

CICA AND ASIAN COOPERATION ORGANIZATIONS (SCO, ASEAN, OIC): COOPERATION POTENTIAL AND PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT

The article contains an overview of the activities of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), a structure aimed at creating a comprehensive mechanism for developing and reconciling the positions of Asian countries on key security issues. The CICA is a forum that many regional states have joined as permanent participants. Eight countries and five international organizations, including the U.N., currently have an observer status at the CICA, which cooperates with existing regional organizations such as SCO, ASEAN, and OIC in a number of specific areas. The current concept of

CICA's work is aligned with five main spheres: military and political collaboration; the fight against new challenges and threats, including terrorism; drug trafficking; transnational crime and human trafficking; as well as the economic, environmental and human dimensions.

Cooperation with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, whose members (including the observer countries) are all also members of the Conference, will be of great importance for the further development of CICA. The presence of both resource-producing countries and large oil and gas importers in the organization creates the pre-

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conditions for the formation of an energy block within its framework, which will increase the energy security of its member states. The authors note that the interaction between ASEAN and the CICA can be based on five points required for building a “community of common destiny,” which were set forth by President of the People’s Republic of China Xi Jinping in Jakarta:

- (1) adhere to the principle of trust and strive for good neighborliness;
- (2) adhere to the principle of cooperation and mutual benefit;
- (3) constantly provide mutual assistance;
- (4) adhere to the principle of “living in perfect harmony”;

(5) adhere to the principle of openness and tolerance.

The authors note that the problem of Afghanistan can become a point of contact and development of joint approaches and strategies of the CICA and the OIC in the context of international and regional security. The author concludes that the transformation of the CICA into the Organization for Security and Development of Asia, proposed by Kazakhstan, would mean an expansion of the conference format and a turn towards solving new problems. In addition, the urgent task of the CICA at present is the transition to qualitatively new levels of cooperation—preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention.

KEYWORDS: CICA, SCO, Belt and Road Initiative, security, Kazakhstan, ASEAN, OIC, cooperation.

Introduction

Kazakhstan’s initiative to convene the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA, Conference) is almost thirty years old. It was first proposed at the 47th session of the U.N. General Assembly on 5 October, 1992. The global geopolitical situation and military strategic security in Asia have since transformed several times. At present, the current chairmanship of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the CICA coincided with a new geopolitical reformatting of the global system.¹

The key processes in Asia (and more broadly in Eurasia) are the mounting confrontation between the United States and China, and the prospects for the implementation of China’s ambitious geopolitical and geo-economic Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Over the past period, the situation has significantly changed in such challenging regions as the Near and Middle East, South Asia, Asia-Pacific, Southeast and Northeast Asia; and in such problematic areas as the Arab-Israeli conflict, ISIS, Syria, the Iranian nuclear program, Afghanistan, and the Indo-Pakistani confrontation. The military policy and strategy in the security sphere of many Asian and Eurasian states, i.e., Japan, China, India, Russia, Turkey, etc., has undergone a transformation.

The role and place of the CICA are radically changing under these contradictory conditions. Kazakhstan must once again assume the responsibility for the evolution of this organization, strengthening cooperation and confidence-building measures. The current circumstances require a revision of the CICA agenda and a search for new security tools.

¹ See: G. Dubovtsev, “Osnovnye tendentsii i perspektivy razvitiia SVMDA,” *Kazakhstan-Spektr* (KISI), No. 3, 2019, pp. 29-43.

The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan had outlined the need for systemic and comprehensive approaches to solving key Asian security issues and presented Kazakhstan's vision of this issue as follows: "We are calling on all friends and partners to unite their efforts to improve the forum's efficiency and international competitiveness. For this purpose, its step-by-step, gradual transformation into a full-fledged regional organization is required. All the necessary conditions have been created for the institutional formation of the CICA, the legal framework has been developed, and its permanent structures are operational."²

Two new factors influence and dominate the global (including Asian and Eurasian) security systems.

