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Sixth Meeting of Ministers
of Foreign Affairs

Inauguration ceremony
of the new headquarters

Transformation of CICA
Think Tank Forum

Chairmanship intends to launch the structured discussion
on transformation of CICA

30 YEARS



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30 YEARS



Conference on Interaction and
Confidence Building Measures
in Asia (CICA)



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Address by Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mukhtar Tileuberdi

2021 has been a year of landmark achievements for the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA). Practice has once again proved the universality of the principles laid down in the CICA Declaration of 1999 and the relevance of the idea to create a common, indivisible and comprehensive security in Asia stipulated in the fundamental CICA document - the Almaty Act of 2002.

It can be stated with full confidence that after almost three decades since it was initiated, CICA has taken its rightful place in the architecture of pan-Asian security. Today, CICA serves as an effective international structure for building confidence and cooperation aimed at ensuring peace, security and stability in Asia. The Conference brings together 27 countries from the Pacific to the Mediterranean, from the Urals to the Indian Ocean, thereby creating a vast indivisible security area.

A huge amount of work has been done and significant results have been achieved this year. The Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures as the main instrument of the CICA activities has been significantly expanded. The updated Catalogue provides opportunities for interaction in new priority areas.

Member States have carried out about 40 events on the practical implementation of confidence building measures in all five CICA dimensions. It is gratifying that Member States fully support the approaches of the Kazakh Chairmanship to issues that remain high on the international agenda – from countering terrorism and cybersecurity to green economy and combating the pandemic.

A special place in the joint work of 2021 has been taken by the decision to establish the Council of Eminent Persons headed by the Founder of CICA, First President – Elbasy Nursultan Nazarbayev. This institutional body is designed to ensure the continuity of CICA, to make full use of the rich practical experience of prominent politicians and experts from Member States. Another important decision of the outgoing year was the transformation of the CICA Think Tank Forum into a permanent advisory body that would contribute to ensuring high-quality expert support of the CICA activities.

The Sixth Meeting of the CICA Ministers of Foreign Affairs in October 2021 in Nur-Sultan confirmed the course we have chosen to further deepen all-round cooperation in Asia and beyond.

Finally, the joint work of the CICA Member States in 2021 pushed the process towards another milestone – transformation of the Forum into a full-fledged international organization for security in Asia. The achievement of a qualitatively new organizational and conceptual level shows the desire of the Member States to unite their efforts in countering new challenges and threats.

The upcoming Sixth Summit of the CICA Member States in October 2022 is destined, according to President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, to determine the course of “New Asia in the New World”.



The Sixth Meeting of CICA Ministers of Foreign Affairs

The Sixth Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA) was hosted by Kazakhstan's Chairmanship under the theme: "Security and Sustainable Development in Asia in New Realities of the Post-Pandemic World" on 12 October 2021 in Nur-Sultan.

The representatives of the Member States and observers, heads of international observer organizations and partner organizations attended the Meeting. 23 of the 27 States were represented by ministers or their deputies.

Ahead of the Ministerial Meeting, its participants were received by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

Opening the Ministerial Meeting, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Akan Rakhmetullin read out a statement to the participants from the First President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

The welcoming statement of the UN Secretary-General António Guterres was read out by the head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia, Natalia Gherman.

As the head of the Kazakh delegation emphasized, «today, after almost three decades, CICA is an effective forum for

multilateral diplomacy.» According to him, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Asian countries are facing new challenges, including ensuring epidemiological, medical and food security. In this regard, the importance of the initiative to transform the CICA into a full-fledged international organization was emphasized, which would give a new important impetus to the political dialogue within the framework of the Conference, increase the effectiveness of the implementation of confidence-building measures in Asia, and address common challenges to global and regional security.

During the meeting, the parties engaged in a constructive exchange of views on the most pressing issues of international and regional agenda, the current state and prospects of cooperation among the Member States in priority areas of cooperation within the CICA.

The delegations noted the outstanding contribution of Nursultan Nazarbayev to the establishment and evolution of the CICA, which today makes a meaningful contribution to multilateral efforts for ensuring regional cooperation and security in Asia. Appreciation was expressed to the Kazakh Chairmanship for the systematic work to further strengthen and implement the potential of the CICA. The importance of assistance from the



international community to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan was noted. The participants also welcomed the accession of Turkmenistan to the CICA as an observer state.

The parties agreed to continue active joint work within the framework of the Meeting and welcomed Kazakhstan's intention to hold the

6th CICA Summit in 2022.

Following the event, the Ministers adopted the following important documents:

- Statement of the CICA Chairmanship. The document notes the importance of strengthening cooperation between the CICA countries to ensure security and peace in Asia, countering new challenges and threats,



Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov



UN SRSR for Cental Asia, the Head of the UNRCCA Natalia Gherman

including in the field of epidemiological security, environmental protection and adaptation to climate change, sustainable economic development, promoting the digital economy, interconnection in the field transport and logistics, cultural dialogue, etc. Special attention is paid to the situation

in Afghanistan. Transformation of the CICA Think Tank Forum into a permanent platform is welcomed;

- Updated CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures. The Catalogue adapted to modern realities includes such new priority areas of cooperation as epidemiological



Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India Subrahmanyam Jaishankar



Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov

safety, public health and pharmaceuticals, information and communication technologies, and the fight against terrorism;

- Regulations on the CICA Council of Eminent Persons. The Council of Eminent Persons is supposed to be a consultative and advisory body of the CICA on a wide range of issues of interaction and development of the CICA, including the issues of strengthening peace and security, implementation of

confidence-building measures, as well as further priorities within the CICA;

- Amendments to the CICA Rules of Procedure regarding the status of observers.

In addition, the participants took part in the inauguration of the new office of the CICA Secretariat in Nur-Sultan.

Source: the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan



Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani



Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev holds a meeting with the heads of delegations participating in the CICA Foreign Ministers Meeting

At the Akorda Palace, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev held a meeting with the heads of delegations participating in the 6th Foreign Ministers Meeting of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia. The gathering was attended by the Foreign Ministers of Bahrain, Belarus, India, Qatar, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, the Minister of Tourism of Israel, as well as deputy foreign ministers of a number of countries, as well as heads of international organizations and diplomatic missions.

Welcoming the participants of the meeting, the Head of State noted that the CICA as brainchild of Kazakhstan at the dawn of its Independence has now turned into a continental platform with the broad geographical reach and comprehensive agenda.

According to the President, today the Conference has the relevant potential to

consolidate collective will and wisdom of Asian nations in the interests of peace, cooperation and development.

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev commended all Member States and the Secretariat for their dedicated and fruitful interaction with the Kazakh Chairmanship.

"As you know, we have set forth a cluster of ambitious priorities underpinned by the strategic goal of transforming the CICA into a full-fledged international organization. CICA already possesses all the essential features of an international organization, including foundational documents, decision-making and working bodies, operational budget and a permanent Secretariat. The proposed transformation will highlight the new role of Asia in global affairs. This move will also affirm the Member States' commitment to creating a genuinely common, indivisible and comprehensive security architecture in the largest continent," the Head of State is

convinced.

At the same time, President Tokayev recalled that the Covid-related disruption has significantly limited the Kazakh Chair's capacity in the CICA. With this in view, he suggested the CICA's Member States to support the following proposals.

"First, I feel privileged to nominate the CICA Founder, First President of Kazakhstan Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev to lead the Council of Eminent Persons. Second, I announce Kazakhstan's bid for another term-in-office at the helm of CICA for 2022-2024. If granted, we pledge to use a renewed mandate to reinforce collective efforts in fulfilling the CICA's noble mission," the Head of State said.

The President of Kazakhstan expressed the opinion that in the changing strategic environment, Asia is increasingly turning into the main geopolitical battleground.

"I am convinced that the twenty-first century will really belong to Asia provided that we develop a truly unified and constructive approach, assume greater responsibilities and obligations. In this regard, like never before, we need to invest our hope in CICA as the only forum capable of shaping a new configuration of Asian security, cooperation and shared prosperity," Kassym-Jomart Tokayev believes.

Addressing the diplomats, the President of Kazakhstan outlined a number of topical issues, which in his view, should be in CICA's focus in the years ahead.

As far as President Tokayev is concerned, confidence building and conflict prevention remain the backbone of CICA. He noted that the member states have done a great job in developing an updated Catalogue of CBMs, which has embraced new priority areas for cooperation, such as Epidemiological Safety, Public Health and Pharmaceuticals; Information Technology; and Combating Terrorism.

Another pressing issue the Head of State called the current situation in and around

Afghanistan.

"Five Central Asian states have a special interest in Afghanistan's back to track. Kazakhstan's message is very simple and clear – we strive for not Great Game but Great Gain in the Heart of Asia," the President stressed.

Amid the ongoing pandemic, President Tokayev pointed out the need to ensure broad access to vaccines. Here affirmed Kazakhstan's intention to make a feasible contribution to strengthening the universal health care system through the QazVac vaccine. He called on the CICA partners to intensify collective efforts within the new confidence-building measure on epidemiological security.

Kazakhstan President also noted that the pandemic could become a turning point that will open up new opportunities for strengthening the role of Asia in the world.

"Our region is already a global center of gravity. It is home to 60% of the world's population and about 40% of world GDP at purchasing power parity. Such powerful economic entities as the Eurasian Economic Union, ASEAN, APEC and the Comprehensive Regional Economic Partnership operate on the continent. In order to increase the sustainability of our economies, the CICA, in my opinion, will have to pay special attention to cooperation with these organizations," the President believes.

