

BOLETIN DE NOTICIAS DE ASIA CENTRAL

COMITE DE ESTUDIOS EUROASIATICOS

CONSEJO ARGENTINO PARA LAS RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES

N° 6 – JULIO – AGOSTO 2023

07 de Septiembre de 2023

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Presentación

El Comité de Estudios Euroasiáticos pone a disposición de todos aquellos interesados en el desarrollo de la evolución política, militar, económica y social de los países que integran el núcleo territorial de Asia Central, una nueva edición de este Boletín, dedicado al análisis de los principales acontecimientos desarrollados en dichos países durante los meses de Julio y Agosto del corriente año.

El objetivo de esta serie de Boletines es ofrecer, regularmente, una visión actualizada y objetiva de las distintas circunstancias que impactan en la vida política, económica y social de tales Estados, así como de sus posibles ramificaciones al ámbito regional y, eventualmente, global.

Confiamos que será de utilidad para todos sus lectores.

□ **Perspectivas Regionales**

Durante este cuarto bimestre del año 2023, Asia Central nuevamente fue una generadora importante de mensajes de contenido geopolítico, cuya relevancia supera los límites de esta región.

La Cumbre de la “Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai” cuya Presidencia “Pro-Témpore” (2023-2024) asumió Kazajistán, el “Foro Centro – Asiático sobre Seguridad y Cooperación” realizado en Kazajistán, y la Primera Cumbre “Asia Central – Consejo de Cooperación del Golfo” celebrada en Arabia Saudita, fueron los eventos de mayor significación por su proyección extra – regional.

A ellos se pueden agregar las reuniones realizadas entre los países de la región y también con otros Estados, sobre un aspecto que, aunque relevante desde 2001, pasó a constituirse desde 2021 en una de las prioridades para las cinco Repúblicas (así como para China): la situación en Afganistán. Adicionalmente, y vinculados con lo expuesto precedentemente, merecen destacarse los ejercicios militares conjuntos realizados entre Kazajistán y Kirguistán, y entre aquella República y Uzbekistán.

§ ***Cumbre Anual de la “Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai”***¹

Conforme lo prevén sus normas constitutivas, la “Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai” (SCO, constituida en el 2001) realizó el 04 de Julio la Cumbre Anual de su Consejo de Jefes de Estado.

Aunque en 2020 se hizo virtual por las restricciones de la pandemia, la de 2021 fue híbrida y la de 2022 (en Samarkanda) fue presencial, en esta oportunidad el país anfitrión optó por un formato virtual.

Distintas interpretaciones se han elaborado por la elección de esta modalidad (anunciada pocas semanas antes de la Cumbre), pero sin dudas este formato evitó que en ella se expresaran con mayor intensidad tensiones de peso en el interior de la Organización, varias de ellas de vieja data pero que aumentaron recientemente.

Entre las más visibles, se pueden identificar a: la complejidad de la relación que desarrolla India con EE.UU. y con Rusia; las discusiones recientes entre China e India vinculadas con la “Línea de Control Real” (LAC, que demarca territorios entre ambos países en la región del Himalaya, luego de la guerra que los enfrentara en la década de 1960), y la tradicional tensión entre India y Pakistán, cuyos Ministros de RR.EE. tuvieron un fuerte enfrentamiento verbal (con mutuas imputaciones vinculadas al terrorismo) al reunirse los Cancilleres de todos los Miembros en Mayo pasado.

En esta Cumbre participaron, además de los Presidentes de los Estados Miembros (China, India, Kazajistán, Kirguistán, Pakistán, Rusia, Tayikistán y Uzbekistán), los Jefes de Estado de Bielorrusia, Irán y Turkmenistán (este último como invitado de India), así

como funcionarios de distintas Instituciones: Naciones Unidas, “Comunidad de Estados Independientes” (CIS), “Organización del Tratado de Seguridad Colectiva” (CSTO), Unión Económica Euro Asiática” (EAEU), “Conferencia sobre Interacción y Construcción de Medidas de Confianza en Asia” (CICA) y la “Asociación de Naciones de Asia Sud-Oriental” (ASEAN).

Además de efectivizarse el traspaso de la Presidencia rotativa de India a Kazajistán por el período 2023-2024, la incorporación de Irán como Miembro Pleno, y el Memorándum de Entendimiento suscrito por Bielorrusia para ingresar a la Organización, la Cumbre culminó con la aprobación de una serie de documentos y una Declaración Final.

En esta, identificada como “Declaración de Nueva Delhi” (Anexo N° I, conforme la versión del sitio web oficial de la Organización), se formulan (además del gesto de apoyo a Irán), distintas consideraciones, fundamentalmente centradas en temas de seguridad, pero también de tipo económico (sanciones unilaterales, proteccionismo y restricciones a flujos comerciales y fomento del uso de monedas locales en los flujos intra-Organización), las que están adquiriendo una mayor presencia en los documentos de la SCO, en particular desde el enfrentamiento comercial EE.UU. – China y la invasión Rusa a Ucrania. Entre las más destacadas cabe mencionar:

- Los tradicionales criterios de la SCO en favor de un sistema multipolar basado en la aceptación de los Principios de la Carta de Naciones Unidas.
- La preocupación por los temas de seguridad, tanto regional como global (terrorismo, separatismo, extremismo, tráfico de drogas) y por la expansión de sistemas misilísticos y la militarización del espacio exterior.
- La necesidad de implementar el Plan de Acción Conjunto sobre el Programa Nuclear de Irán.
- La crítica a las sanciones económicas aplicadas sin acuerdo del Consejo de Seguridad de Naciones Unidas así como a medidas proteccionistas que violentan los principios de la OMC.
- La promoción del uso de las monedas locales para los flujos comerciales (anticipando un tema que incluiría la Cumbre de los BRICS en Sudáfrica en Agosto).