- The first factor is the COVID-19 pandemic that broke out in 2020. The epidemiological crisis, which has seized the whole world, and simultaneously affected the health sector, the global economy and the regional security system (including NATO, SCO, OSCE and CICA) is truly unprecedented. The global pandemic caused by the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus acted as a marker of the ongoing changes and, at the same time, as their catalyst. If the countries of the world had not reached such a high level of interdependence and globalization, the epidemic would not have spread to the whole world. In fact, geopolitical changes will be a direct result of the pandemic, or will be related to an attempt to address the economic and social weaknesses revealed by the disaster.
- The second factor is the sharp aggravation and confrontation in the cyber security sphere.

These factors encourage relevant political actors to pay attention and build a CICA strategy with regard to these new threats.

CICA and SCO

The development and evolution of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, whose members (including the observer countries) are all members of the Conference, will be of great importance for CICA's fate.

Some experts believe that the SCO will hardly be able to take on a mediating function, since Russia enjoys much greater confidence of the parties involved in the regional border disputes (in particular, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan): for Russia, border instability is a strong destabilizing factor that constantly aggravates the relations between the Central Asian states.

In addition to border disputes, the SCO's activities are aimed at fostering interaction in other security areas. A number of documents adopted by the SCO are aimed at solving these problems. Among them is the Convention of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on Counteracting Extremism signed on 9 July, 2017 in Astana (now Nur-Sultan); Action Plan for 2018-2022 on the Implementation of the Provisions of the Treaty on Long-term Good-Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation of the SCO Member States, adopted on 10 June, 2018 in Qingdao, China, following the meeting of the heads of the SCO member states; and the Program of Cooperation of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Countering Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism for 2019-2021 and the Anti-Drug Strategy of the SCO Member States for 2018-2023, approved there at the same time.

Notably, judging just by its official documents (SCO Charter, SCO Development Strategy until 2025, etc.), the SCO avoids being considered a military political organization. There is also resistance

² [<https://www.nur.kz/politics/universe/1799778-tokavev-prinal-ucastie-v-v-sammite-svmda/>].

(mainly from China) to the transformation of the SCO into an association with an integrative function that creates supranational governing bodies. As a result, the SCO only declaratively reacts to numerous problems that emerge in the process of ensuring regional security. Preference is often given to solving these problems through bilateral interstate contacts, rather than within the framework of the SCO or its structures.

According to experts, the realities of the modern global order are pushing for a military modernization of the SCO and a reinforcement of its military-political component. In particular, this refers to the conclusion of agreements on mutual assistance and the formation of the SCO peacekeeping forces with the inclusion of Russian and Chinese contingents. Experts propose to establish a permanent SCO coordination committee for security cooperation purposes. At the same time, it is vital to note the ambiguity of the positions of the SCO member states on the issue of cooperation in the security sphere.

Following the admission of India and Pakistan as full SCO members in 2017 allows to proclaim the “qualitative and quantitative strengthening of the SCO in the Eurasian space.” Its renewed political and economic core has emerged in the form of the big three: Russia-India-China. However, only time will reveal the capabilities of this core, provided the burden of unresolved problems in Sino-Indian relations.

Afghanistan remains an important factor that destabilizes the regional security system in the zone of SCO and CICA’s responsibility. Adhering to its established strategy in the Central Asian region, China is focusing on economic forms of pacifying Afghanistan by “extending the Sino-Pakistani economic corridor towards Afghanistan.” Essentially, this means the involvement of Afghanistan in the Chinese Belt and Road project and China becoming the main investor in the Afghan economy.

If Beijing’s plans to create new transport infrastructure are implemented in Afghanistan, there will be an alternative to the northern routes through Russia, and a Chinese-controlled passage to the south (the Indian Ocean) will open up for the Central Asian countries. Thus, the game between the leading regional and non-regional players on the Afghan field is not over just yet.

One of the problematic issues complicating the progress in regional integration is the permanent deficit of the authority of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Thus, the SCO turned out to be powerless in the face of yet another acute complication of Indian-Pakistani relations in early 2019. The reason for this is the absence of both appropriate structures capable of neutralizing internal organizational frictions and procedures for settling internal disputes within the SCO.

As a result, another crisis in relations between India and Pakistan was overcome through parallel bilateral contacts without direct participation of the SCO. Armed clashes around the Tajik-Kyrgyz border in the Ferghana Valley in April 2021 have once again actualized the issue of the effectiveness of the SCO’s mediation function in resolving conflict situations. However, the Organization’s disengagement from direct interference in interstate disputes or internal political conflicts may have a completely rational motivation, namely, an unwillingness to undermine the basic structure of the SCO by adopting recommendations or binding solutions that may cause dissatisfaction of the parties involved in conflict situations.