The Head of State stressed that the Conference is constantly working to strengthen its economic dimension. In particular, new measures are being taken to ensure the security of financial transactions, pipelines and logistics routes. In addition, he drew attention to the importance for further development of transport corridors in the CICA space.

"Long-term investments in continental infrastructure projects open up wide opportunities in this dimension. According to the estimates of international financial institutions, it is necessary to invest \$1.7



trillion annually in these areas by 2030,” Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said.

In the President’s speech, a big attention was paid to climate issues. He stated that amid the global climate change, the ideas of sustainable development should be reflected in the policies of the CICA Member States.

“Nowadays, the Asia-Pacific region is increasingly susceptible to various natural disasters. It accounts for more than 40% of the world’s natural disasters and 84% of the affected population. These issues are of particular importance on the eve of the COP26 Summit, which is the most important climate

forum after the Paris Conference. The high standard implementation of the agreements in Glasgow is of great importance for preventing further human casualties and lowering the standard of living. We hope for the assistance of your countries in promoting these pressing issues,” the Head of State said.

At the same time, President Tokayev expressed concern about the growth of extreme weather events that damage food and water security in Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions of Asia.

“Kazakhstan, as an active participant in global food supply chains, as well as





the initiator of the creation of the Islamic Organization for Food Security, believes that these issues should occupy a priority place on the CICA agenda. It is important to support our inclusive growth and social well-being, especially in the post-Covid period,” the President believes.

The Head of State expressed the opinion that against the background of the escalation of geopolitical tensions, the “technological iron curtain” is becoming more real. In this regard, he outlined Kazakhstan’s interest in deepening technological partnership with CICA member countries to offset new risks. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev stressed the great importance of inclusion of cooperation in the field of IT as a new confidence measure in the CICA Catalogue.

A separate block in the speech was devoted to the expansion of cooperation in the field of finance.

“We welcome the outcomes of the CICA Financial Summit. Today Kazakhstan is becoming one of the important players of the financial market in the Eurasian space. Here, I would like to note the Astana International Financial Centre. Today it is a dynamic financial platform combining the best experience of world institutions and using the latest tools based on English law. I invite CICA partners to use the AIFC’s capabilities more actively,” the Head of State said.

Concluding his speech, the President

stressed that all his proposals are aimed at achieving a common goal – building a safer, more sustainable and prosperous Asia. In this context, he emphasized the importance of the 6th CICA Summit, which will be held next year in Kazakhstan. According to him, it is intended to determine the course of “a New Asia in a New World». The Head of State stated that he attaches exceptional importance to this Summit and invited the leaders of the CICA member countries to take an active part in its work.

Source: official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan



Interview with CICA Executive Director Ambassador Kairat Sarybay on the outcomes of the Sixth Meeting of CICA Ministers of Foreign Affairs

It has been over a year since Kazakhstan took over the Chairmanship of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia back in September 2020. In October 2021, Kazakhstan's Chairmanship hosted a major event of the year - the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of CICA. Could you elaborate on the main outcomes of the Meeting?

The Sixth Ministerial Meeting of CICA, held this year, was devoted to security and sustainable development in Asia in new post-pandemic realities. There were 23 Member States' foreign ministers or their deputies present at the Meeting demonstrating a notably high level of participation. Despite the ongoing pandemic, the overwhelming majority of CICA Member States' heads of delegations were able to participate in the Meeting in person.

The success of the Meeting was largely

owed to the hard work of the Member States' diplomats. The Chairmanship, with the support of the Secretariat, has held a series of consultations within the Senior Officials Committee and the Special Working Group.

During the Meeting, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs engaged in a substantive exchange of views on the most pressing issues of the regional agenda. An overview was made on the current status and prospects for cooperation between the Member States within the framework of five dimensions of interaction, including in countering new challenges and threats, recovering economies and developing economic connectivity in the post-pandemic period and combating climate change. A special attention was paid to the situation in Afghanistan.

The Ministerial Meeting adopted a number of important decisions. The two decisions relate to the establishment of the two new institutional bodies of CICA - the Council of Eminent Persons (CEP) and the Think Tank

Forum (TTF). Both institutions are advisory bodies. The major outcome of the Ministerial Meeting was the adoption of the updated Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures which is one of the key documents of CICA. The updating and enriching of the Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures was one of the key priorities of the Chairmanship. The task has been accomplished through the support and efforts of the Member States and the Secretariat.

The CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures is one of the key documents containing the provisions on practical implementation of confidence building measures. The updated Catalogue, adapted to new realities, includes 18 priority areas within the framework of five dimensions of interaction. The Member States identified the new priority areas of cooperation such as Epidemiological safety, public health and pharmaceuticals; Security of and in the use of information and communication technologies. In addition, such relevant aspects as connectivity and digitalization have been reflected in the Economic dimension. The Human dimension was enriched with the gender issue.

The Council of Eminent Persons is meant to become an advisory body of CICA on a wide range of matters of interaction and development, including on the aspects of promotion of peace and security, implementation of confidence building measures, and future priority areas of interaction. The Council shall consist of prominent political and public figures of CICA Member States. At the Ministerial Meeting, President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev nominated the Founder of CICA to the post of the Chairman of the Council of Eminent Persons. Considering the valuable contribution of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Elbasy to the convening of CICA and its further development, the Member States unanimously supported the candidacy of Nursultan Nazarbayev. The Secretariat is currently forming the Council of Eminent Persons based on the Member States' proposals.

In line with the decision of the Ministerial Meeting, the CICA Think Tank Forum has been

transformed into an advisory body, which shall provide informational and analytical support to CICA, and develop interaction between the Member States' think tanks and research institutions. The CICA Think Tank Forum was created at the initiative of the People's Republic of China in 2014. On 15 June 2019, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, in his address at the 5th CICA Summit, noted that an important aspect of interaction should be based on the high-quality expert support in all dimensions of CICA. In this regard, President Tokayev put forward the initiative aimed at strengthening the capacity of the CICA Think Tank Forum by transforming it into a permanent platform for dialogue. The TTF shall be composed of one high-profile think tank or research institution from each CICA Member State, which shall be appointed by the Member States. The Shanghai Institute for International Studies has recently been appointed as the Chair of the TTF for two years.

This year, the Member States have not reached consensus on the Declaration of the Ministerial Meeting. What was the reason behind it?

Unfortunately, the draft Declaration was not totally approved despite the hard work of the CICA Special Working Group during its six meetings, though 95% of the text had already been approved by the Member States. Given the fact that all decisions in the framework of CICA are adopted on the basis of consensus, the adoption of the Declaration cannot be possible if a Member State expresses its objection in relation to any paragraph of the Declaration. Therefore, the decision was made to confine to adoption of the Statement of the Chairmanship on the Sixth Ministerial Meeting.

In general, this fact demonstrates the increasing importance of the Forum for its Member States on one hand and the geopolitical trends on the other. Therefore, it is obvious that the Chairmanship and the Member States should conduct a thorough analysis on the negotiation process outcomes and draw appropriate conclusions for the future.

What are the main priorities of Kazakhstan's Chairmanship in CICA?

Kazakhstan, in its capacity as the Chair in CICA, announced its key priorities to further deepen the CICA process, by taking a course to an incremental transformation of the Forum into a fully-fledged international organization. The transformation shall be focused on the priority of the institutional development of CICA in order to adapt its institutions to new challenges and threats in the region. In addition to the institutional development of CICA, the key priorities shall include: practical implementation of confidence building measures, improving the legal framework and rules of procedure, developing partnerships with international and regional organizations, enhancement of the capacity of the CICA Secretariat in terms of its international representation.

On top of that, the relevance of the Chairmanship's top priority – the aspect on transformation of CICA into an international organization is evident, as it will further enhance the role of the Forum with regard to continental and global security issues, increase the effectiveness of confidence building measures, and adapt the existing CICA tools to better address new challenges and threats.

In addition, I would like to emphasize that over 40 events have been implemented on the CICA platform as part of Kazakhstan's Chairmanship in 2021, despite the harsh realities of the pandemic.

In this respect, by taking this opportunity, I would like to thank the coordinating and co-coordinating countries, including the Member States' relevant state bodies and agencies, for their well-coordinated efforts in arranging events in five dimensions of CICA. For its part, the CICA Secretariat will continue providing administrative and coordinative support to implement confidence building measures.

What prospects do you see in terms of CICA's further development?

Unlike other regions in the world, multilateral formats of cooperation on security in Asia are in the stage of development. The Asian region will continue its rapid growth, and in such conditions, the countries will attach the high priority to the issues of security.

According to foreign experts, CICA has the potential of serving as an effective regional structure in the Asian security architecture on a par with other international and regional organizations in Asia. CICA has accumulated the relevant international expertise, inclusive membership and a comprehensive approach to security. An important factor, "the principle of consensus", is another advantage to ensure equality of decision making. The platform for dialogue, which was the reason of convening CICA, has proved its effectiveness in building confidence and promoting regional cooperation on security. Certainly, the further process of development will mainly depend on political will and commitment of the Member States.

The Chairmanship, with the support of the Secretariat, plans to launch the structured discussion process on transformation of CICA into an international organization. We believe that the Member States will pay due consideration to this important matter.