También se incluyeron referencias específicas sobre la situación en Afganistán y sobre la necesidad de que dicho país se constituya en un Estado independiente, neutral, unido, democrático, pacífico, libre de terrorismo, guerras y drogas, así como que se establezca un gobierno inclusivo.

Adicionalmente se aprobaron más de una docena de documentos, incluyendo los vinculados con la cooperación en el ámbito de tecnologías digitales, y el combate al terrorismo, el separatismo y el extremismo.

Por su parte, el Presidente de Kazajistán, en su discurso como titular por el período 2023-2024 (Figura N° 1), enfatizó, como prioridad para los Miembros, el prevenir

una grieta geopolítica entre el Este y el Oeste, y avanzó en su iniciativa sobre “Unidad Mundial para una Paz y Armonía Justas”. Paralelamente, entre otras consideraciones:

- Destacó la necesidad de mantenerse comprometidos con los principios de la Organización a construir un orden mundial multipolar.
- Resaltó la necesidad de mejorar para el período 2025-2027 el denominado “Programa de Cooperación para Combatir el Terrorismo, el Separatismo y el Extremismo”.
- Advirtió sobre la necesidad de la SCO de estar preparada para enfrentar la crisis que puede asolar a Afganistán.
- Impulsó la creación de un Fondo de Inversión Conjunto de la Organización.
- Señaló la necesidad de establecer una red de puertos y centros logísticos estratégicos para desplegar y aprovechar todas las oportunidades de la BRI y del Corredor Trans-Caspio.
- Ilustró sobre la conveniencia de promover el turismo entre los miembros, ya que la Organización cubre el 45% de la población mundial.

Cabe asumir que algunas de esas tensiones (en especial la de China – India) se volverán a manifestar, a través de distintas conductas, en la próxima reunión del G-20.

Figura N° 1 – Cumbre Anual de la “Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai”



Fuente: <https://astanatimes.com/2023/07/president-tokayev-outlines-kazakhstans-priorities-as-new-chair-of-sco/>

A continuación la Figura N° 2 exhibe la cobertura geográfica de la SCO, sus Miembros Plenos y Miembros Observadores y Miembros de Diálogo

Figura N° 2 – La “Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai”



Fuente: <https://ssbcrackexams.com/what-is-shanghai-cooperation-organisation-sco-summit-2023/>

§ **“Foro Centro – Asiático sobre Seguridad y Cooperación”** ²

Como continuación de la reunión celebrada en Enero pasado en Astana (Kazajistán) bajo el lema “Asia Central 2030 – Visiones del Futuro” entre representantes de las áreas de Planificación y Asuntos Estratégicos de las cinco Repúblicas, durante el 13 y 14 de Julio tuvo lugar, también en Astana, el “Foro Centro – Asiático sobre Seguridad y Cooperación” (CAF), organizado conjuntamente por el Instituto de Estudios Estratégicos y el Ministerio de RREE de ese país, bajo el lema: “Asia en un Mundo Cambiante: una Agenda para el Futuro” (Figura N° 3).

Dicho Foro convocó a decenas de expertos de más de veinte países y funcionarios de organismos internacionales, los que debatieron durante ambas jornadas sobre distintos temas vinculados con el fortalecimiento de la cooperación regional, propuestas para resolver problemas regionales y, en particular el rol que están llamados a desempeñar los denominados “países de poder medio” como los de Asia Central, y su interrelación entre sí y con actores globales

Figura N° 3 – “Foro Centro – Asiático sobre Seguridad y Cooperación”



Fuente: <https://astanatimes.com/2023/07/second-day-of-central-asian-security-and-cooperation-forum-in-astana-begins/>

§ **Primera Cumbre “Asia Central - Consejo de Cooperación del Golfo”³**

En el marco de la 18° Cumbre de Jefes de Estado del “Consejo de Cooperación del Golfo” (GCC), celebrada en Yeda el 19 de Julio, Arabia Saudita, como país anfitrión, organizó también la Primera Cumbre “Asia Central – CCG” (Figura N° 4)

En la misma se discutieron distintas propuestas orientadas a intensificar la relación bilateral, reforzar la cooperación económica, y crear una plataforma de comunicaciones, destacándose, en las intervenciones de los distintos Jefes de Estado, la relevancia estratégica de esa relación, previéndose una Segunda Cumbre en 2025 en Samarkanda (Uzbekistán) (Anexo II – fuente: Saudi Press Agency).