Economic cooperation between the SCO member states is typically carried out on a bilateral basis, which erodes the principle of collectivity in the economic sphere of its operation. The Central Asian states are competing for access to China’s financial and technological resources. Differences are noted between the approaches of China, Russia and the Central Asian states to the creation of free trade zones (FTZ). The idea of establishing FTZs, actively promoted by China, provokes a wary reaction from other SCO members, who fear China’s dominance in the commodity competition.

The presence of both resource-producing countries and major oil and gas importers in the Organization creates the preconditions for the formation of a self-sufficient energy block within its framework, which will dramatically increase the energy security of its member states.

The problem of drug trafficking is especially urgent for the Asian members of the SCO. Taking into account the emergence of maritime drug transportation routes from the Golden Triangle countries (Thailand, Myanmar, Laos) in addition to land routes, as well as the fact that it undermines the security of India and China, the SCO believes that the intensified cooperation with ASEAN in the fight against the drug threat has significant potential.

The SCO's practical experience in the field of countering terrorism, Islamist extremism and drug trafficking must be acknowledged as particularly successful. SCO member countries proceed from the fact that it is difficult to fight terrorism, which is an international phenomenon, alone. The coronavirus pandemic, which has affected the SCO countries and has posed the organization's members with the task of adapting to new realities, will force them to develop a collective response to biological security challenges more actively.

Thus, the following may become the points of contact between the CICA and the SCO and their exchange of experience in terms of achievements and shortcomings:

All countries are chiefly concerned with using the opportunities offered by the SCO to develop national economies, introduce innovations and technologies in production, and attract investments in projects carried out in these countries. China, India and Pakistan seek to gain access to oil and gas resources and raw materials and to create efficient channels for their delivery, while Russia and Kazakhstan are concerned with formation of new markets for their oil and gas. This stimulates the participation of the SCO countries in oil and gas production and transportation projects.

There is a mutual interest in the creation of international transport corridors to reduce the cost and shorten cargo delivery time. The digitalization of the SCO member countries' economies determines the directions of their cooperation in high-tech industries. Another common task for all SCO countries is to ensure food security. The development of economic cooperation within the SCO is greatly influenced by the international environment. Fears of the Chinese economic expansion are growing in Central Asian countries.

The SCO has an extensive representation; therefore, it should contribute to peace, stability, development and prosperity in Eurasia in accordance with its status. Security cooperation problems within the SCO framework arise because the Organization is willing to sacrifice efficiency for the sake of its core consensus principles. The SCO attaches great importance to maintaining state sovereignty.

In 2020, the world has entered a new era. The global COVID-19 pandemic has not only provoked a major global crisis in health care systems and economies, it has also led to the expectations of a new rise in terrorism and extremism, thus, critical new security challenges may arise for the SCO members. The deterioration of the situation in Eurasian hotspots, such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, will greatly affect the security environment for the SCO countries and the CICA. Against this background, cooperation in the security sphere between the countries on the SCO and CICA platforms is extremely relevant and necessary.³