Kazakhstan, during the Ministerial Meeting, announced its bid for the extension of the CICA Chairmanship for the period of 2022-2024, and the decision to hold the Sixth Summit of the Heads of State and Government in Nur-Sultan in 2022. As a founding state and the Chair in CICA, Kazakhstan, in the coming years, plans to concentrate every effort for the development of CICA into an effective structure that will jointly address the urgent challenges of security to ensure peace, development and prosperity in Asia.

Source: Interview with CICA Executive Director Ambassador Kairat Sarybay on the outcomes of the Sixth Meeting of CICA Ministers of Foreign Affairs to the Journal "Diplomatic Herald"



Inauguration ceremony of the new CICA headquarters

The inauguration ceremony of the new office of the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) was held on October 12, in Nur-Sultan within the framework of the Sixth Ministerial Meeting. The opening ceremony was attended by the Foreign Ministers, the Heads of Diplomatic Missions of the CICA Member and Observer States and the Heads

of International Organizations.

The new office of the CICA Secretariat is located in the modern building of EXPO, an international exhibition complex, in the capital of Kazakhstan; the building meets all safety requirements and modern technological and innovative standards.

CICA Executive Director Ambassador K.Sarybay thanked the acting Chairman of





Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Akan Rakhmetullin and CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay (left to right)

CICA – the Republic of Kazakhstan for its continuous support to the CICA process and provision of the new office to the Secretariat. “The new premises allow to increase the Secretariat’s international staff capacity in order to ensure a fair and balanced representation of all CICA regions at the CICA headquarters», said Ambassador K.Sarybay in his opening speech.

At the inauguration ceremony, on behalf

of the Chairman of CICA, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan A.Rakhmetullin delivered welcoming remarks, stating: “Kazakhstan has provided new premises to the CICA Headquarters on the eve of the 30th anniversary. This is a perfect timing. CICA has already established itself as a mature international organization, uniting 27 Members committed to multilateralism and inclusiveness, moving together towards





common goals, and carrying out practical cooperation in all dimensions of confidence building". In addition, the Acting Minister underlined that the Republic of Kazakhstan would continue providing its full support to CICA to further strengthen its capacity.

The logo of the 30th Anniversary of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, which is the winner of an international contest, was presented

during the ceremony.

The CICA Secretariat was established in accordance with the provisions of the Almaty Act of 2002 to provide administrative, organizational and technical support for the activities of CICA. Currently, the diplomats from China, India, Kazakhstan and Russia, as well as administrative and technical staff are present at the Secretariat.





Transformation of CICA Think Tank Forum

The CICA Member States have decided to transform the CICA Think Tank Forum (TTF) into an information and analytical advisory body that will provide information and analytical support for activities within the CICA framework. The CICA Senior Officials Committee adopted the Regulations of the TTF by the decision dated October 7, 2021, creating a regulatory framework for its activities.

The Think Tank Forum was founded within the framework of CICA on the initiative of the People's Republic of China in 2014, and coordinated by the Shanghai Institute for International Studies. From 2014 to 2020, the Shanghai Institute organized 8 round tables of TTF, the results of which formed the basis for individual decisions on how to improve cooperation between the CICA Member States on specific confidence building measures.

The initiative of the Chairmanship to strengthen the capacity of the CICA

think tanks by transforming them into a permanent dialogue platform was supported by all Member States, which, after detailed elaboration, approved the Regulations on the TTF.

According to the document, the goals and objectives of the TTF are:

- To provide information and analytical support to the activities of CICA;
- To develop cooperation among think tanks, research and educational institutions of the Member States on CICA related issues;
- To hold forums, conferences, workshops, round tables and other events on CICA related matters;
- To promote the establishment of cooperation between scientists and experts of the Member States in all dimensions within the framework of CICA.



The SOC Meeting: Kazakhstan's Chairmanship intends to launch the structured discussion process on transformation of CICA into an international organization

The meeting of the Senior Officials Committee (SOC) of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), held on 8 December 2021, was chaired by First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Shakhmat Nuryshov.

Kazakhstan's Chairmanship in CICA presented the information on drafting of a concept paper and the upcoming structured discussions on transformation of CICA into an international organization for regional security and cooperation in Asia. Thus, in his address to the meeting participants, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan noted that the transformation of CICA was a strategic goal of Kazakhstan's Chairmanship. In the long term, CICA, in its capacity as full-fledge organization, will be better equipped to cope with a rapidly changing security environment, and to contribute to strengthening of cooperation and development on the Asian continent. The Chair of the SOC meeting also informed the meeting participants on holding of the Sixth CICA Summit in Nur-Sultan on 12-13 October 2022, in the year of CICA's 30th Anniversary. The SOC adopted the recommendation on the Republic of Kazakhstan's bid for the CICA Chairmanship in 2022-2024.

The SOC reviewed and adopted a number

of key decisions, recommended by the SWG at its last meeting. In particular, the participants discussed the membership of the newly established advisory body of CICA – the CICA Council of Eminent Persons, implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, establishment of the CICA Fund, and building partner relations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC). The number of Member States emphasized the importance of establishing partnerships between CICA and other international and regional organizations.

According to the Chinese side, the CICA Think Tank Forum's (TTF) meeting would be held on 28-29 December 2021.

Executive Director of CICA Ambassador Kairat Sarybay submitted to the SOC the Report on implementation of confidence building measures and activities of the Secretariat in 2021. "Despite the ongoing challenges due to the pandemic, this year has been quite productive in terms of implementation of CICA's confidence building measures: so far we have implemented 38 events outlined in the Plan on Implementation of Confidence Building Measures for 2021", noted the Head of the Secretariat. The SOC commended the activities carried out by the Secretariat in 2021.



Drying of Wetlands and Rivers and Dust Spreading (Case Study: Management Experience of Iran in Lake Urmia)

Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project (CIWP)

By:

Mohammad Reza Akbari

Project Coordinator (Sustainable Agriculture Project)



July, 2021

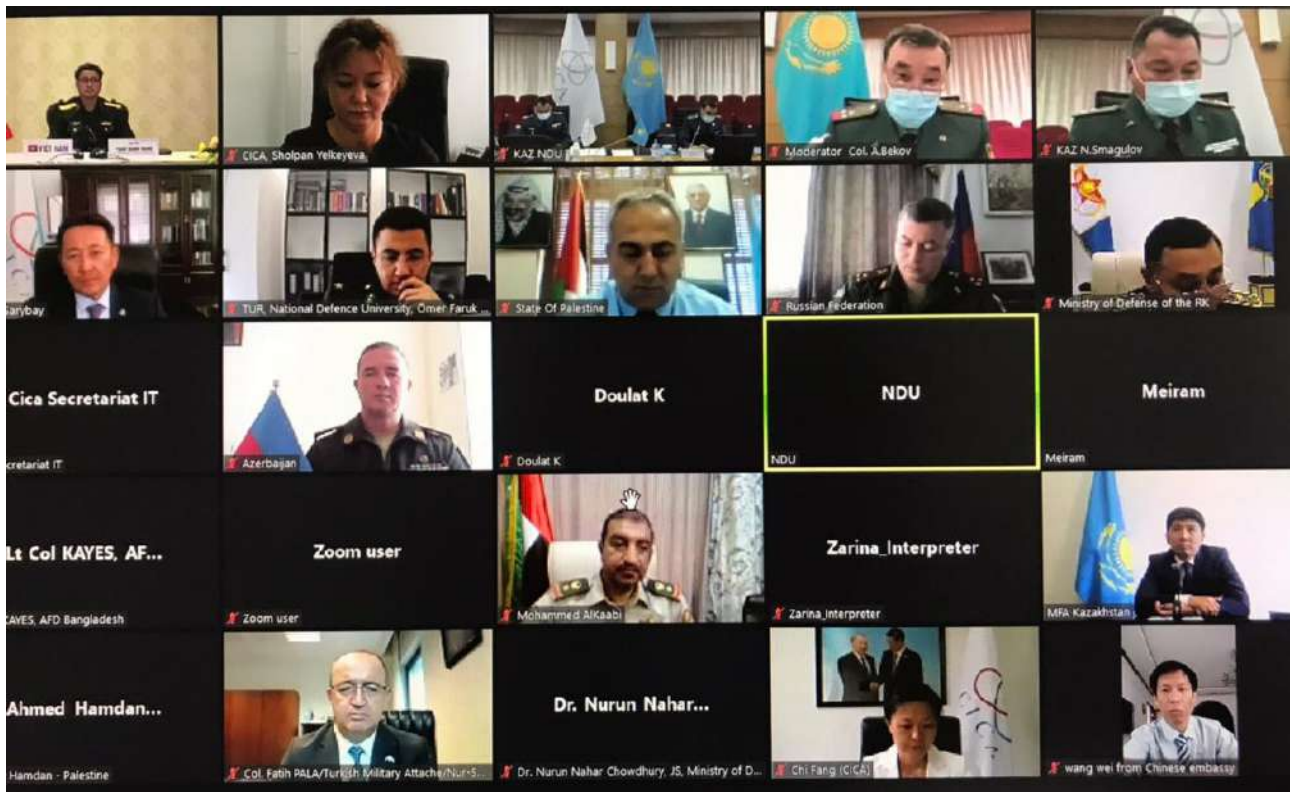


Seminar on natural disaster management

The best practices and experience in Natural Disaster Management was shared by the Republic of Iran in capacity of Coordinator of CBMs in this area, at an online CICA seminar “Drying of Wetlands and Rivers and Dust Spreading - Case Study: Management Experience of Iran in Urmia Lake”, held on 13 July 2021. The seminar was attended by the participants from Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, Iran, Thailand and Turkey.