En este aspecto y si bien los flujos comerciales alcanzan a unos US\$ 3 mil millones, caben considerar múltiples dimensiones:

- La fuente alternativa de energías que representan tanto los países del Golfo como Asia Central para la U. Europea.
- La pertenencia de varios miembros del GCC así como de Kazajistán, a la “OPEC +” a la que también pertenece Rusia.
- El apoyo diplomático que para varios países del Golfo representa una mejor relación con Asia Central, expuesto por el Príncipe Saudí y Primer Ministro de

ese país, Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, al agradecer el apoyo de Asia Central para que Arabia Saudita sea la sede de la “World Expo 2030”

- La importancia de los países del Golfo para el desarrollo de energías renovables en Asia Central reflejada en distintas visiones estratégicas: “Saudi Vision 2030”, “Oman Vision 2040”, “Bahrain Economic Vision 2030”, “Kyrgyzstan National Development Strategy 2018-2040” y “Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy”.

Figura N° 4 – Cumbre “Asia Central – Consejo de Cooperación del Golfo”



Fuente: <https://spa.gov.sa/en/5667fc9af0y>

§ **Asia Central - Afganistán** ⁴

Como fuera expuesto en ediciones precedentes de este Boletín, la situación en Afganistán, en particular desde la retirada de EE.UU. de ese país a mediados del año 2021, se ha constituido en una de las más relevantes prioridades de la política exterior y de seguridad de las cinco Repúblicas Centro – Asiáticas.

Ante el nuevo régimen Talibán, los países de Asia Central, en términos generales, optaron por una actitud pragmática: no han brindado reconocimiento diplomático pleno al nuevo gobierno (argumentando que lo harán cuando la comunidad internacional lo haya hecho), pero aceptan representantes del Talibán en sus países, con una fuerte restricción en sus funciones (limitadas a temas económicos y comerciales), siendo Tayikistán (producto de los conflictos étnicos en los que se vio involucrado), el país más vocal en cuanto a la necesidad de un gobierno que no sea exclusivamente Talibán.

Es precisamente la dimensión comercial la que se mantuvo operativa entre los seis países, involucrando energía, alimentos y medicamentos, además de asistencia humanitaria. Adicionalmente, ha habido diálogos en materia de desarrollos logísticos, que interesan en particular a Kazajistán y Uzbekistán.

Sin perjuicio de ampliar sus vínculos comerciales (en parte como modo de contención a la situación alimentaria en Afganistán), la mayoría de las cinco Repúblicas han incrementado sus medidas preventivas ante posibles ataques terroristas, habida cuenta que hay grupos étnicos de algunos de esos Estados operando en Afganistán, ya sea apoyando al Talibán o bien enfrentándolo (en especial en las zonas próximas a Tayikistán).

En este contexto, durante el bimestre bajo análisis, hubo múltiples eventos que expusieron la dinámica de esas relaciones, así como la preocupación de los Estados Centro – Asiáticos; entre ello se pueden mencionar:

- Las consideraciones vertidas en la “Declaración de Nueva Delhi” del SCO (citadas precedentemente), respecto de ese país.
- La preocupación expuesta por el nuevo Presidente “Pro-Témpore” de la SCO en su discurso inicial, sobre una potencial crisis en Afganistán.
- La reunión celebrada hacia fines de Julio en Kazajistán, en el marco del formato “C5 +1”, entre funcionarios de los cinco países y el Enviado Especial de EE.UU. En dicha reunión se evaluaron planes para aumentar la asistencia humanitaria a Afganistán, así como para mejorar la situación de derechos humanos en ese país, y sobre todo, para afrontar hechos de terrorismo.
- La propuesta de Kazajistán, ante el SCO y también en el marco de esta reunión “C 5 +1” de abrir en Almaty un Centro Regional de Naciones Unidas para atender el desarrollo de Asia Central y Afganistán.
- La ampliación de acuerdos comerciales (durante Julio y Agosto) entre Afganistán y los demás países, que involucran flujos de trigo y harina, maquinaria liviana, medicamentos y electricidad.
- Los avances alcanzados hacia mediados de Julio para destrabar un anhelado proyecto de infraestructura ferroviaria que posibilitaría la conexión desde Uzbekistán hasta Pakistán, conocido como “Corredor Ferroviario Termez - Mazar-i-Sharif – Kabul – Peshawar” (Figura N° 5).
- Los crecientes reclamos de Uzbekistán y Turkmenistán por el proyectado “Canal Qosh Tepa”, que desarrolla Afganistán y que derivaría un importante flujo hídrico del río Amu-Darya, para irrigar las regiones Septentrionales de ese país, afectando el volumen hídrico que arribaría a los otros dos países, también necesitados de irrigación para sus zonas agrícolas (Figura N° 6).
- La realización de ejercicios militares conjuntos, en particular con la participación de tropas especiales y asumiendo como hipótesis de conflicto la presencia de grupos terroristas en sus territorios, que tuvieron lugar durante Agosto entre Kazajistán y Uzbekistán, y entre aquella República y Kirguistán.
- La ratificación, a mediados de Agosto, y mediante visitas oficiales, de las “Alianzas Estratégicas” que vinculan a Kazajistán con Tayikistán y Uzbekistán.

