. Sok Siphana, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia Cheong Loon Lai, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan Muzaffar Huseinzoda, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) António Vitorino, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Mariano Grossi, and Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization Zurab Pololikashvili.







Following the visit, Ambassador Sarybay gave an extensive interview to a number of international news agencies in Azerbaijan.

The Non-Aligned Movement was formed in 1961 to uphold the interests of developing countries in the context of the Cold War confrontation. To date, NAM has 120 Member States, or 60 percent of the United Nations membership. NAM also has 17 Observer States and 10 Observer Ogranizations. Azerbaijan assumed the NAM Chairmanship for 2019-2022.







CICA Secretary General and First Deputy Prime Minister of Kazakhstan discuss integrated approaches to establishing CICA Council on Sustainable Connectivity

As part of the initiatives of President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev announced at the Sixth CICA Summit, Secretary General of CICA Ambassador Kairat Sarybay met with First Deputy Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Roman Sklyar.

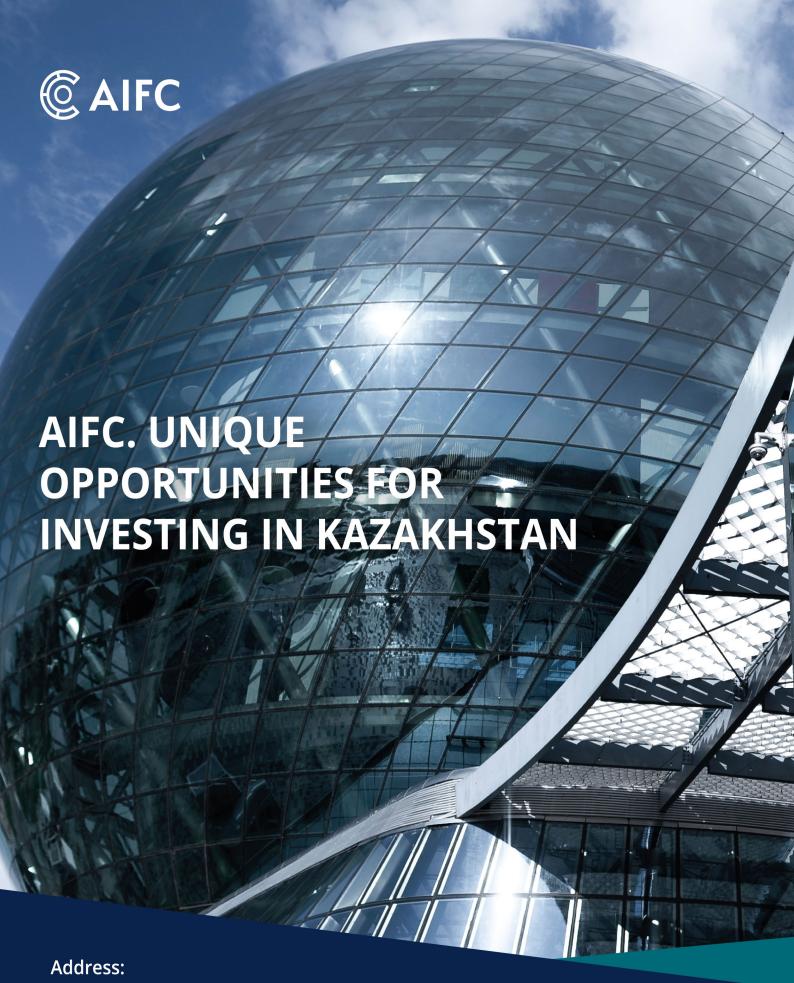
The Secretary General informed his counterpart about CICA's current activities and transformation process, as well as progress in the implementation of the Kazakh Chairmanship's priorities for 2023-2024.

The parties focused their discussion on integrated approaches to establishing the CICA Council on Sustainable Connectivity spearheaded by President Tokayev.

The meeting also covered various aspects of economic growth in the CICA region, digitalization of business processes, development of international transportation corridors, environment protection, and renewable energy.

The First Deputy Prime Minister of Kazakhstan briefed the Secretary General on the Government's plans for sustainable connectivity and shared its vision for a number of specific areas to implement the initiative of the Kazakh President.

The parties agreed to continue discussions, including on green transformation and industrial cooperation.

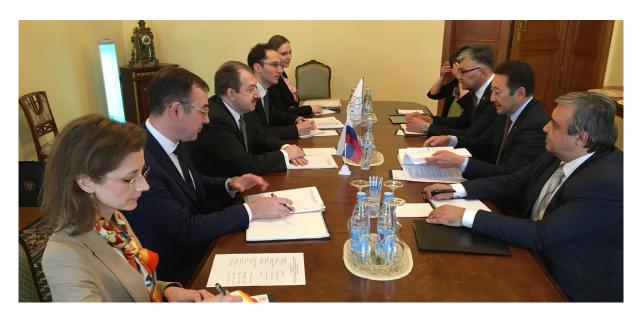


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CICA Secretary General pays working visit to Moscow

Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Ambassador Kairat Sarybay paid a working visit to Moscow, where he met with the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.