Mr. Mohammad Reza Akbari, national coordinator of Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project gave presentation on efforts made in successfully reviving the drying Urmia Lake located in Northwest of Iran. It was the joint project of Department of Environment of Iran and United Nations Developing Programme (UNDP).

Participants noted the usefulness of the management experience and best practices applied in Establishment of Sustainable Agriculture, Participatory Technology Development, Integrated Projects, Diversification of Livelihood, and Capacity building of different stakeholders.



Seminar in the military-political dimension

Activities implemented under the CICA military-political dimension as well as prospects for deepening cooperation were considered during online seminar held by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 11 August 2021.

Opening the seminar, Deputy Minister of Defence of the Republic of Kazakhstan Major General Mukhamedzhan Talassov noted that CICA had a deep potential and was an important part in the architecture of regional security. He stressed that Kazakhstan, chairing CICA, was consistently working on the gradual transformation of the forum into a full-fledged international organization. He also confirmed that Kazakhstan, as coordinator of confidence building measures in the CICA military-political dimension, would continue the practice of holding annual seminars, including with access to military facilities in Kazakhstan, which was the most convincing implementation of confidence building measures.

Representing the Turkish Ministry of

Defence, Lieutenant Ömer Faruk Kodjatepe shared with audience an overview of the confidence building measures implemented by Turkey under the CICA military-political dimension, including the years of Turkey's Chairmanship in CICA (2010-2014). He noted the high efficiency of Turkey's policy in resolving regional conflicts in the Caucasus, the Middle East, Central Asia, and addressing the problem of Afghanistan. The speaker noted the contribution of the First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to strengthening the Pan-Asian security architecture through the initiation of CICA, and underlined the high relevance of CICA in modern conditions.

Ambassador Doulat Kuanyshev, Colonel Nurzhan Smagulov presented thematic reports at the seminar, Deputy Director of the line department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Mr. Anuar Mirzatillaev delivered his welcoming remarks to the participants.

About 40 experts from 16 CICA Member States took part in the seminar.



B2B Interactive Session for tourism recovery methods

The Virtual B2B Interactive Session was held under the CICA economic dimension in order to enhance cooperation in the field of tourism among CICA Member States on 17 August 2021. About 100 representatives from 24 CICA Member States and tourism organizations, as well as representatives of tourism-related institutions and agencies attended the event.

As a co-coordinator of confidence building measures in tourism and the host of the event, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka shared its experience on measures to support tourism in the post-pandemic period.

“Such events on the exchange of sector-specific knowledge and experience with CICA Member States represent a real opportunity to unite efforts and restore tourism in the post-pandemic period”, noted CICA Deputy Executive Director Ms. Chi Fang in her speech delivered at the event.

At the B2B Session, the participants shared best practices for the development of tourism.



4-wheel-drive, 4-wheel-steering robots



4-wheel-drive, differential-steering robots

Tracked robot

Ground robot-based high-throughput plant phenotyping platforms

Second Seminar on smart agriculture application and development

China, in its capacity as Coordinator of Confidence Building Measures in the field of "Agriculture", presented its most recent scientific developments in "smart agronomy" during the second seminar for CICA, held on 18-19 August 2021.

The two-day seminar brought together 510 participants from 10 CICA Member States. Scientists from the Huazhong Agricultural University presented the breakthrough achievements in the field of agriculture at four thematic sessions of the seminar.

The session "Big biological data and smart breeding" was devoted to issues related to collection, storage and analysis of big biological data at the level of cells, organs, tissues of individual species and populations of species. It was emphasized that the systematic study of genetic and molecular mechanisms, underlying the variation of agronomic traits, highly efficient genomic breeding and synthetic design of new crops and varieties for future breeding efforts have become imperative in ensuring food security regionally and globally. The scientists of the Huazhong Agricultural University professor Lin Li and professor Tingting Guo gave special

emphasis to the discovery of characteristics and patterns, advanced modeling and biotechnology innovations in breeding and genetics of plants and animal breeding.

The seminar participants were presented the scenarios on the implementation of smart breeding principles, smart equipment, digital systems, Internet of things, cloud computing, UAVs and other technologies facilitating the significant improvement of crop productivity and efficiency of animal breeding. Above all, it was proved that the implementation of smart technologies significantly reduces the spending volume of farmers.

The second day of the seminar was focused on the matters related to satellite, remote and hyperspectral remote crop sensing and smart decision-making models.

In addition, the scientists and practitioners from Turkey and Thailand shared their national achievements in the field of smart agronomy.

The seminar sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China was highly commended among the agricultural environment of CICA.



Specialized meeting: “Assessment of the Economic and Social Damage Caused by Dust in Iran”

Topical issues of combating dust and sand storms were discussed at the specialized meetings for representatives of environmental organizations of the CICA Member States on 1 September 2021.

The virtual event was initiated by Iran as coordinator in the area of natural disaster management. Professors from the Shahid Beheshti University and the Kharazmi University made presentations on the assessment of socio-economic damage caused by dust in Iran.

Participants of the event discussed the possibilities of developing sustainable tools for assessing the real damage caused by dust storms. Iranian speakers called for closer and stronger cooperation at the expert level, as well as for the exchange of best practices against sand and dust storms.

The participants noted that increased interaction was critical to counter the negative effects of dust storms on social life and expressed appreciation to CICA for the provided platform.



International Forum in the field of digitalization of the economy

An international online forum titled “Opportunities for Cooperation of the Member States of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in the Field of Digitalization of the Economy” was held on 9 September 2021.

The forum was attended by heads of government agencies, line experts and specialists from 14 CICA Member States, including Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Thailand, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

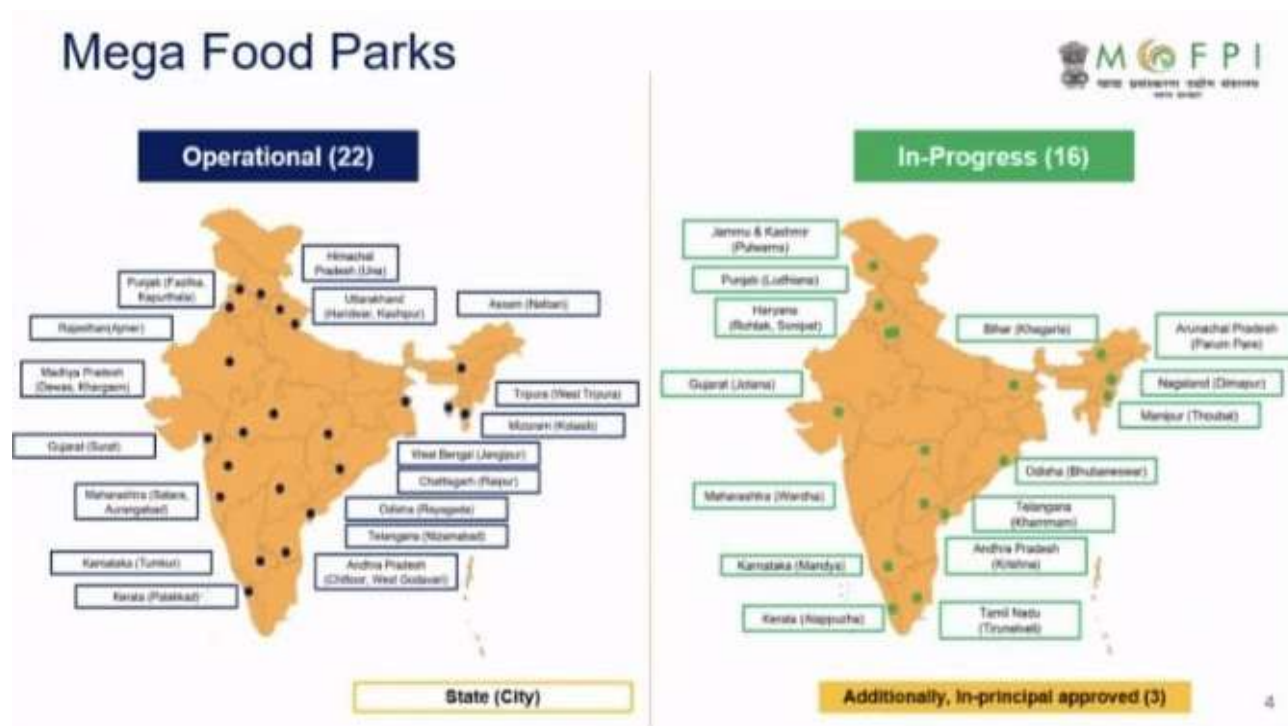
“The relevance of the chosen topic is evident against the background of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, which caused a decline in the economic development of all countries, without exception. In this regard, the Member States have an excellent opportunity to consult with each other, share both positive and negative experiences of digitalization, develop mutually beneficial cooperation at the CICA platform,” said CICA Deputy Executive Director Chi Fang in her welcoming remarks.

Bakhytzhon Makazhanov, Deputy Chairman of the Board of DAMU Entrepreneurship Development Fund JSC, also welcomed the

participants and guests of the forum, sharing his experience in digitalization of business processes supporting small and medium-sized enterprises.

The forum participants discussed the following topics: “Actions in progress and main problems in the CICA Member States in the field of digitalization”, “Actions of state support for SMEs to stimulate digital transformation of activities” and “Development of e-commerce in the CICA Member States. Prospects for cooperation”.

