

# **The Fourth Meeting of the Youth Council of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)**

**June 18, 2021, Nur-Sultan**  
Virtual Meeting

## **REPORT**

On June 18, 2021, Nur-Sultan hosted the Fourth Virtual Meeting of the CICA Youth Council within the framework of the 2020-2022 Chairmanship of the Republic of Kazakhstan in CICA. The meeting was attended by representatives of state bodies and youth organizations of CICA Member States.

*For reference: The idea to convene CICA was first announced by the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Elbasy N.A. Nazarbayev at the 47th session of the UN General Assembly on October 5, 1992. The driving force behind this initiative was the desire to create an effective and acceptable structure for ensuring peace and security in Asia.*

*The Third Meeting of the CICA Youth Council was held on April 13-14, 2018, in Baku (Azerbaijan), which resulted in the development of proposals with due regard to the needs of the youth in the CICA area.*

### **Welcoming remarks:**

The meeting was chaired by Askhat Oralov, Vice Minister of Information and Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan. In his speech, Vice Minister Oralov noted the initiative of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Tokayev within the 75th anniversary of the United Nations to urge states to consolidate their efforts in overcoming current challenges, including those related to the youth.

In addition, acknowledging the role of volunteers, Kazakhstan invited the UN to proclaim an International Year of Mobilizing Volunteers for Development. In turn, Kazakhstan was ready to share its experience in holding the Year of Volunteers, as it had held such Year in 2020.

It was also noted that on June 1 within the framework of the 30th anniversary of Independence of Kazakhstan and on the eve of the 30th anniversary of CICA, the Conference inaugurated the CICA Alley in Nur-Sultan, on the territory of the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation, with the participation of representatives of 27 CICA Member States.

Taking into account the urgency of global environmental problems, the Chairman of the Youth Council proposed to hold a joint environmental campaign "Clean Planet" in 2021-2022 with the involvement of the youth of

the CICA countries. The action would become an important basis for the sustainable development of the CICA Member States to improve the environmental culture of each person.

Executive Director of the CICA Secretariat Kairat Sarybay addressed the participants of the event through a video message, supporting the stated agenda of the meeting. Ambassador Sarybay greeted all the participants of the meeting and assured that, for its part, the CICA Secretariat was always ready to provide the necessary assistance to the Youth Council in its important activities to strengthen the dialogue among the youth of the CICA Member States.

The discussions were mainly focused on the support of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at various levels (*session 1*), as well as on the experience and the role of the youth in the fight against new challenges and threats, in particular, environment-related issues under the SDGs (*session 2*). Both sessions were addressed by speakers from 11 countries: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, China, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

They noted the importance of the event and the role of CICA in the development of youth policy, and pointed out that work in the said area was aimed at the benefit of the youth of the Member States.

### **Session 1. Development of all-round cooperation among the youth of the CICA Member States**

In his speech, Deputy Director of the Agency for Youth Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan **Farrukh Omonov** noted the situation of the youth in the region and the challenges faced by societies. Focusing on the program actions undertaken by Uzbekistan in the field of youth, he highlighted the development of entrepreneurship and professional employment of the youth. He pointed out that the government was organizing various platforms for discussing topical problems, implementing employment programs, and creating additional opportunities for education. Practical assistance was provided regularly. A state concept for the youth development until 2025 had been developed, which was implemented stage-by-stage. Work on countering extremism and radicalism among the youth received a special attention. Prevention of social conflicts was also in the focus. Uzbekistan welcomed cooperation in both bilateral and multilateral formats and was ready to share its experience in the mentioned area.

**Leyla Badalova**, Deputy Head of the Department for Event and International Programs of the Association of Volunteer Centers of the

Russian Federation, made a presentation on the strategy of volunteering in Russia. She informed about the best practices of interaction on the topic of volunteering. She invited to take part in volunteer projects in Russia, solving humanitarian problems, etc.

Senior Consultant of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Azerbaijan **Nissa Pashayeva** in her speech drew attention to aspects of bilateral and multilateral cooperation and confronting new challenges faced by young people. She briefly spoke about the activities done in the field of youth policy. She noted the special relations and productive work with Turkey and Russia, which was reflected in the signed documents. Azerbaijan was strengthening work in the said direction in every possible way and had developed projects to strengthen interstate cooperation in the youth area. It was brought to the participants that the Azerbaijani side was ready and open to cooperation with CICA in the youth area.

**Jawad Hesham**, Legal Advisor at the Office of the Deputy Minister for Youth Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan, dwelled on the current situation in Afghanistan. He noted the main tasks facing the government of Afghanistan - poverty reduction, ongoing civil war, which had a strong negative impact on young people. Despite all the difficulties, Afghanistan was solving a number of conceptual issues in the field of youth, ensuring support at the current stage. In particular, a program was being developed to engage youth representatives in the work of the national parliament. The process of involving young people in international processes was intensifying, including through CICA. Many problems resonated with foreign partners, found their positive response. The Afghan initiative for regional cooperation during the COVID-19 pandemic was being actively promoted.