Figura N° 5 – Canal Qosh-Tepa (Afganistán)



Fuente: <https://www.intellinews.com/uzbekistan-pursues-dialogue-with-afghanistan-on-fraught-canal-project-274030/>

Figura N° 6 – Proyecto Ferroviario Uzbekistán – Afganistán - Pakistán



Fuente: <http://inozpress.kg/en/podrobno-uzbekistan-presented-details-of-the-construction-project-of-the-kabul-railway-corridor/>

Aunque en las circunstancias antedichas la situación en Afganistán estuvo expuesta en general explícitamente, hubo también un evento en donde es válido asumir que estuvo incluida, aunque no haya sido citada en el comunicado oficial respectivo: la Cumbre Tripartita entre Turkmenistán, Uzbekistán y Tayikistán, celebrada a comienzos de Agosto en la capital de la primera de las citadas Repúblicas.

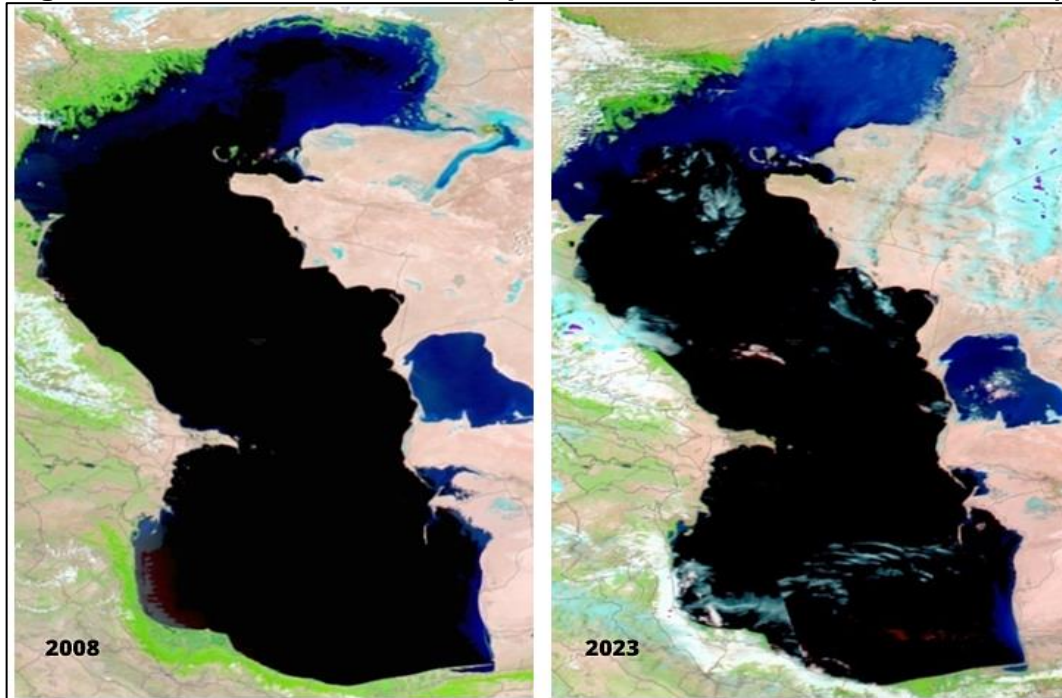
Dicha Cumbre, la primera en ese formato, cubrió múltiples temas, siendo los más enumerados, los vinculados con el aprovechamiento de los recursos hídricos del río Amu-Darya, lo que necesariamente involucra a Afganistán. Si se considera que son los tres países Centro – Asiáticos con fronteras con dicho Estado (Figura N° 5), y uno de ellos (Tayikistán) el más opuesto públicamente al Talibán, es válido asumir que las derivaciones de la situación Afgana en materia de seguridad, también consumieron parte de la agenda oficial.

Indudablemente, la dinámica de la situación en Afganistán continuará ocupando lugares prominentes en las agendas diplomáticas y de seguridad de las cinco Repúblicas de Asia Central, y al mismo tiempo, una renovada preocupación para China, por sus potenciales impactos domésticos (en la región de XinJiang) y externos (los proyectos de la BRI).

§ **Rusia -Asia Central**⁵

En el marco de su política de presencia activa en Asia Central, Rusia anunció que convocará a una Cumbre de los Estados ribereños del Mar Caspio, a celebrarse este año en Moscú, para analizar distintos temas vinculados con la implementación de la “Convención sobre el Status Legal del Mar Caspio”.

Figura N° 7 – Reducción de la superficie del Mar Caspio (2008 – 2023).



Fuente: <https://astanatimes.com/2023/07/satellite-images-show-level-of-caspian-sea-dropping/>

Cabe recordar que Rusia, Kazajistán, Turkmenistán, Irán y Azerbaiyán suscribieron años atrás una Convención que dio al Mar Caspio un status ad-hoc, no siendo considerado jurídicamente un lago ni tampoco un mar y, por ende, quedando excluidos

su miembros de las obligaciones derivadas de los Convenios Internacionales sobre ambos tipos de espacios acuáticos.

La convocatoria de Rusia fue la continuación de una Conferencia de perfil científico, organizada por Turkmenistán el 12 de Agosto y titulada: “El Mar Caspio es un Mar de Paz y Amistad”.