The event was addressed by representatives of the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry and the Ministry of Trade and Integration of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Digital Transformation Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, the Ministry for Development of Information Technologies and Communications of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the National Small Industries Corporation (India), the SME Corporation (Russia), Summit Bank (Pakistan), China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products (CCCME), Alibaba Cloud Intelligence (China) and others.



Conference “Food Security in Asia: Prospects of Cooperation”

The prospects of cooperation on food security in the CICA area were discussed over the course of an online conference on “Food Security in Asia: Prospects of Cooperation in the Framework of CICA” held on September 15, 2021.

While opening the conference, Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mr Rustem Kurmanov stressed the pressing need for the stabilization of food markets in times of the COVID-19 pandemic and the extreme climatic conditions affecting a great number of Asian states.

Federal Minister for Food Security and Research Mr Syed Fakhar Imam presented the audience with Pakistan’s National Food Security Policy, shared the achievements of Pakistan in the sector of agriculture, in particular, in the production of staple foods, and expressed his gratitude to CICA for holding such a relevant event. Minister Imam emphasized the critical need for providing food assistance to the poorest countries in

Asia, which are now facing acute levels of food insecurity.

Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries of India Mrs Reema Prakash noted that the consolidation of efforts of the CICA Members should contribute to the achievement of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals in reduction and eradication of poverty.

The conference was attended by the representatives from the Academy of Agriculture of the People’s Republic of China, Islamic Organization for Food Security, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the participants from Bangladesh, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Thailand and Turkey.

The conference was organized as part of Kazakhstan’s Chairmanship in CICA by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan in coordination with the CICA Secretariat.



Seminar on development of transport corridors

Agencies and departments of the CICA Member States discussed modern approaches to the development of transport corridors at an online seminar held on 16 September 2021.

In her welcoming remarks, CICA Deputy Executive Director Chi Fang noted that CICA was a unique platform bringing together the largest countries located in Asia with huge high-tech and economic potential, providing an opportunity to exchange experience, develop common goals for infrastructure development, which would contribute to the economic recovery and close cooperation in the CICA spirit of unity and solidarity.

Seminar participants discussed measures to respond to new pandemic-related challenges in the transport sector and ways to optimize the transport processes in order to improve the quality of transportation and reduce transport costs.

As a result, the participants agreed to continue their interaction as part of joint events and exchange best practices in the field of transport.



Annual International Training Course on Sustainable Development

Thailand, as the coordinator of confidence building measure on sustainable development, conducted an online training course “Sustainable Community Development Applying Sufficiency Economy Philosophy from theory to practice” for the CICA Member States on September 20-27, 2021.

As part of the training course, participants from Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Turkey attended lectures on the following topics:

- Rural Development in Thailand
- Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP): Theory and Practice
- Agricultural New Theory: Application of SEP in Practice
- Community - Based Microcredit

The participants exchanged experience in the development of investment policy, education, healthcare, social protection in their countries, and discussed capacity-building in order to ensure a balanced way of life and sustainable development.

The course highlighted the need for efforts in key areas, including poverty alleviation, democratic governance and peacebuilding, climate change and disaster risk reduction, and economic inequality. The participants noted that the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by the UN, would lead states to sustainable development in all major areas of life and to the resolution of global problems affecting every person in this world.



Experts Meeting: «Promoting cooperation in digitalization of transport and logistics operations»

On 23 September 2021, the Republic of Azerbaijan held, within the framework of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), a meeting of experts from CICA Member States on “Promoting Cooperation in Order to Strengthen the Digitalization in Transport and Logistics Operations”.

The event was conducted under the CICA priority area on Development of Secure and Effective Systems of Transportation Corridors, coordinated by Azerbaijan. The meeting was organized by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The expert meeting was attended by heads of government agencies, line experts and specialists from 19 CICA Member States, including Azerbaijan, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam.

Welcoming remarks were delivered by CICA Deputy Executive Director Ms. Chi Fang, who noted that transport and logistics infrastructure was a key element of the

economic development of any country without exception, and the relevance of the topic was evident against the background of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Opening the session of the CICA expert meeting, Mr. Rahman Hummatov, Deputy Minister of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, highlighted involvement of the Republic of Azerbaijan in projects developing regional cooperation in the field of transport, as well as the country's support for new initiatives to digitize transport corridors.

The participants shared best practices and information in the field of digitalization of transport and logistics operations, as well as discussed possible areas of cooperation among CICA Member States and active dialogue between key stakeholders in this domain.



Third Seminar on smart agriculture application and development

The training course on «Development and Application of Smart Agronomy», organized by the People's Republic of China as a coordinator of confidence building measures in the area of «agriculture» of economic dimension, brought together more than 950 participants from 16 CICA Member States.

The course consisted of three workshops held in May, August and October 2021.

During the three-stage course, more than 100 presentations and reports were presented in the field of high-tech crop production, animal husbandry, production of important staple foods for states with a high population density, preserving soil fertility under intensive exploitation, digital big data management techniques in agronomy, the benefits of using drones to monitor large agricultural areas.

A separate session was devoted to smart decision-making methods in agriculture based on analysis of big data and data from satellites. The experts emphasized that the use of presented smart technologies in agriculture can significantly reduce the cost of producing socially important staple goods.

The interactive course, organized by Huazhong Agricultural University, was followed by an active discussion, which was attended by experts from CICA Member States, who shared their own achievements in the field of smart technologies in agriculture.

CICA Executive Director Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, who addressed the course participants with a written statement, thanked the organizers of the event - the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and Huazhong Agricultural University for organizing the course. He also stressed that China, which is a coordinator in two and co-coordinator in four priority areas of confidence building measures, annually holds events in areas of its responsibility. He noted a great contribution of the People's Republic of China to advancement of CICA process during the presidency in 2014-2018.



Industrial Poverty Alleviation Model Exchange and Training Workshop

More than 100 representatives from 14 CICA Member States: Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Pakistan, Thailand, Turkey, and Vietnam gathered for a two-day CICA online seminar “Industrial Poverty Alleviation Models” organized by the People’s Republic of China as a coordinator of confidence building measures in the priority area of “agriculture” on 25 – 26 October 2021. Experts from Bangladesh, China, Iran, Pakistan, Thailand, and the representatives of the World Bank, UNDP, and IFAD attended the event.

During the seminar, 20 presentations for industrial poverty alleviation mechanisms were made, including for accelerated industrialization of remote rural areas, promotion of creation of new jobs, as well as implementation of large-scale transport, logistics and infrastructure projects connecting large industrial centers with the regions, promoting greater mobility of the population, improving the quality of human resources, and infrastructural connectivity.

CICA Deputy Executive Director Ms. Chi Fang, who addressed the participants of the seminar with a welcoming speech, thanked the organizers of the event - the Agricultural Information Institute of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and the Center for International Agricultural Research of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences for their contribution to implementation of CICA confidence building measures.



Seminar on cooperation in the field of financial technologies and investments

The prospects for development of financial technologies and investment were discussed by the CICA Member States' representatives of financial structures over the course of an online seminar held on 10 November 2021. The event was organized by the Astana International Financial Center in partnership with the CICA Secretariat. The seminar was attended by representatives of financial and banking structures of Azerbaijan, China, India, as well as participants from Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Turkey and Tajikistan.

In his welcoming remarks, CICA Executive Director Ambassador Kairat Sarybay noted that the seminar was undoubtedly a follow-up of the process initiated by the CICA Member States in their efforts to further expand financial cooperation, including interaction in the fintech sector. "In the era of digitalization of economies and the rapidly changing technologies, it is essential to enhance international cooperation, entailing greater access of the region's countries to scientific and technological achievements, including in the regulation of the financial sector and technology", – emphasized Kairat Sarybay.

Governor of the Astana International Financial Center Kairat Kelimbetov, while addressing the participants of the seminar, noted that most of the CICA Member States represent developing or emerging economies, and, consequently, need the financial support for their projects as well as having the advanced technologies in order to upgrade their economies. «Only by working together, we can ensure the transfer of know-how, experience, and expertise, which is essential if we want to develop new tech - be it fintech, govtech, or any other - tech», - summarized his statement the head of the AIFC.

During the event, the participants exchanged their experiences on activities of the financial centres, discussed prospects for an expanded cooperation in the field of financial technologies and investment, financial sector regulation, and establishing a favorable business climate.



Seminar Prospects of Cooperation in the Area of Cybersecurity among CICA Member States

Seminar “Prospects of Cooperation in the Area of Cybersecurity”

The online seminar on Prospects for cooperation of the CICA Member States in the field of cybersecurity was held on 18 November 2021. The event was held within the framework of Kazakhstan’s Chairmanship in the CICA. The seminar was organized by the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the assistance of the CICA Secretariat.

During the seminar, representatives of the Member States noted the timeliness of the event and the need to actively implement Confidence Building Measures in a priority area of the CICA as Security of and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

“In the conditions of the growing digital world space, the issues of ensuring cybersecurity are the most important condition for the development of the information society at the present stage and requires close attention from the international community. In this regard, cooperation of the Member States in the area of Information and Communication Technologies will have a positive effect in the fight against cyber threats at the regional and global levels”, said Ms Chi Fang, Deputy Executive Director of the CICA Secretariat, in her welcoming speech.