³ Concerning the SCO issues, see: D. Bayshulakova, G. Dubovtsev, "SCO Activities at the Present Stage and the Interests of the Central Asian Countries," *Central Asia and the Caucasus. English Edition*, Vol. 21, Issue 3, 2020, pp. 7-14; D. Malyshova, "Shankhaiskaia organizatsiia sotrudnichestva i problemy bezopasnosti v Azii," *Rossia i novye gosudarstva Evrazii* (MEMO), No. IV (XLIX), 2020, pp. 25-36; A. Muratbekova, "Krizis identichnosti Shankhaiskoi organizatsii sotrudnichestva: chto budet dalshe?" *Vestnik mezhdunarodnykh organizatsiy: obrazovanie, nauka, novaia ekonomika* (NIU VSHE), No. 4, 2019, pp. 138-160; N. Rakhmatulla, "Rol ShOS v sovremennykh mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniakh: vzgliad iz Uzbekistana," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn* (MID RF), No. 4, 2021, pp. 52-57; *Perspektivy mnogostoronnego sotrudnichestva ShOS s mezhdunarodnymi strukturami v interesakh razvitiia strategii Organizatsii*, ed. and comp. by Yu.V. Morozov, IDV RAN, Moscow, 2019, 344 pp.; L.S. Revenko, N.S. Revenko, "Potentsial i predposylki ekonomicheskogo sotrudnichestva stran Shankhaiskoi organizatsii sotrudnichestva," *Azia i Afrika segodnia* (IV-IAf RAN), No. 1, 2021, pp. 15-22; F. Suesong, "Sushchestvuiushchie mekhanizmy Shankhaiskoi organizatsii sotrudnichestva i ikh problemy dlia borby s netraditsionnymi vyzovami bezopasnosti," *Vestnik mezhdunarodnykh organizatsiy: obrazovanie, nauka, novaia ekonomika* (NIU VSHE), Vol. 17, No. 1, 2021; *ShOS v sisteme bezopasnosti v Evrazii: problemy mnogostoronnego vzaimodeistviia*, ed. and comp. by L.Ye. Vasiliev, IDV RAN,

CICA and ASEAN

ASEAN is a Eurasian platform for fostering dialog and implementing multilateral economic projects. The association's principle of separating the economic from the political is attractive to CICA as well. In this context, the experience of the association, albeit not entirely successful, plays a vital role in regulating trade exchanges, in particular, reducing tariff barriers and eliminating non-tariff restrictions, developing e-commerce, and establishing economic growth zones through public-private partnerships.

In recent years, it has become obvious that the center of global confrontation is moving to the Asia-Pacific region. At the core of this confrontation is the American-Chinese rivalry, which draws Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, the Philippines, Vietnam, the countries of Southeast Asia and ASEAN, and India into the conflict. Along with the practically open trade and economic war, which the United States had unleashed against the PRC, elements of a naval confrontation (deployment of a submarine fleet, etc.) are also present. The "pivot towards Asia" declared during Barack Obama's second term was replaced by the Trump administration's rhetoric on the importance of a "free and open" Indo-Pacific region (IPR).

China's geopolitical assessment of the Indo-Pacific region is based on its increasingly important geostrategic position. There are serious doubts in regard to the ability of the United States to maintain its leadership in the Asia-Pacific region. The American side vigorously promotes the concept of the Indo-Pacific zone and relies on the traditional strategic planning principles, which are centered on flexible deployment of forces and assets. Such a large-scale escalation is primarily intended to restrain China's aspirations.

At the initial stage of its formation and development, the CICA initiative relied on economic integration as the main tool for establishing stability, security and interaction. At the same time, the negative experience of the OSCE/CSCE in this sphere was barely taken into account. Asia (APR, SEA, ASEAN) is the only region that has recorded an increase in FDI inflow in recent years.

~~— Since the acceleration of Eurasian integration and the registration of the EAEU, the idea of cooperation between the Eurasian formats (EAEU, SCO, CICA, and CSTO) with ASEAN has been put forward more than once. China's launch of the Belt and Road Initiative has opened up new and, most likely, the only opportunities for interaction with ASEAN since it contains the required component, namely, sea communications. In recent years, 136 states and 30 international organizations have joined the initiative. China was able to fill cooperation programs within the framework of certain international formats, such as BRICS, SCO, and CICA, with specific content.~~

Despite the fact that the content of the Chinese initiative offers nothing fundamentally new, it is perceived as a real alternative to the Western world order, which undoubtedly enhances China's status in the eyes of the developing world. The concept of strategic stability and security is an important factor in the context of Belt and Road. The initiative potentially answers a number of serious challenges. The Belt and Road Initiative is based on economic corridors that include oil and gas pipelines, port infrastructure, air, road and rail routes, transport and logistics schemes, warehouse complexes, joint value chains with other countries, etc. Partnerships with neighboring countries are required to implement such projects.

As part of the implementation of this part of its global comprehensive initiative, China pursues both trade and economic goals, as well as those in the field of security (combatting unconventional threats, developing the potential of the PRC's naval forces, projection of power). At the same time,

Moscow, 2020, 240 pp.; B. Khakimov, "ShOS i problemy evraziiskoi bezopasnosti," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn* (MID RF), No. 2, 2021, pp. 144-145; W. Song, *China's Approach to Central Asia. The Shanghai Co-operation Organisation*, Routledge, London, 2018, 172 pp.

the Chinese intellectual elite is notably more focused on issues like joint economic cooperation and prosperity, while foreign authors pay greater attention to the study of the geopolitical and military-political dimensions of the Chinese Maritime Silk Road (MSR) strategy.