Sin perjuicio de ello e independientemente de las reales motivaciones detrás de la iniciativa de Rusia o los temas jurídicos a debatir, hay una realidad preocupante para los cinco Estados ribereños, pero en particular para Rusia y Kazajistán: como lo exhibe la Figura N° 7, las imágenes satelitales capturadas por la Agencia Espacial de Kazajistán muestran que en los últimos 15 años, el Mar Caspio ha estado expuesto a un proceso de desecación, que genera muchos interrogantes sobre su evolución futura y sus posibles impactos económicos, demográficos y medioambientales.

ANEXO N° I – Cumbre Anual de la “Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai” (SCO) “Declaración de Nueva Delhi” de la (04-Julio-2023) ⁶

NEW DELHI DECLARATION OF THE COUNCIL OF HEADS OF STATE OF SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION

Leaders of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States (hereinafter referred to as "the SCO" or "the Organization") held the meeting of the Council of Heads of State of SCO in the video conference format on 4 July 2023 and declare the following:

Today, the world is undergoing unprecedented transformations and is entering a new era of rapid technological development that requires an increase in the effectiveness of global institutions. These fundamental processes are accompanied by stronger multi-polarity, increased interconnectedness, interdependence and an accelerated pace of digitization. At the same time, threats and challenges are becoming more and more complex, destructive and dangerous, existing conflicts are aggravating and new conflicts are emerging.

The growing technological and digital divide, continued turbulence in global financial markets, global reduction in investment flows, instability of supply chains, increased protectionist measures and other barriers to international trade, consequences of the global climate change and COVID-19 pandemic are adding to the volatility and uncertainty in the global economy and creating additional challenges for economic growth, maintaining social well-being, ensuring food and energy security, as well as the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To this end, new approaches are required to promote a more equitable and effective international cooperation.

Based on the proximity of assessments of the current regional and international agenda, the Member States confirm their commitment to formation of a more representative, democratic, just and multipolar world order based on the universally recognized principles of international law, multilateralism, equal, joint, indivisible, comprehensive and sustainable security, cultural and civilizational diversity, mutually beneficial and equal cooperation of states with a central coordinating role of the UN.

The Member States reaffirm that the SCO is not directed against other states and international organizations and is open to broad cooperation with them in accordance with the goals and principles of the UN Charter, SCO Charter and international law, based on consideration of mutual interests and common approaches to solving regional and global problems.

The Member States, in accordance with the principles of the SCO Charter, pursue a policy that excludes bloc, ideological and confrontational approaches to address the problems of international and regional development, countering traditional and nontraditional security challenges and threats. Taking into account the views of the Member States, they reaffirm the relevance of initiatives to promote cooperation in building of a new type international relations in the spirit of mutual respect, justice, equality and mutually beneficial cooperation, as well as formation of a common vision of the idea of creating a community of the common destiny of humanity.

The Member States advocate respect for the right of peoples to an independent and democratic choice of the paths of their political and socio-economic development, emphasize that the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity of states, equality, mutual benefit, non-interference in internal affairs and non-use of force or threats to use force, are the basis of sustainable development of international relations. They reaffirm their commitment to peaceful settlement of disagreements and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultations.

The Member States intend to further develop cooperation in the fields of politics and security, trade, economy, finance and investment, cultural and humanitarian ties in order to build a peaceful, safe, prosperous and environment-friendly planet Earth, achieving harmonious coexistence of Man and nature.

The Member States consider it important to build up joint coordinated efforts by the international community to counter the activities of terrorist, separatist and extremist groups, paying special attention to preventing the spread of religious intolerance, aggressive nationalism, ethnic and racial discrimination, xenophobia, ideas of fascism and chauvinism.

Reaffirming their commitment to peace, joint development and equal relations based on the principles of mutual respect, friendship and good-neighborliness, the Member States will continue conducting a constructive dialogue based on trust, deepening effective multifaceted cooperation, making every effort to strengthen security and stability and ensure sustainable development in the SCO region.

The Member States consider Central Asia to be the core of SCO and support the efforts of the countries of the region to ensure prosperity and peace, sustainable development and the formation of a space of good-neighborliness, trust and friendship.

Reaffirming their strong commitment to fighting terrorism, separatism and extremism, the Member States are determined to continue taking active measures to eliminate the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, to disrupt the terror financing channels, to suppress recruitment activities and cross-border movement of terrorists, to counter extremism, and radicalization of youth, the dissemination of terrorist ideology, as well as to eliminate "sleeper cells" and places used as terrorist safe havens.

The Member States note the inadmissibility of interference in the internal affairs of states under the pretext of countering terrorism and extremism, as well as unacceptability of using terrorist, extremist and radical groups for mercenary goals.

The Member States consider it important to build up joint coordinated efforts by the international community to counter the attempts to involve young people in the activities of terrorist, separatist and extremist groups.

The Member States note the effective activities of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure(RATS) in promoting cooperation between competent authorities in countering terrorism, separatism and extremism, including the implementation of the relevant Program for 2022-2024. The importance of implementing practical measures aimed at expanding its capabilities to strengthen cooperation in these areas was emphasized.