The Chairman of the Committee on Information Security of the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry



of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr Ruslan Abdikalikov, also addressed the participants and guests of the seminar with a welcoming speech, who urged the participants to fruitful work, open exchange of useful information and experience. "Not a single state in the world, no matter how strong and developed it is, will be able to completely get rid of all threats in the area of cybersecurity if it does not establish cooperation with other countries", Mr Abdikalikov said.

During the seminar, the participants discussed the following topics: "The future of cybersecurity - challenges and opportunities for the CICA countries", "Prospects for the development of cooperation between the CICA Member States in the areas of cyber and information security", "New approaches and solutions to ensure information security in the CICA Member States» and others.

The speakers were representatives of the Security Council and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Cybersecurity Directorate of the President's Office of the Republic of Turkey, the National Cyber Security Auditing and Evaluation Lab (NUST) and Army of Pakistan, "State Technical Service" JSC (Kazakhstan) and others.



International Conference “Development of Green Technologies and Renewable Energy in the Context of Low-Carbon Development”

The issues on climate change and transition to the green economy were discussed by CICA Member States at the Conference on “Development of Green Technologies and Renewable Energy Sources in the Context of Low Carbon Development” held on 25 November 2021. The event was organized by the International Green Technologies and Investments Center in partnership with the Association of Environmental Organizations of Kazakhstan on the platform of CICA. The international conference brought together over 90 participants from CICA Member States: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, China, India, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Thailand and Turkey.

During the panel sessions, the experts and representatives from the State Agency on Renewable Energy Sources under the Ministry of Energy of Azerbaijan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, National Institute for Solar Energy of India, Shanghai Environment and Energy Exchange, China Beijing Environmental Exchange (CBGEX), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Institute of International Economics and Finance of the Research Academy of Foreign Trade of the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia, Ministry of Energy of Thailand, Turkish Corporation Machtech, UNDP in Kazakhstan and Nazarbayev University, delivered their presentations.

“The idea of convening the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia was first announced by First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at the 47th session of the United Nations General Assembly on 5 October 1992. At the outset of its path, Kazakhstan strived to establish friendly relations with its neighbours in an effort to contribute to the enhancement of

security in Asia. Today we face a new challenge – the climate change”, noted Aliya Nazarbayeva while addressing the conference participants with welcoming remarks. In this connection, Chairman of the Association of Environmental Organizations of Kazakhstan emphasized that CICA has to become a powerful tool in combating global warming by developing green technologies and renewable energy sources in the context of low-carbon development.

In his welcoming address, Executive Director of CICA Ambassador Kairat Sarybay noted that environmental issues are an integral part of CICA’s agenda, given the comprehensive approach to ensuring security on the Asian continent. “Climate change, caused by the emission of pollutants into the atmosphere, has serious environmental and economic consequences for the world, and as a result has implications on security in its broader sense”, emphasized Kairat Sarybay.

Acting Chairman of the Board of the International Center Zhanar Igenova stressed the high relevance of the conference and the commitment of CICA Member States to combat climate change. In addition, it was emphasized that the need to consolidate the efforts to tackle the consequences of climate change would require the development of green finance and subsequent introduction of green and renewable energy technologies.

The participants exchanged their views on the elaboration of collective approaches to solve the existing problems, in particular they shared their experiences on the implementation of green and renewable energy technology projects, capabilities of CICA countries to implement the COP26 Decisions and combat the consequences of climate change.



Participants of Basic Training for Anti-Smuggling and Organized Crime

Basic Training for Anti-Smuggling and Organized Crime

From 29 November to 3 December, a training seminar for representatives of law enforcement agencies of the CICA Member States called “Basic Training for Anti-Smuggling and Organized Crime” was held at the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime in Ankara. Specialists from Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine, Qatar and Russia took part in the training conducted by Turkish instructors.

The event was of special significance given that it was the first offline CICA event in a long time since the onset of the pandemic.

In his welcoming remarks to the participants of the training, Mr. Arkadii Koshcheev, a Senior Officer of the CICA Secretariat, stressed that the dialogue of law enforcement agencies is





one of the most dynamic areas of interaction within CICA, and noted the steady interest of Member States in countering new challenges and threats, which was reflected in the updated Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures adopted at the 6th CICA Ministerial Meeting in October 2021.

During the training week, the delegates were briefed on the approaches of Turkish law enforcement officers to the fight against organized crime and had an opportunity to exchange their national experience in that area. The methods of countering corruption, economic and financial crimes were also

discussed. Participants were particularly interested in the issues of combating telephone fraud, fight against production of counterfeit banknotes and anti-money laundering. Participants also enjoyed practical sessions on risk analysis and search techniques for vehicles and couriers in the context of the suppression of smuggling and drug trafficking.





Briefing “Information Exchange on Scanning Systems, Use of Technical Equipment and Projects”

Preventing and combating smuggling, which is a tangible threat to the economies and social life of states, became the topic of the discussion at the CICA seminar, which was held on 15 December 2021 on the CICA platform.

Turkey, which is the Coordinator of Confidence Building Measures in the priority area of «New Threats and Challenges», shared its experience in the use of high-tech scanning equipment that allows identifying people and goods, containing smuggled goods as drugs, weapons, explosives and tobacco.

The organizer of the event shared the examples of the use of the latest equipment based on processing data from satellites and GPS, which allows detecting and seizing smuggling at the stage of remote approaching to the border. In particular, an example was given of the seizure of 180 kg of cocaine at the Turkish border, which the smugglers were able to freely smuggle across 3 state borders of the countries of South Asia. Also, portable

magnetic devices were presented that allow detecting unjustified deviations from the route and transport delays in places. Their use can significantly save human resources, ensure the safety of the personnel, involved in the fight against organized crime. In addition, the organizers of the event presented devices that are effective in the fight against smuggling of goods, transported by sea and aircraft.

Representatives of customs services from Jordan, Iran, Thailand and Sri Lanka offered their own vision of the problem of combating smuggling.

The representatives of 9 CICA Member States took part in the work of the Seminar. The Seminar was moderated by an Officer of the Secretariat Mrs. Sholpan Yelkeyeva.



TADOC officers are holding training on search techniques in the fight against smuggling

Seminar on the fight against smuggling

The official opening ceremony of CICA Seminar on “Risk Analysis and Search Techniques in the fight against smuggling of contraband” was held on 20 December 2021 in Nur-Sultan. This is the first seminar organized by the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC) at the CICA Secretariat’s headquarters. The seminar was held from 20 to 24 December 2021 with the focus to enhance the capacity of law enforcement officers, and deepen cooperation in combating smuggling of contraband by implementing the best international practices.

CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay, in his welcoming remarks, noted that smuggling of contraband seriously undermines economies and social welfare of all countries, and that the seminar is of a critical importance in consolidating international experiences and joint efforts to address this challenge. In addition, the Executive Director expressed gratitude to the Republic of Turkey, Coordinator of Confidence Building Measures in the propriety area of “New Challenges and Threats” that annually holds events and activities aimed at raising the professional skills of the law enforcement officers and shares its best national practices with the CICA partners.

In his welcoming remarks, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Turkey to the Republic of Kazakhstan Ufuk Ekici noted that it was the first event organized

at the CICA Secretariat’s headquarters. The Turkish side chaired CICA from 2010-2014 and keeps significantly contributing to the implementation of confidence building measures in its capacity as Coordinator of the priority area “New Challenges and Threats” and Co-coordinator in Military-Political dimension. “Today’s seminar on “Risk analysis and search techniques” will add another brick to our long lasting cooperation with CICA and its Member States. We believe that such regular events conducted within the framework of “Plan of Confidence Building Measures” contribute to sense of cooperation and collective security in the Asian continent”, concluded Ambassador Ufuk Ekici.

During the training, the law enforcement officers will learn how to apply an integrated approach to implement professional and systematic search techniques; to identify methods of withholding and concealment of evidence, to read and interpret the “body language” of potential smugglers in order to prevent the smuggling of contraband; to plan and manage the anti-smuggling efforts, to take strategic decisions during the process of managing the work of police officers involved in anti-smuggling operations.

The seminar was attended by the law enforcement officers from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine, the Russian Federation and Thailand.



The President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev receives Executive Director of the CICA Secretariat Kairat Sarybay

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev was informed about the outcomes of the first year of Kazakhstan's presidency in the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia on 19 October 2021. Special attention was paid to the ongoing work on the CICA's institutional development as one of the priorities of the Secretariat's current activities.

In this regard, Kairat Sarybay reported about the implementation of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's initiatives on the creation of the Council of Eminent Persons and the transformation of the Forum of CICA Analytical centers into a permanent advisory platform.

During the meeting, President Tokayev was also informed that about 50 events were held within the CICA aimed at strengthening confidence and cooperation on the Asian continent.

In addition, Kairat Sarybay spoke about the main results of the recent sixth CICA's Foreign Ministers meeting, as well as shared plans for preparing to the upcoming VI CICA Summit in Nur-Sultan in 2022.

The President of Kazakhstan emphasized the importance of high-efficiency preparation for the upcoming summit, including the elaboration of its substantive part and organizational aspects.

Source: Official website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan



CICA Executive Director attends the inauguration ceremony of new President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

At the invitation of the Government of the Islamic Republic Iran, CICA Executive Director Ambassador Kairat Sarybay participated at the inauguration ceremony of new President of the Islamic Republic Iran H.E. Seyed Ebrahim Raisi. During the visit to Tehran on 4-5 August the Executive Director was received by President-Elect Raisi and had a meeting with Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf.