Director of the Department of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Turkey **Mustafa Barış Öztürk** spoke about the historical mission of CICA, noting that the forum mainly brought together different historical cultures that complement each other and help to develop new approaches to solving youth issues of our time. He pointed out the role of Turkey in the matter, called on to support mechanisms in the said area. Turkey, in turn, was ready to share its experience with its foreign partners in CICA. He informed that at present a significant part of the resources was dedicated to refugees, especially to their younger part. He said that the Turkish side had created a successful platform in the field of volunteering with 160 thousand members. Called to join it. The Director emphasized the attention of those present that at the current stage it was necessary to prepare young people for the post-COVID period and overcome its consequences.

Head of the International Relations Department of the Youth and Sports Committee under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan **Shabnam Rakhimzoda** presented a historical perspective on the work carried out by Tajikistan in the youth sphere. In particular, she drew attention to the creation of the National Council for Youth Affairs under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, whose work was aimed at social orientation and solving the problems of employment of Tajik youth. Productive employment and training of young professionals were the main tasks of the government.

## **Session 2. The experience and the role of the youth in the fight against new challenges and threats, in particular, environment-related issues under the SDGs**

Acting Director of the SCO Department of the China Center for SCO Environmental Cooperation, representative of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of the PRC, **Wang Yuyi** focused on the global scale of environmental education and nature protection. Exchange of information for achieving sustainable development should serve as the main mechanism in the said direction. The participation of young people in the environmental protection process should be a key factor. Many projects had been undertaken and implemented, documents had been signed, numerous environmental actions had been carried out. Various programs for educational institutions had been created. Feasible related assistance was provided to the Asian countries. Wang Yuyi also informed that the Institute of Innovation had been established in China, where leadership and innovative skills were developed among young people. The personnel and experience of the institution were used by state agencies.

**Shaikha Al-Marri**, Member of the Youth Advisory Committee under the Ministry of Sports and Culture of the State of Qatar, reported that 87 percent of Qatar's population is youth. She spoke about youth policy and Qatar's experience in the said direction. Qatar focused on the political and social aspects, the involvement of young people in the process of environmental protection. Being a state of the Persian Gulf with steadily growing industrialization in its neighboring countries, the environmental problem for Qatar was a priority. Particular attention was paid to the development of leadership qualities of the youth, as well as the participation of the youth in the fight against corruption within the framework of the sustainable development program.

Head of the Youth Creativity Center of the Kingdom of Bahrain **Arva Albufalah** presented information on the main projects of Bahrain in youth

policy. She especially noted that the environmental component was a priority. In particular, innovative solutions and large-scale development of new models with the participation of young people had a successful practical result. Research was carried out in the social sphere and in the field of management, the involvement of private partners in the prevention of climate change, water initiatives, etc.

Head of the Department for Coordination and Interaction on Youth Affairs of the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic, **Muratally Uchkempirov**, pointed out in his speech the need for closer interaction in the field of youth policy and environmental protection. He highly appreciated the platform. He called for the development of a common position and shared the projects being implemented in Kyrgyzstan. One of them was the 20 Leaders Project, which, inter alia, provided awareness raising in the field of nature protection. He noted that the involvement of young people in the goals of sustainable development was the main guideline in that important work. Kyrgyzstan also paid special attention to ensuring security in conjunction with other multilateral platforms. Peacekeeping promotion could serve as a good basis for joint cooperation. Inclusive methods were also developed for various fields.

Head of the Department of Rights and Opportunities of INGOs - Deputy Minister of Sports and Youth of the Islamic Republic of Iran **Nourollah Pasha** noted the key role of youth NGOs in Iran. He explained the processes of involving youth in NGOs, including sustainable development. He shared his views on development processes and pointed out that every effort should be made in that direction for their development. Iran held various seminars, discussions and round tables in that area. An important financial assistance in the matter was provided by the state, which allocated five thousand dollars for each idea of a youth NGO. In conclusion, he suggested holding a discussion meeting of youth NGOs of CICA Member States to develop new mechanisms in youth policy.

Deputy Director of the Youth Department of the Higher Council for Youth and Sports **Barghouti** was unable to take part in the work for technical reasons.

During the meeting, the Kazakh side announced the International Conference on the Promotion of Green Technologies, Green Finance, Greenhouse Gas Management and the Transition to the Principles of the Best Available Techniques in November 2021 in Nur-Sultan. The Conference will be held under the 2020-2022 Chairmanship of Kazakhstan in CICA. Kazakhstan invited CICA Member States to take part in this event.

*For reference: The aim of the event is to promote confidence in the exchange of information in the field of greenhouse gas management and transboundary water management. It is also aimed at the creation of an effective communication platform for an open and constructive dialogue*

*The event is organized by the International Green Technologies and Investment Projects Center of the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan.*

Following the meeting, the Ministry of Information and Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan presented a draft recommendation.