Subject to their national laws and on the basis of consensus, the Member States will seek to develop common principles and approaches to form a unified list of terrorist, separatist and extremist organizations whose activities are prohibited on the territories of the SCO Member States.

The Member States emphasize a key role of the UN in countering threats in the information space, creating a safe, fair and open information space built on the principles of respect for state sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. They consider it important to ensure equal rights for all countries to regulate the Internet and sovereign right of states to manage it in their national segment.

The Member States categorically oppose militarization of information and communication technologies (ICTs). They support development of universal rules, principles and norms of responsible behavior of states in this area, and in particular, welcome the development under the auspices of the UN of a comprehensive international convention against the use of ICT for criminal purposes.

The Member States will continue cooperation within the framework of specialized negotiating mechanisms at the UN and other international platforms.

The Member States have expressed their concern about the growing threats posed by increased production, trafficking and abuse of narcotic drugs and using the proceeds of illicit drug-trafficking as a source of funding for terrorism. They stressed the need for a joint and balanced approach to countering trafficking of illicit drugs and their precursors and noted the importance of implementing the international drug control conventions and other relevant legal regulatory instruments.

The Member States note that illicit drug trafficking and their non-medical consumption pose a threat to international and regional security and stability, sustainable economic development of states, health and well-being of people, as well as the exercise of fundamental human rights and freedoms. Emphasizing the importance of consolidating forces in the fight against illicit drug-trafficking and wide cooperation in this area, they will continue implementing the SCO Anti-Drug Strategy for 2018-2023 and Action Plan for its implementation.

The Member States intend to further conduct joint anti-drug operations on a regular basis. They advocate active interaction with interested states, regional and international organizations in this field.

The Member States that are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are in favor of strict observance of the provisions of the Treaty, the comprehensive balanced promotion of all the goals and principles fixed therein, strengthening of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, continuation of the nuclear disarmament process, as well as the promotion of an equitable, mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

The Member States reiterate that unilateral and unlimited expansion of global missile defense systems by certain countries or groups of countries has a negative impact on the international security and stability. They consider unacceptable attempts to ensure their own security at the expense of the security of other States.

The Member States stand for responding to global and regional security challenges and threats through political and diplomatic means on a multilateral basis and will strengthen cooperation and actively promote the multilateral arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation process, including efforts within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Member States advocate keeping outer space free of weapons of any kind and state the importance of strict observance of existing legal regime, which provides for solely peaceful use of outer space. They emphasize the need to conclude an international legally binding document that would enhance transparency and provide reliable guarantees to prevent an arms race and not be the first to deploy weapons in outer space.

The Member States emphasize the importance of the Convention on Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BTWC) as one of pillars of the global security architecture. They emphasize the need for strict adherence to the BTWC, in particular, through adoption of a Protocol to the Convention which provides for an effective verification mechanism. They oppose creating any mechanisms duplicating the BTWC functions, including those that fall within the mandate of the UN Security Council.

The Member States call for full compliance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) as an effective instrument in disarmament and non-proliferation. They emphasize the significance of early destruction of all declared stockpiles of chemical weapons.

The Member States reaffirm their support for Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and advocate for concerted decisions to bridge divisions within the Organization, ensure its integrity and operate effectively under the Convention.

The Member States consider that the early entry into force of the Protocol on Security Assurances to the Agreement on a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia for all signatories, will become a significant contribution to regional security and the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The Member States consider sustainable implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Action Plan on the Iranian nuclear program to be important and, in accordance with Resolution 2231 of the UN Security Council, urge all the participants to strictly fulfill their obligations for comprehensive and effective implementation of the document.

The Member States believe that one of the most important factors of preservation and strengthening of safety and stability within SCO region, is the early settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. They advocate building Afghanistan as an independent, neutral, united, democratic and peaceful state, free from terrorism, war and drugs.

The Member States consider it essential to establish an inclusive government in Afghanistan with the participation of representatives of all ethnic, religious and political groups in Afghan society.

Stressing the importance of long-term hospitality and effective assistance provided to the Afghan refugees by regional and neighbouring countries of Afghanistan, the Member States consider important, the active efforts of the international community to facilitate their dignified, safe and sustainable return to their homeland.

In view of the evolving humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the Member States supported continued efforts to assist the Afghan people.

The Member States called for greater effectiveness of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a key platform for discussing the international trade agenda and adopting the regulations of the multilateral trading system. They emphasize the need for early implementation of an inclusive reform of the organization, focusing on the issues of its development and adaptation to modern economic realities, as well as effective implementation of the functions of monitoring, negotiation and settlement of disputes.

The Member States affirm the significance for further improving and reforming the architecture of global economic governance and will consistently advocate and strengthen an open, transparent, fair, inclusive and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system based on the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles and rules, promote the development of an open world economy, ensure equitable market access, oppose protectionist measures and trade restrictions that are contrary to the WTO principles that undermine the multilateral trading system and threaten the global economy. They stressed that unilateral application of economic sanctions other than those approved by the UN Security Council are incompatible with the principles of international law and have a negative impact on the third countries and international economic relations.