At the meeting with President Raisi, Executive Director Sarybay thanked Iran for continuous support to CICA and expressed confidence that under new leadership Iran will further strengthen its contribution to global and regional peace and security. The Executive Director noted the crucial role of Asia in international affairs and the need to take systemic actions and move CICA forward through transforming it into an international organization.

President Raisi stressed his support to cooperation with international partners of Iran and the importance of regional fora, such as CICA. He noted the important role of Secretariats of intergovernmental organizations, including CICA, in promoting cooperation between governments and in decision-making processes of their Member States.

At the meeting with Speaker of Parliament Ghalibaf Mohammed Bagher, the CICA Executive Director stressed the importance of Iran for security and cooperation in the CICA area and beyond. Speaker of Parliament of Iran Ghalibaf stressed that peace and security are of paramount importance for all countries, including Iran, and that Asia in the 21st century is one of the drivers of peace, security and economic development in the world.



During the visit to Tehran CICA Executive Director Sarybay met with Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Hadi Soleimanpour and held a

productive and detailed exchange of views with his colleague on synergies and areas of possible practical cooperation between CICA and ECO.





Polling station, Elections of the President of Uzbekistan

CICA Executive Director observes presidential elections in Uzbekistan

At the invitation of the Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Zayniddin Nizamkhodjaev, CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay participated in observing the presidential elections in the Republic of Uzbekistan, held on 24 October 2021.

After the elections, Ambassador Sarybay expressed deep gratitude for the invitation to such an important political event for the country and noted that the people of Uzbekistan made a choice and confirmed their trust and support for the political course of H.E. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

As part of his visit to Tashkent, the Executive Director held a number of productive meetings with the leaders of Uzbek think tanks and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO RATS).

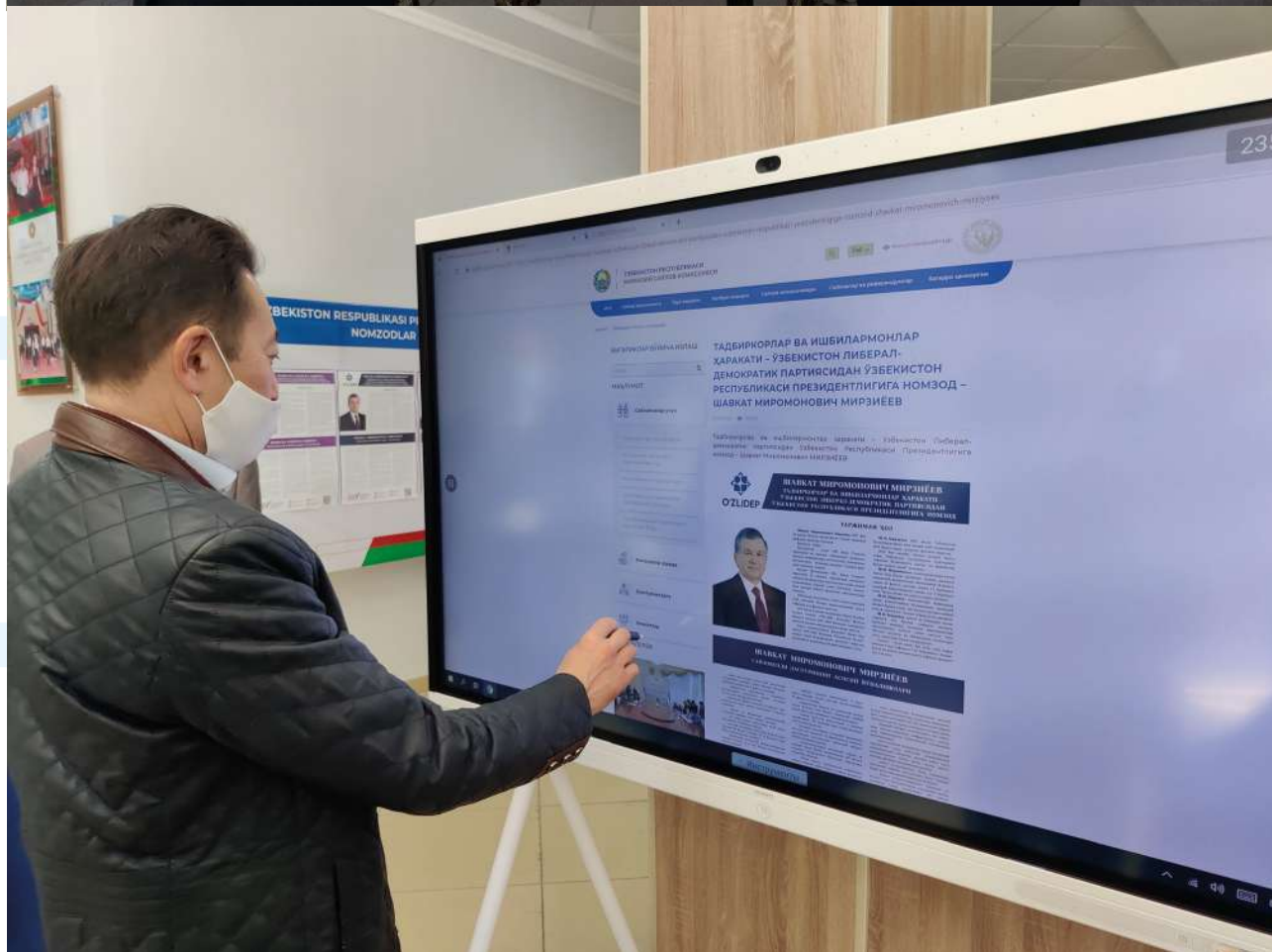
At a meeting with the Director of the International Institute for Central Asia, Mr. A.D. Nassirov, and Deputy Director of the

Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. S.A. Valiyev, Kairat Sarybay held a constructive dialogue on the prospects for cooperation among the leading think tanks of the CICA Member States.

The issues of developing cooperation in the priority area "Combating terrorism" were discussed at a meeting with the Director of the SCO RATS Executive Committee, Mr. Jumakhon Giyosov. Ambassador Sarybay put forward a number of promising areas, where the CICA Secretariat and the SCO RATS could establish substantive interaction. In turn, the Director of the SCO RATS Executive Committee expressed his readiness to develop mutually beneficial cooperation, including by organizing and conducting joint events.



CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay and Director of the International Institute for Central Asia, Anwar Nassirov (left to right)





Participation in the International Conference “Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and opportunities»

CICA took part in the International Conference “Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities” held on July 15-16 in Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan.

The Conference was attended by the President of Uzbekistan, the President of Afghanistan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, foreign ministers and high representatives

of the countries of Central and South Asia, other foreign states, heads of international and regional organizations, including CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay.

At the plenary and breakout sessions, participants discussed opportunities and initiatives aimed at further strengthening regional connectivity in trade and economic, transport and communication, cultural and



Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov and CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay (left to right)



CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay and Secretary General of the Turkic Council Baghdad Amreyev (left to right)

humanitarian areas.

“Connectivity, cooperation, dialogue and, most importantly, trust are the driving force for ensuring stability and sustainable development, improving the standard of living and well-being of the peoples of our regions”, - said President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev in his welcoming remarks. These basic principles are also guided by CICA in its activities.

In his speech at the plenary session, Mr. Sarybay noted that connectivity was a trend of the 21st century and that CICA would continue to keep connectivity issues high on its agenda.

On the margins of the Conference, the Executive Director held a meaningful meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov, where the sides discussed the progress of preparations for the 6th CICA Ministerial Meeting, increasing CICA's international standing and strengthening its capacity for a higher degree of interaction.

“The accession of Turkmenistan to CICA as an observer in June 2021 highlighted the relevance of the platform in the region”, - said the Executive Director at the meeting with Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov. The counterparts discussed the need to adapt CICA to new realities and the prospects for Turkmenistan's active neutrality on the CICA platform.

At meetings with Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Central Asia Natalia Gherman and Secretary General of the Turkic Council Baghdad Amreyev, the Executive Director discussed issues of interaction and further development of cooperation.

The main goal of the Conference was to strengthen historically close and friendly ties, trust and good-neighborliness between Central and South Asia in the interests of all peoples and countries of both regions, most of which are CICA Member States.



CICA attends 76th Session of the UN General Assembly

Representatives of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in capacity of Observer to United Nations General Assembly took part at the 76th Session of the UNGA in New York. Strong message of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to “restore trust, inspire hope and reignite multilateralism” at the opening of the General Debate correlates the CICA vision and activities. This and other important issues were discussed by CICA Executive Director Ambassador Kairat Sarybay at bilateral meetings on the margins of the UNGA76 high-level week on 20-22 September 2021.

CICA Executive Director updated interlocutors on main objectives of the CICA Chairmanship of Kazakhstan for the CICA Ministerial Meeting in 2021 and CICA Summit in 2022, highlighting the need to take systemic actions and move CICA process forward, including through transforming it into an international organization. Mr. Sarybay used also this opportunity to discuss specific events within the implementation of CICA confidence building measures.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Alzayani expressed Bahrain’s full support for CICA activities and suggested to look at perspectives of synergy in health and climate within Bahrain’s upcoming Presidency at Asian Cooperation Dialogue.

Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka Hon. Prof.



CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay and Under-Secretary-General of the UNCTO Mr. Vladimir Voronkov (left to right)



CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Alzayani (left to right)

Gamini Lakshman Peiris underlined that cultural diversity of CICA Member States is a strength of the forum and encouraged to focus on common challenges that CICA Member States are facing currently.

