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Statement by

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

At the outset, I would like to thank the Government and people of Kazakhstan, especially H.E. Mr. Mukhtar Tileuberdi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan for their warm hospitality, and Mr. Kairat Sarybay, the Executive Director and his colleagues at the CICA Secretariat for organizing this important meeting.

Dear colleagues,

Today, the world is in a perilous situation. The pursuit and implementation of unilateral policies by some countries have made it difficult to work together to meet global challenges. The era of unilateral security based on military power is long over, and trans-regional interventionist powers have experienced the consequences of this destructive policy in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan. Security and development are two sides of the same coin. Today, we need constructive and synergistic interaction to achieve true sustainable and endogenous security and sustainable development at the regional level.

Mr. Chairman,

Iran considers Asia as the main driving force of its foreign political and economic interactions. Iran adheres to its principled policy of strengthening good neighborliness, building trust, opening the door to dialogue with neighbors and other Asian countries. Proposing several peace initiatives to help resolve regional crises, working closely with countries in the region to remove great threats such as Takfiri terrorism, and the continuing emphasis on the need to increase multilateral cooperation among the CICA Member States are the manifestation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's constant commitment to play a participatory and cooperative role in ensuring security and sustainable development in the region and the world.

We have always considered the security and stability of our neighbors and neighboring areas as our own security and stability. We believe that the issues between the neighbors should be resolved through dialogue and the use of a political solution between them, and in this regard, any alliance or unity with third parties, especially entities with a dim record of aggression, assassination, espionage, conspiracy, war crimes and crimes against humanity, apartheid and gross violation of human rights, will result in nothing but losses and defeat for the perpetrators of such an act.

The blind support for apartheid in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the denial of the basic rights of the Palestinian people exacerbates the unstable situation throughout the Middle East. Today, the daily massacre of the Palestinian children and the escalation of the crimes of the occupying regime in Palestine is one of the ominous consequences of the abject submission of a very few to the so-called "normalization" process. We must condemn in the strongest possible terms the escalation of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including the Holy Quds, as a blatant and systematic violation of human rights, humanitarian law, and international law by the Zionist entity.

Strengthening Iran's presence and participation in regional organizations in Asia is of great importance to us. CICA, as a precious and important forum composed of the Asian countries, especially 11 neighboring countries of Iran, due to its proper structure and practical mechanisms for dialogue and strengthening positive interaction among its Member States has a special place in Iran's foreign policy. Iran welcomes the concept of upgrading CICA to an organization and believes that the transition from the current situation to an organization should take place within the framework of systematic and scheduled negotiations in CICA.

Dear Colleagues,

The emergence of an inauspicious phenomenon called the Covid-19 pandemic and tackling this and other threats and hostilities such as pandemics, climate change, cyberattacks, silent economic coups, and the forced relocation of populations require a fundamental overhaul of our security priorities. In the case of Covid-19, addressing this common challenge at the CICA level requires a unified and coherent approach by the Member States, in close coordination with the United Nations and other relevant international organizations. Ensuring full, free, and fair access to health services, medical equipment and vaccines for the people of the region and the world should be accorded a high priority in any policy in this regard.

We should adopt an effective and forward-looking strategy for the post-Corona world and turn this threat into an earnest opportunity to strengthen our unity and empathy. To take advantage of the opportunities ahead and avoid threats, we must engage in more active multilateral diplomacy and position ourselves in the Post-Corona world interaction processes to the best of our ability.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we hope to see the expansion and deepening of peace, stability, security, and development in the Asian region by expanding and strengthening the interaction and cooperation between the Member States in the Post-Corona era.

Thank you.