Reaffirming their support for China's "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) initiative, the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Russian Federation, Republic of Tajikistan and Republic of Uzbekistan note the ongoing work to jointly implement this project, including efforts to link the construction of the Eurasian Economic Union and BRI.

They spoke in favor of implementing the Roadmap for gradual increase in the share of national currencies in mutual settlements by the interested Member States.

The Member States intend to broaden and deepen cooperation for sustainable socioeconomic development and to improve the well-being and living standards of the people in the SCO region.

They consider it important to ensure the implementation of the SCO Economic Development Strategy 2030 adopted by interested Member States, other joint programme and projects aimed at promoting cooperation in such priority areas as the digital economy, high technology and innovation, creation of new and modernization of existing international routes for road and rail transport, multimodal transport corridors and logistics centres, finance and investment, energy and food security, reliable, resilient and diversified supply chains, industrial cooperation and inter-regional ties.

The Member States intend to strengthen cooperation in education, science and technology, culture, health, disaster management, as well as tourism, sports and people-to-people contacts, especially through women and youth, public diplomacy institutions, cultural centres and the media.

The Member States, noting the importance of cooperation in the field of environmental protection, ecological security and prevention of the negative consequences of climate change, development of specially protected nature reserves and eco-tourism, agreed to declare 2024 as the SCO Year of Environment.

The Member States stressed the historical significance of the admission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the SCO as a full Member State. They also noted the importance of signing the Memorandum of Obligations by the Republic of Belarus to achieve the status of a SCO Member State.

The Member States highly appreciated the outcomes of the Republic of India's presidency of the SCO in 2022-2023 which has contributed to the further development of multi-faceted and mutually beneficial cooperation.

The presidency of the SCO for the forthcoming period is handed over to the Republic of Kazakhstan. The next meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State will be held in 2024 in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

New Delhi, 4 July 2023

ANEXO II - Cumbre “Asia Central – Consejo de Cooperación del Golfo” – Declaración Final (19-Julio-2023) ⁷

GCC-Central Asia Summit Joint Statement

In response to the invitation of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the heads of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Central Asian states held their meeting in Jeddah, on Wednesday, Muharram 1, 1445H, corresponding to July 19, 2023. The meeting was chaired by His Highness Royal Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the participation of Their Majesties, Highnesses and Excellencies, the leaders of the GCC and Central Asian countries, and His Excellency Mr. Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi, Secretary General of the GCC.

The meeting concluded the following:

1. *The leaders congratulated the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for the success of the Hajj season for the year 1444H, and the high level it achieved in serving the pilgrims and providing them with the necessary care during their performance of Hajj.*
2. *Based on common values, interests, and deep historical ties between the GCC countries and Central Asian countries, the leaders stressed the importance of strengthening political and strategic relations between the two sides at the collective and bilateral levels, and continuing political coordination in order to achieve regional and international security and stability, face challenges, and work to ensure the flexibility of supply chains, transportation and communication, food security, energy security, and water security, pushing for building cooperation relations in developing green and renewable energy sources and technologies, creating business opportunities, supporting investment opportunities, and increasing trade exchange.*
3. *The leaders praised the cultural diversity, openness and rich history of the countries of the Cooperation Council and Central Asia, and they stressed that tolerance and peaceful coexistence are among the most important values and principles for relations between nations and societies. In this regard, the leaders welcomed the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2686, by which the Council recognized that hate speech, racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, gender discrimination and acts of extremism can contribute to the outbreak, escalation and recurrence of conflicts. They expressed concern about the growing rhetoric of racism and Islamophobia and acts of violence against Muslim minorities and Islamic symbols.
The leaders praised the results and goals of the Conference of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, which has been held in Kazakhstan since 2003 in order to discuss global guidelines for achieving respect and tolerance among races and religions.*
4. *The leaders praised the results of the Bahrain Dialogue Forum “East and West for Human Coexistence”, which was held in 2022 in the Kingdom of Bahrain, under the patronage of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, in cooperation with the Sheikh of Al Azhar and Pope of the Vatican.*
5. *The leaders stressed the importance of strengthening the strategic and political dialogue between the countries of the Cooperation Council and Central Asia, and strengthening this partnership towards new horizons in various fields, including political and security dialogue, economic and investment cooperation, enhancing communication between peoples, and exchanging best practices and expertise in all fields such as education, culture, youth affairs, tourism, media and sports, in accordance with the agreed joint action plan for the period 2023-2027.*
6. *The leaders commended the outcomes of the joint ministerial meeting of the strategic dialogue between the GCC and Central Asian countries, which was held on September 7, 2022,*

and the technical meetings held between officials and specialists from both sides in the fields of economic cooperation, trade, investment, health, culture, youth and sports. The leaders also urged the concerned authorities to take the necessary measures for the immediate implementation of the joint action plan, at the bilateral and multilateral levels, to enhance joint cooperation in various fields.

7. In the economic field, the leaders stressed the importance of continuing efforts to enhance trade and economic cooperation and encourage joint investment by strengthening relations between financial and economic institutions and business sectors on both sides to explore areas of cooperation and available opportunities and provide an attractive climate for business, trade, joint investments and economic cooperation, in order to achieve mutual benefit. The leaders also called for achieving integration between available opportunities and developing investment fields, discussing development priorities and exchanging experiences in light of the joint action plan.