If the initiative for a comprehensive Indo-Pacific security system is launched, it is likely to include the key provisions of the PRC's two main foreign policy documents—the Concept of Maritime Cooperation within the Framework of the Belt and Road Initiative and China's Policy on Cooperation in the Field of Security of the Asia-Pacific Region. Among other things, this will mean new cooperation opportunities for the SCO, ASEAN and the CICA.

Realizing its inability to ignore the development of the IPR project, ASEAN cannot help but consider developing an effective approach to it, or, ideally, repeating its own “success story” in building multilateral dialog mechanisms in regard to security issues. The Organization's experts believe that the IPR can aggravate the problem of the South China Sea, which is located at the epicenter of the future ‘Indo-Pacific,’ and is the arena of geopolitical clashes between China and the United States.

There are three institutions in an ASEAN-centric cooperative security system—the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting+ 8 (ADMM+); and the East Asia Summit (EAS).

The basic principle of ASEAN—the markedly neutral nature of cooperation and the strengthening of trust between its participants—cannot be applied to the Indo-Pacific region. That is, the fundamental principle of the CICA will not be able to function.

It is crucial to determine the place of ASEAN in Eurasian cooperation—if only due to the fact that the Belt and Road economic corridors will pass through Eurasia, and SEA will not remain outside the framework of the Chinese project due to its geographical location and the impossibility of replacing sea transportation with land transportation. From this point of view, the interest of ASEAN experts in cooperation with Eurasian dialog formats and initiatives, including the CICA, seems feasible.

The main question in the analysis of potential ASEAN-CICA connection is the following: how to adapt the ARF, ASEAN DMM+ 8 and EAS to the China-centered Eurasian security system, which will be based on the Belt and Road Initiative. An assumption can be made that ASEAN will position these dialog platforms as ready-made cooperation infrastructure that can be used to reduce the severity of the international terrorism threat, especially given the growing infiltration of the China's XUAR, Central Asia and Afghanistan by ISIS militants.

The interaction between ASEAN and the CICA may be based on five points required for building a “community of common destiny” set forth by President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping in Jakarta:

- (1) adhere to the principle of trust and strive for good neighborliness;
- (2) adhere to the principle of cooperation and mutual benefit;
- (3) constantly provide mutual assistance;
- (4) adhere to the principle of “living in perfect harmony”;
- (5) adhere to the principle of openness and tolerance.

Another point of possible conjugation of interests of the CICA and ASEAN is associated with maintaining a system of U.S.-centered security alliances that excluded such major players as China and Russia, which gives rise to obvious problems. In these conditions, the ASEAN countries set their sights on the formation of new institutions oriented to a greater extent on the practical cooperation in the security sphere. This idea found its reflection in the created mechanism—ADMM+. Establishing contacts between the CICA and ASEAN along these lines with the involvement of the SCO and the CSTO as dialog partners may be feasible.

As of 2020, the following specialized expert working groups were operating in ADMM+: humanitarian assistance and emergency response, maritime security, military medicine, combating terrorism, peacekeeping and humanitarian mine removal. It is also worth noting that the areas of cooperation within the framework of the ADMM+ are expanding significantly. Joint exercises are regularly held under its auspices.

Thus, the potential structure of ASEAN-CICA will require deeper, integration-oriented cooperation for the coupling of the EAEU development strategy and the PRC's Belt and Road Initiative. Partnership with the EAEU opens up the opportunities for ASEAN to penetrate deeper into the relatively closed and inaccessible continental region. For the countries of the Eurasian integration association, preferential ties with ASEAN are useful from the viewpoint of overcoming the restrictions caused by the absence of a protracted and convenient access to the sea.

ASEAN representatives have not been involved in a number of forums: Far Eastern Investment Congress in Vladivostok, Astana Economic Forum, Eurasian Week International Business Forum, and CICA. These events and institutions, no doubt important and timely, should be accompanied by the development of grassroots cooperation between the EAEU, CICA and ASEAN, that is, between enterprises, retail chains, online platforms, entrepreneurs, etc.

