

JOINT STATEMENT
of the 6th Meeting of Ministers of Justice
of Member States
of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

On 24 August 2018, the city of Cholpon-Ata was the venue of the 6th Meeting of Ministers of Justice of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (hereinafter the Meeting).

The Meeting was attended by Law Secretary of the Ministry of Law and Justice of the Republic of India Sri Suresh Chandra, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan Marat Beketayev, Party Committee Secretary and Deputy Minister of Justice of the People's Republic of China Yuan Shuhong, Acting Minister of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic Maksatbek Yesenaliyev, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Republic of Kazakhstan Imtiaz Ahmad Kazi, Minister of Justice of the Russian Federation Alexander Konovalov, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan Rustam Shokhmurod, and Minister of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan Ruslanbek Davletov.

The meeting was chaired by Acting Minister of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic Maksatbek Yesenaliyev.

The Meeting involved the following representatives of the observer states: Minister of Justice of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Abdul Basir Anwar, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Belarus Oleg Slizhevsky, Minister of Justice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyyed Alireza Avayi, and Minister of Justice and Home Affairs of the State of Mongolia Nyamdorj Tsend.

The Meeting was also attended by SCO Deputy Secretary-General Nurlan Akkoshkarov.

The participants at the Meeting, which was as usual held in an open and friendly setting and in an atmosphere of mutual understanding, summed up the results of cooperation between ministries (of law) and justice to implement the agreements reached by the 5th Meeting of Ministers of (Law and) Justice of the SCO Member States.

Pursuant to the principles and provisions of the SCO Charter of 7 June 2002, the Treaty on Long-Term Good-Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation of the SCO Member States of 16 August 2007, and the SCO Development Strategy Towards 2025, the ministers of (law and) justice expressed support for the development and further improvement of interaction between the ministries of (law and) justice of the SCO member states.

They expressed confidence in the further successful development of cooperation and consolidation of partnership and an open dialogue existing between the ministries of (law and) justice.

The ministers of (law and) justice discussed matters related to rendering legal services to physical persons and/or legal entities and stressed that the ministries of (law and) justice of the SCO member states as before prioritised the development of information technology in the sphere of services.

The participants at the Meeting exchanged views on the role of the ministries of (law and) justice of the SCO member states in counteracting the spread of modern threats to international security. The ministers unanimously confirmed the importance and urgency of mutual cooperation and active involvement of the ministries of (law and) justice of the SCO member states in the world community's efforts to fight modern threats and challenges, given their transnational nature.

The ministers of (law and) justice emphasised that the establishment of the rule of law based on the principles of respect for as well as protection and provision of human rights in the spheres of a country's public, political and economic life was the main factor of stability as well as the successful development of the SCO member states.

Noting the importance of interagency cooperation, the ministers of (law and) justice approved the Plan of Events of the Working Expert Group for Judicial Expert Activity of the Conference of the SCO Ministers of Justice for 2018-2020 and the Plan of Events of the Working Expert Group for Legal Services of the Conference of the SCO Ministers of Justice for 2018-2020.

The ministers of (law and) justice noted with satisfaction the positive dynamism in the development of multilateral cooperation in the field of judicial expert activities and legal services and emphasised the need to prioritise programmes as well as projects of innovative cooperation that were of mutual interest, improve the contractual and legal infrastructure, and promote mutually beneficial dialogue in the area of scientific and technological innovations and achievements.

Stating mutual understanding reached in matters related to developing the legal systems of the SCO member states, considering agreements and tasks enshrined in the SCO Development Strategy Towards 2025, the ministers of (law and) justice of the SCO member states declare the following:

1. The development of cooperation between the ministries of (law and) justice of the SCO member states is in conformity with the goals and principles of the SCO Charter, the Treaty on Long-Term Good-Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation of the SCO Member States, and the SCO Development Strategy Towards 2025.

2. The interaction between the ministries of (law and) justice of the SCO member states facilitates preservation and expansion of mutual trust, good-neighbourliness and friendship between the SCO member states.
3. The ministers of (law and) justice regard as their priority the continuation of interaction in improving the mechanism for rendering legal services to physical persons and/or legal entities and in the key areas of judicial expert activities.
4. The ministers of (law and) justice stress the importance of counteracting the spread of modern threats to international security based on the generally accepted norms of international law and international treaties accepted by the SCO.
5. The ministers of (law and) justice note the importance of the establishment of working expert groups for judicial expert activities and for legal services of the Conference of SCO Justice Ministers and emphasise the need for active and purpose-oriented work to implement their Plans of Events for 2018-2020.
6. The ministers of (law and) justice took note of Russia's report regarding the draft SCO Convention on Legal Assistance and Legal Relations in Civil and Criminal Cases. To carry out the instruction of the SCO heads of state, as envisaged in the Qingdao Declaration, the parties will continue their effort to form the SCO contractual and legal infrastructure related to rendering legal assistance to citizens and legal entities in civil and criminal cases by signing a relevant SCO convention.
7. The ministers of (law and) justice will actively help to implement the present Joint Statement.

The ministers praised the efforts made by the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic to prepare and host the Meeting, and expressed gratitude for creating a favourable working environment and for their hospitality.

The next Meeting will be held in the Republic of India in 2019. The timeframes and the venue will be coordinated additionally via diplomatic channels.

The present Joint Statement was signed in the city of Cholpon-Ata on 24 August 2018 in one original copy in Russian and Chinese, with both texts having equal force.

The original of the present Joint Statement shall be deposited in the SCO Secretariat, which will send its authenticated copies to the SCO member states.

**For the Ministry of Law and Justice
of the Republic of India**

**For the Ministry of Justice
of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

**For the Ministry of Justice
of the People's Republic of China**

**For the Ministry of Justice
of the Kyrgyz Republic**

**For the Ministry of Law and Justice
of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**

**For the Ministry of Justice
of the Russian Federation**

**For the Ministry of Justice
of the Republic of Tajikistan**

**For the Ministry of Justice
of the Republic of Uzbekistan**