8. The leaders affirmed their support for the candidacy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host Expo 2030 in Riyadh, to exert all efforts to support this nomination, stressing the importance of organizing international and regional exhibitions and active participation in them to stimulate economic and cultural exchanges between Central Asia and the GCC region.

9. The leaders emphasized the importance of continuing cooperation between the Cooperation Council and Central Asia in international forums and organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to confront the economic challenges facing the world.

10. The leaders praised the pioneering role played by the two sides in confronting the climate change phenomenon and renewed their welcome and support to the United Arab Emirates for hosting the COP28 conference to support international efforts in this regard.

As developing countries, the leaders emphasized the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, especially fairness and the principle of shared responsibilities, taking into account different national circumstances and priorities, and taking into account in the implementation of the two agreements the negative social and economic impacts resulting from response measures to climate change, especially those affecting developing countries that are the most susceptible to these effects. COP28 will provide an opportunity to assess these issues and progress in collective efforts to implement these international agreements.

11. The leaders stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation in the field of environment and climate change, protecting glaciers and water resources, and attracting more investments to the main sectors of the economies of Central Asian countries to adapt to climate change through integration and cooperation on the risks and consequences of natural disasters between the two sides.

12. The leaders stressed the importance of developing connected transportation routes between the two regions, building strong logistical and commercial networks, and developing effective systems that contribute to the exchange of products.

13. The leaders agreed to enhance cooperation in the fields of higher education, scientific research and vocational training, encourage cooperation between universities and scientific research centres on both sides, and provide educational opportunities in technical universities, wherever possible, for students from the GCC and Central Asian countries, as well as exchange of experience and expertise through communication between experts and education specialists.

14. The leaders expressed their aspirations to enhance cooperation in the health field, exchange experiences among specialized institutions in various health fields, and support global initiatives to address current and future epidemics, health risks, and challenges. In this context, the leaders highlighted Kazakhstan's initiative to create a special multilateral body in the United Nations – the International Agency for Biosafety – which was announced at the 75th session of

the United Nations General Assembly. The Agency is intended to contribute to the prevention of biological threats and the exchange of data on dangerous diseases.

15. In the field of cultural and humanitarian cooperation, including the media and social fields, the leaders stressed the importance of protecting the common cultural heritage between the two sides, elevating joint cultural and media cooperation, encouraging cultural dialogue between the two sides, and discussing opportunities to develop cooperation in all fields to serve joint interests.

16. The leaders emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation in the field of youth and sports, exchanging experiences, and coordinating electoral positions in regional, continental, and international sports federations. They noted that Qatar will host the 2023 AFC Asian Cup matches.

17. The leaders emphasized the importance of bolstering cooperation in the fields of green energy economy, digital economy, innovation, and green technology. They highlighted the need for investments to implement new projects in these crucial areas between the two sides. The leaders welcomed the decision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host the 'GCC-Central Asia Investment Forum in the last quarter of 2023. They also welcomed the initiatives of the Republic of Turkmenistan and the Kyrgyz Republic to host the Forum in the year 2024.

18. The leaders discussed regional and international issues, and their visions agreed on the importance of concerted efforts to achieve peace, security, stability, and prosperity worldwide. They emphasized the priority of restoring international peace and security through mutual respect and cooperation between countries to achieve development and progress. They highlighted the principles of good neighborliness, respect for the sovereignty of states, their territorial integrity, and political independence, non-interference in their internal affairs, non-use or threat of force, and the protection of the international order based on adherence to the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Moreover, the leaders affirmed that the increasing risk of a nuclear confrontation between nuclear-armed countries constitutes a serious and unacceptable threat to international peace and security and that the use of nuclear weapons should never be allowed.

19. The leaders expressed their condemnation of terrorism, whatever its sources, the rejection of all its forms and manifestations, and the drying up of its funding sources. They expressed their determination to strengthen regional and international efforts to combat terrorism and extremism and to prevent the financing, arming and recruitment of terrorist groups for all individuals and entities. The leaders referred to the results of the Dushanbe High-Level Conference on International and Regional Cooperation in the Field of Border Security and Management in order to Counter Terrorism and Prevent the Movement of Terrorists, held on October 18-19, 2022 in Dushanbe, and the results of the ministerial meeting of the Global Coalition Against Daesh, which was held on June 8, 2023 in Riyadh, and affirmed their commitment to continue supporting all international and regional efforts to combat terrorist organizations and address all activities that threaten security and stability. They also emphasized that tolerance and coexistence among nations and peoples are among the most important principles and values upon which relations between states and societies are based.

20. The leaders stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation between the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and its institutions and bodies. They noted that many parts of the Islamic world are facing increasing food insecurity, primarily due to the challenging geopolitical and geo-economic situation as well as climate change. In this context, the leaders emphasized the necessity of cooperation and support for the efforts of the Islamic Organization for Food Security and utilizing its capacities to ensure the delivery of food supplies to needy countries

The leaders thanked the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting this historic summit, adding that they were looking forward to holding the next summit between the GCC and the countries of Central Asia in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in 2025.

Issued in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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