State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar Mr. Sultan bin Saad Almuraikhi expressed Qatar's commitment to the CICA process and noted that forum today meets expectations and needs of its Member States.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkey Mr. Sedat Önal expressed Turkey's strong position to support priorities of Kazakhstan CICA Chairmanship, including gradual transformation of CICA into full-fledged international organization for regional security.

CICA Executive Director held wide range discussions with Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office Mr. Vladimir Voronkov on CICA and UNOCT cooperation perspectives, including CICA Action Plan for Implementation of UN Global Counter-Terrorism strategy.



CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay and Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka Hon. Prof. Gamini Lakshman Peiris (left to right)



CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay and State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar Sultan bin Saad Almuraikhi (left to right)



CICA Executive Director participates in the Tenth Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries

CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay participated as a guest in the Tenth Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TURKPA), which took place in the spiritual capital of the Turkic world, the city of Turkestan, on 28 September 2021.

Ambassador Kairat Sarybay congratulated the member states and observers of TURKPA on its Anniversary and noted the practical relevance of the parliamentary diplomacy aimed at building political dialogue and implementing mutually beneficial cooperation projects. He emphasized the similarity of TURKPA and CICA objectives in terms of implementing confidence building measures and strengthening interaction in the Eurasian space.





CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay and OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid (left to right)

Visit of CICA Executive Director to Vienna for expanding cooperation between CICA and OSCE

Defining the areas of common interest with the aim to create a synergy between Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) was discussed during the visit of CICA Executive Director Ambassador Kairat

Sarybay to Vienna on 17-18 November, 2021.

The talk between CICA Executive Director and OSCE Secretary General Ms. Helga Schmid during the bilateral meeting in Hofburg demonstrated once again that two organizations share common principles and goals aimed at ensuring peace and stability.





CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay and OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid (left to right)

Interlocutors concluded that CICA and OSCE pursue individual regional and political agendas, nevertheless, they face common security challenges, operate within the UN principles, make decisions on consensus basis, and promote dialogue and trust among Member States. Today 19 countries are Members or Observers/Partners both to CICA and to OSCE. Parties agreed to continue engagement to define the possible areas of cooperation.

At his presentation for OSCE Ambassadors and Heads of Delegation from CICA region CICA Executive Director underlined Asia's growing importance and role in the 21st century, as one of the main drivers of global development. Ambassador Sarybay stressed that CICA's relevance in the Asian security architecture is also increasing, and elaborated on a set of forward-thinking priorities of Kazakh Chairmanship, including the transformation into full-fledged international organization for regional security as a strategic goal.

Special attention was made to the Outcomes

of the Sixth CICA Ministerial Meeting held in Nur-Sultan on 12 October 2021, which was attended by 23 of the 27 States at the level of ministers or their deputies. The Executive Director introduced important decisions taken at the Ministerial Meeting.

CICA Executive Director encouraged to exchange ideas and discuss prospects for a future engagement for a common goal of ensuring lasting peace and security across CICA-OSCE region or, in other words, Greater Euro-Asian space.



Presentation of analytical review “Opportunities for CICA Countries to Cooperate on Regional Strategic Agreements”

Analytical review “Opportunities for CICA Countries to Cooperate on Regional Strategic Agreements” prepared by the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan was presented at the CICA headquarters on 7 September 2021.

Ambassador Bolat Nurgaliyev, Chairman of the FPRI Board, noted that the study was devoted to the specific features of interaction among states within ASEM and to the analysis of ASEAN activities in various fields, primarily in those corresponding to the CICA dimensions of interaction. In addition, the study considered ASEAN’s cooperation with the United States and the European Union, as well as activities in the framework of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue.

Presenting the review, Ambassador Dzharbussynova, Head of the FPRI Department, focused on the prospects for ensuring pan-Asian security identifying the CICA niche. She also attached much importance to the ways of integrating the UN Sustainable Development Goals with action plans for CICA confidence building measures. According to Ambassador Dzharbussynova, “the establishment of a universal mechanism for ensuring collective security in Asia should be based both on a drastic revision of approaches to ensuring regional stability and on improving the activities of existing forums and systems.”

“It is important to have a critical view of the situation in Asia for further strengthening and increasing the effectiveness of CICA,” said CICA Executive Director Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, expressing his appreciation to the experts for their research.

During the discussions, it was noted that continuing analytical studies were critical for the further development of the CICA process.



Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Republic of Kazakhstan Chatchawan Sakornsin and CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay (left to right)

On voluntary contributions of Member States to the budget of CICA Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia expresses its sincere gratitude to the Governments of Kazakhstan, China, Republic of Korea, Turkey, Thailand, Israel and Tajikistan for their voluntary contributions to the budget of the Secretariat.

We recognize it not only as financial support, but also as an expression of Member States' political will to strengthen the capacity of CICA in ensuring security and development on a continental and global scale.

Voluntary contributions demonstrate the effectiveness of CICA in enhancing the pan-Asian security architecture, and that its activities are of keen interest.

Taking this opportunity, we would like to express our gratitude to Member States for their continued support for the CICA Secretariat's work.



Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of Kazakhstan Koo Hong-seok and CICA Executive Director Kairat Sarybay (left to right)



Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of the State of Israel Galina Frenkel and Deputy Executive Director Chi Fang (left to right)



The "Forum of Interaction and Trust" Exhibition in the Museum of the First President

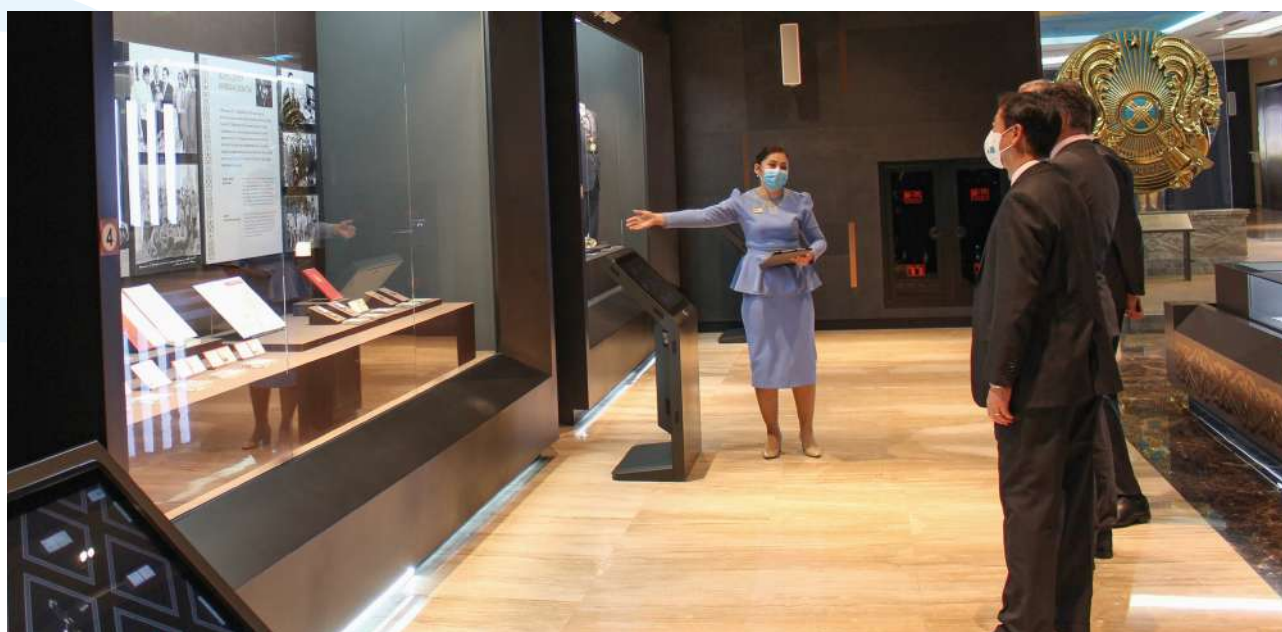
“Forum of Interaction and Trust” Exhibition

The “Forum of Interaction and Trust” exhibition, dedicated to the history and development of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), was launched at the Museum of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The exhibition was organized by the Library of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – Elbasy in partnership with the CICA Secretariat. The opening ceremony was attended by the Heads of diplomatic missions and representatives of international

organizations.

Director of the Library of the First President Mr. Bakytzhan Temirbolat and CICA Executive Director Ambassador Kairat Sarybay addressed the exhibition participants.

The exhibition is designed to familiarize visitors with the history of CICA - one of the significant foreign policy initiatives of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Elbasy Nursultan Nazarbayev, aimed at promoting peace and harmony in Asia. The exhibition reflects a personal contribution of





the Founder of the forum, the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, to development of CICA; the idea was first announced from the rostrum of the UN General Assembly in 1992.

The exhibition displayed unique archival documents covering important milestones of CICA, historical photographs illustrating important events in the history of the forum, collections, books and publications about CICA, as well as other memorable souvenirs.

As noted by Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, it is quite reasonable, that the thematic exhibition

dedicated to the history of CICA which has been convened by Elbasy is being organized for the first time at the Museum of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The exhibition was launched on October 12, 2021 and became the first event within the framework of the upcoming 30th anniversary of CICA.







The CICA Secretariat's team participates in the Football tournament dedicated to the 30th Anniversary of Independence of Turkic States and the Cooperation Day of the Turkic Speaking States.



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