ASEAN is an attractive partner for CICA to establish meaningful and institutional interaction with an efficient multilateral dialog platform. The current obstacles to cooperation between the CICA and ASEAN are of a systemic nature. Overcoming them will require a lot of resources, the main of which is time.⁴

CICA and OIC

The OIC is currently undergoing a period of modernization. Security concerns affect few of the Organization's structures. These are the Jerusalem Foundation, the Jerusalem Committee and the ~~Committee of Islamic Solidarity with the Peoples of the Sahel zone.~~

In accordance with the OIC Charter, priority areas of the program include peace and security issues; the fight against terrorism and poverty. Significant attention is also paid to food security, investment and finance, climate change, achieving interfaith peace, and human rights.

With regard to ensuring peace and strengthening security, the OIC currently operates in several spheres: resolution of the Middle Eastern crisis, struggle against international terrorism, examination of the situation in Kashmir (the Indo-Pakistani conflict) and provision of assistance and support to specific countries, including Afghanistan. This, along with the Middle East, is the sphere of CICA's responsibility.

Modern terrorist organizations operating in the Near and Middle East are no longer small poorly armed groups with very limited resources who are obsessed with a certain idea. They are well-organized structures with ramified international ties, multimillion-dollar income, internal division of spheres of activity, specializations, their own recruitment system, training camps, warehouses, work-

⁴ Concerning the ASEAN issues, see: V.V. Vershina, "Predsedatelstvo Vietnamu v ASEAN v 2010 i 2020 gg.: itogi i perspektivy," *Azija i Afrika segodnia* (IV-IAf RAN), No. 4, 2021, pp. 48-53; Idem, "Soveshchanie ministrov obrony stranchlenov ASEAN i dialogovykh partnerov (SMOA+) kak novy element formiruiushcheisia arkhitektury bezopasnosti v YUVA," *Yugo-Vostochnaia Azia: aktualnye problemy razvitiia* (IV RAN), Vol. III, No. 4 (49), 2020, pp. 34-46; E.A. Kanayev, A.S. Korolev, "Bolshaia Evrazia, Indo-Tikhookeanskiy region i otnosheniia Rossii s ASEAN," *Kontury globalnykh transformatsiy: politika, ekonomika, pravo* (TSIKO, Moscow), No. 1, 2019, pp. 26-43; E. Kanayev, A. Korolev, "EAES i ASEAN: rezultaty i perspektivy sotrudnichestva," *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia* (MEMO RAN, Moscow), No. 1, 2020, pp. 64-72; G.M. Lokshin, E.V. Kobelev, V.M. Mazyrin, *Soobshchestvo ASEAN v sovremennom mire: ID «FORUM»*, Moscow, 2019, 296 pp.

shops, hospitals, laboratories for the manufacture of weapons, explosives and explosive devices, chemical weapons, poisons, means of communication and transportation, etc.

Terrorist organizations are constantly looking for new forms, means and methods of action, which allows them to deliver large-scale resonant strikes. They learn from each other, adopt others' experience and try not to repeat the mistakes of their predecessors. The functionaries of international terrorist structures have learned to manage the links of their terrorist networks quite effectively, despite their remoteness from the Middle East, using modern means of communication: from messenger agents to satellite communication systems and the Internet.

The issue of the homecoming of fighters from abroad is both a threat in the short term and a long-term challenge. It is unlikely that the conflicts in Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan will be resolved in the near future. There is a danger that extremist structures will survive and adapt to new conditions by switching to more sophisticated methods of terrorist activity, including the use of weapons of mass destruction and bacteriological weapons in cities.

The main source of terrorist threats for the PRC is separatism in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), which, in the words of the country's leadership, is the main battleground in China's fight against terrorism.

OIC believed that the list of terrorist organizations could not be limited to ISIS, Al-Qa'eda and Boko Haram. This list should also include extremist groups that preach hatred against religious minorities in all countries of the world.

