

Declaration of the Special Conference on Afghanistan Convened under the Auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Moscow Declaration

Moscow, 27 March 2009

The participants in the Conference welcomed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) initiative to organize this forum, expressed their satisfaction with results and noted that the outcome was in line with the efforts of the international community, namely the United Nations, North-Atlantic Treaty Organization, European Union, Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Collective Security Treaty Organization, Organization of Islamic Conference and Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, other international and regional organizations and individual states to counteract threats of terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crimes. The participants also

Recognized the interconnected nature of the challenges in Afghanistan and the region and underscored the importance of sustained international efforts to achieve a stable, peaceful, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan and stressed that such assistance should be comprehensive under the leadership of Afghanistan and the central role of the UN in coordinating international assistance and based on strict adherence of the UN Charter;

Emphasized the need for sustained international support to strengthen Afghan security institutions to effectively combat the scourge of terrorism and production and trafficking of narcotics;

Acknowledged the important role of the International Security Assistance Force and coalition forces to help the Government of Afghanistan provide security to Afghanistan and, in that regard, welcomed the measures adopted by international forces, in consultation with the Government of Afghanistan to ensure closer coordination of operations with Afghan authorities, which inter alia is of special significance for increasing effectiveness of counteracting illegal production and drug trafficking;

Acknowledged the progress of the Afghan Government in reducing the cultivation of poppy, despite limited resources at its disposal, and stressed the need for enhanced regional and international efforts to combat narcotics effectively and resolutely, including provision of alternative means of livelihood for farmers through development of regional markets and transit arrangements, international support for law enforcement and criminal justice agencies of Afghanistan, elimination of drug-laboratories, strengthening anti-narcotics control to curb the flow of precursors and reducing demand and consumption;

Stressed the importance of concerted and combined efforts in the region to counter terrorism, illicit narcotics and organized crime, in particular coordination and cooperation of Afghanistan and its neighbours.

Were encouraged by growing dialogue between the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan aimed at strengthening of mutual trust, as well as by the Joint Declaration on Directions of Bilateral Cooperation, signed on January 6, 2009 in Kabul, and at finding effective means to combat the menace of terrorism, including denying sanctuaries and dismantling the extremist and terrorist network and ideological centers;

Expressed conviction that the successful combat against terrorism, production and trafficking of narcotics and organized crime in Afghanistan and the region requires a due combination of enforcement and administrative methods, accompanied by targeted social and economic programs;

Underlined the need for sustained joint efforts to train Afghan experts in the field of countering drug trafficking, customs service and police;

Called for a full operationalization of the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) as an important tool in combating illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors;

Welcomed the initiative of G8 to facilitate development projects aimed at social and economic development in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the context of cooperation with all neighboring States, as well as the enhancement of counter-narcotics' regional dimension by reaching out, at the next G8 meeting on June 26 and 27, 2009 in Trieste, to the interested Countries and relevant Organizations; and in the same vein, commended the Ankara Trilateral Summit Process;

Supported transregional projects, aimed at comprehensive regional development, in particular construction of a united infrastructure network and energy corridor, transportation and transit, with consideration of activities of relevant regional organizations.

Noted that the SCO was one of the appropriate fora for a wide dialogue with participation of partners on the Afghanistan-related issues in the context of joint efforts of the international community and Afghanistan and for practical interaction between Afghanistan and its neighboring states in combating terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime;

Supported the need for close cooperation and coordination among international and regional organizations under UN coordination, in particular through United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, in joint response to those threats and challenges, and in this regard welcomed adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1868 on March 23, 2009;

Considered the view contained in the Statement and Plan of Action of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on combating terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and organized crime and expressed the intent to explore the possibility of aiding their implementation.

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (Official Website)