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The meetings with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Andrey Rudenko and Director of the Asian and Pacific Cooperation Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Senior Official of the Russian Federation in CICA Alexey Ovchinnikov discussed the ways to implement the decision of the Sixth CICA Summit on transformation, the prospects for this process and its stages. The



Russian side highlighted CICA's unique role in the current geopolitical environment and the high added value of its inclusiveness and flexibility. Moreover, the sides covered the upcoming CICA events in 2023, namely, the Informal Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of CICA on the margins of the UNGA in September, the Youth Council meeting in Uzbekistan, the Business Council meeting and the Business Forum to be held within the framework of the Astana International Forum, the panel session on Prospects for Volunteering in the CICA Countries as part of the International Volunteers Forum in Kazakhstan and other issues of interaction within CICA.



The Secretary General also met with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Pankin to deliberate on CICA's potential role in the network structure of interaction of multilateral fora and international organizations across the vast Eurasian continent to promote connectivity, including strengthening economic, technological, humanitarian, cultural, and other ties.

ІСКАЯ ЭКОНОМИЧЕС **КОМИССИЯ** еэк.

The meetings in Moscow were held in a positive, friendly and trusting atmosphere. The visit was the latest in a series of visits by the CICA Secretary General to the Member States of the Organization to discuss the outcomes of the Sixth CICA Summit and the ways to implement its decisions.

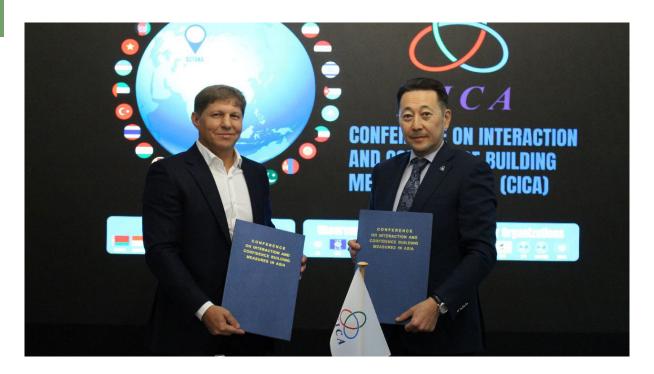
During the conversation with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Mikhail Bogdanov, the sides exchanged views on developments in West Asia and the prospects for dialogue and cooperation among countries in the region, including within CICA.

The meeting with Director of the Second Asian Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov focused on the prospects for the development of the situation in and around Afghanistan and CI-CA's possible contribution to international efforts to assist this CICA Member State.

During the visit, the CICA Secretary General met with Chairman of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) Mikhail Myasnikovich at the EEC headquarters. The meeting exchanged views on practical steps to implement the partnership between the two organizations outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the CICA Secretariat and the EEC, which was signed at the Sixth CICA Summit in Astana. Priority areas of such interaction within the purview of the two organizations were identified, including the development of transportation corridors and greater connectivity, financial interaction, the digitalization of economies and the development of information and communication technologies, improving food security and other areas of common interest. An agreement was reached on mutual participation in events organized by CICA and the Eurasian Economic Union.







Memorandum of Cooperation on Construction of CICA Headquarters signed

With a view to implement the decision on the transformation of the Conference on Interaction and **Confidence Building Mea**sures in Asia (CICA) adopted at the historic Sixth **Summit of the Conference** in October 2022, CICA **Secretary General Am**bassador Kairat Sarybay and Sensata Group CEO Maxim Mikhailov signed a trilateral Memorandum on the Construction of the CICA Headquarters **Building. The Akimat(city** administration) of Astana is another party to this agreement.

In his welcoming remarks, the CICA Secretary General mentioned that Kazakhstan's initiative to establish an international security organization on the world's largest continent, Asia, had been successfully put into action, and the organization had taken its rightful place in the regional and global security architecture.

As instructed by President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, the Akimat of Astana allocated a land plot in a new developing and promising part of the capital for the construction of the headquarters building.

Sensata Group, given its global experience, has kindly offered its services as part of the public-private partnership to build a modern headquarters that meets international standards.

Given a strong architectural and engineering background of Sensata Group, Ambassador Kairat Sarybay expressed his wish that the investor use the most cutting-edge green technologies in erecting the headquarters, noting that the new headquarters was to become one of the landmark buildings in the architecture of the Kazakh capital.

The Memorandum identified the key areas of cooperation of the parties and defined institutional responsibilities to provide the Secretariat with a new edifice.

The parties agreed to exert maximum efforts to complete the construction and commissioning of the CICA headquarters at the earliest.