Over the past few years, there has been an increased focus of the OIC on the Afghan issue. Afghan issues were on the agenda of most summits and sessions of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM). The Afghan arena has been the intersection of the interests of numerous actors, i.e., Russia, Central Asian states, China, India, Pakistan, Iran, the United States and the EU countries. It can be assumed that after the Taliban came to power, the role of the potential importance of the OIC will only increase. The Afghan problem in the context of international and regional security can become a point of contact and development of joint approaches and strategies of the CICA and the OIC.⁵

Conclusion

The possibility of CICA's practical combination with other major geopolitical and geo-economic projects—BRI, SCO, ASEAN, OIC, Greater Eurasia and the EAEU is of decisive importance for its fate.

The CICA's goal is greater security and predictability in Asia and the world as a whole. Despite the above-mentioned problems, CICA has significant potential for strengthening interstate relations and cooperation in order to ensure stability and security in the region. CICA is a political platform founded on the principle of consensus. All of its members are equal to each other and bear obligations in accordance with the Almaty Act of 2002, the Declaration of Principles Governing Relations in the CICA, and other documents. The tactics of moving forward—from the simple to the complex—ensures the success of the CICA processes.

⁵ See: *Nestabilnost geostrategicheskogo prostranstva v stranakh Blizhnego, Srednego i Dalnego Vostoka: aktualnye problemy. Yezhegodnik 2019*, ed. by M.I. Krupyanko, IV RAN, Moscow, 2019, 284 pp.; *Nestabilnost geostrategicheskogo prostranstva v stranakh Blizhnego, Srednego i Dalnego Vostoka: aktualnye problemy. Yezhegodnik 2020*, ed. by M.I. Krupyanko, IV RAN, Moscow, 2020, 340 pp.; *Strany Vostoka v XXI veke: neravnomernost ekonomicheskogo rosta i neravenstvo sotsialno-ekonomicheskogo razvitiia. Tezisy konferentsii, posviashchennoy pamiati V.G. Rastiannikova*, ed. by I.V. Deriugina, 2020, 144 pp.; *Ekonomicheskie, sotsialno-politicheskie i etnokontsionalnye problemy afro-aziatskikh stran. Materialy konferentsii 16,18 marta 2020 g.*, ed. by O.P. Bibikova, N.N. Tsvetkova, IV RAN, Moscow, 2020, 148 pp.; *Ekonomicheskie, sotsialno-politicheskie i etnokontsionalnye problemy afro-aziatskikh stran. Yezhegodnik 2020* (Issue 3), IV RAN, Moscow, 2020, 436 pp.

The principle of cooperative security that forms the basis of the forum's ideology, contributes to the successful development of CICA. In contrast to the collective security concepts with a tough bloc approach, cooperative security implies the interest of the parties in the CICA process with the aim of maintaining peace and stability, resolving the existing differences and preventing possible conflict situations in the region, rather than protecting themselves against a third country. CICA has an observer status at the U.N. General Assembly and cooperates with specialized U.N. agencies in a number of specific areas.

Delegations from 40 countries and international organizations took part in the CICA summit held in May 2014 in Shanghai, which became the largest of all preceding meetings. At this meeting, President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping stated that the CICA "should become a platform for discussing security and cooperation throughout Asia, so that a new architecture of regional security and cooperation can be built on this foundation." He also noted that Asian peoples should "act and resolve all problems independently" that arise in Asia, and maintain security in the region.⁶

Since its inception, the CICA has barely manifested itself as an interstate collective structure that facilitates negotiations and the settlement of various conflicts between its participants. Regionalism and remoteness of different states from each other are not conducive to the development of CICA, which has yet to become a pan-Asian forum.

This leads to the following conclusions:

- CICA is a unique and novel model of a multilateral security forum (in Asia).
- A new concept of Asian security has to be developed on the basis of this model.
- The successful development of the CICA should be based on close cooperation between the RF, China, Central Asian states, ASEAN, OIC and SCO.
- The CICA needs to cooperate with ASEAN and the OIC, as well as with the OSCE and NATO in order to develop.
- The transformation of the CICA into the Organization for Security and Development of Asia, proposed by Kazakhstan, means an expansion of the conference format and a turn towards solving new problems. For this purpose, cooperation needs to be expanded in all five dimensions, similarly to the OSCE; however, first and foremost, activities in the military/political sphere need to be intensified. The most urgent current task of the CICA is the transition to qualitatively new levels of cooperation, such as preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention.

The following assumptions can be made regarding the largest Asian organizations and the possibility of their integration with the CICA:

- the most important and, apparently, the only instrument for transforming the CICA into a pan-Asian association is the SCO. This automatically means attracting and using the BRI and the geo-economic potential of the PRC;
- ASEAN is in a transitional phase of its development and is objectively interested in projecting its interests in Eurasia. CICA, inclusion in the Belt and Road Initiative, intensification of relations with the EAEU may provide such opportunities for the association;
- The opportunities offered by the CICA in relations with the Islamic world through the OIC are reduced exclusively to security problems. That is, the CICA could establish contacts with the eastern segment of the OIC, which includes a number of states of the Middle and Near East, i.e., Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Iraq, Syria, etc.

⁶ See: "Bezopasnost stala tsentralnoy temoi sammita SVMDA," available at [<https://news.21.by/world/2014/05/21/930381.html>].

For this reason, experts are proposing, as before, the following mechanism for strengthening the CICA institutions:

1. Increase the level of participation in the conference by holding summits and meetings of ministers of the participating states.
2. Develop cooperation on a variety of issues at the non-state level within the CICA framework.

As far as combating new challenges and threats is concerned, the CICA must prompt all of its member states to make political commitments and develop specific mechanisms for joint struggle against terrorist and extremist activities, organized crime, drug trafficking, illegal migration, etc.

3. Increase and reinforce the openness of the meeting by stepping up the activities of the observer countries, as well as more active involvement of other international organizations and close cooperation within the U.N., OSCE and SCO.
4. Create monitoring institutions in various spheres, i.e., on environmental problems, desertification, operations of anti-terrorist centers, fight against drugs, etc.
5. It is vital for the CICA not only to intensify diplomatic efforts, but also to possess effective levers of collective influence on the conflicting parties and countries that are responsible for destabilizing the situation in the region.

In addition, it is necessary to create bodies within the organization that specialize in resolving crisis situations and conflicts. The ongoing confrontation, armed conflicts and crises in various Asian regions demonstrate that the reaction and approaches to solving the key issues of Asian security must be systemic and complex.

6. As the initiator, Kazakhstan should intensify the discussion of this issue among the CICA participants. This task should become one of the priorities in Kazakhstani foreign policy. Consistent advancement of the Kazakhstani initiative to transform the CICA is important in ensuring peace and security throughout the Eurasian space. Its implementation can initially contribute to the synchronization of the security maintenance processes in Asia and Europe, and subsequently to the creation of a unified Eurasian security system. Promoting this Kazakhstani initiative not only in the CICA, but also in various U.N., OSCE and SCO structures and institutions in order to involve them in the discussion of this issue is therefore an urgent task.
7. The highly dynamic and unstable geopolitical situation in Asia requires Kazakhstan to work on multiple levels with its partners within the CICA, other international organizations and regional associations for the sake of forming a common Eurasian security system.

Only the creation of effective mechanisms for early warning and crisis prevention, settlement of ongoing conflicts, as well as a prompt response to modern security challenges and threats will ensure the transformation of the CICA into a full-fledged international organization for security and development in Asia.

8. Asia and the world as a whole do not need a new leader, rather, they require new non-aligned international cooperation architecture, which would be based on the principles of openness, equal and indivisible security. The CICA may well claim the role of such an organization.

From a geographical and geopolitical point of view, Central Asia occupies a crucial position in the implementation of almost all major continental projects of a strategic, transport and economic nature. That is, the subsequent fate of the CICA will depend on the will, efforts and influence of ma-

major and medium-sized players and international organizations—Russia, China, India, Iran, Turkey, Kazakhstan, etc.

In general, multilateral formats are slated to give way to bilateral arrangements. Along with the already growing trend in bilateral cooperation, Russia will continue to implement integration projects (EAEU). Maintaining the security of Central Asia and the Republic of Kazakhstan through the CSTO and SCO, and, if possible, the CICA will remain strategically important for the Russian Federation and the regional countries.

All these factors will inevitably influence the dynamics and prospects of the CICA development to one degree or another. Thus, the organization is passing a new development stage under unfavorable conditions. This becomes evident following an analysis of the instability and turbulent development of the current geopolitical situation.