

JOINT STATEMENT
on the results of the Eighth Meeting of Justice Ministers of the member states
of Shanghai Cooperation Organization

On August 6, 2021 the Eighth Meeting of the Ministers of Justice of the SCO Member States (hereinafter referred to as the Meeting) was held via videoconference.

The Minister of Law and Justice of the Republic of India Kiren Rijju, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan M.B. Beketayev, Minister of Justice of the People's Republic of China Tan Yijun, Minister of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic A.R. Chinbaeva, Minister of Law and Justice of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Dr. Muhammad Farogh Naseem, Minister of Justice of the Russian Federation K.A. Chuichenko, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan M.K. Ashuriyon and Minister of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan R.K. Davletov.

The meeting was chaired by Minister of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan M.K. Ashuriyon.

The Deputy Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (hereinafter "SCO" or "Organisation"), E.S. Ashimov, also participated in the Meeting.

During the Meeting, which traditionally took place in an open friendly and mutually atmosphere of understanding, the participants, in accordance with the agreed Agenda, summed up the results of cooperation between the ministries (law and) justice to implement the agreements of the Seventh Meeting of the Member States of the Justice Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The ministers emphasized that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization celebrates its 20th anniversary as a significant international regional organization under the slogan "20 Years of SCO: Cooperation for Stability and Prosperity.

In this context, the Ministers highly appreciated the results of the Ministries' cooperation in the field of law and justice over the past historical time period. In particular, it was noted that the Agreement on Cooperation between the Ministries of Justice of the Member States of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, signed on 18 August 2015 in Dushanbe, and the establishment of expert working groups on forensic activities and legal services of the Meeting of Justice Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States are examples of achieving such cooperation.

In accordance with the principles and provisions of the SCO Charter of June 7, 2002 and the SCO Development Strategy till 2025, the ministers of (law and) justice expressed their support for development and further improvement of interaction

between the ministries of (law and) justice of the SCO member states and for improvement of the treaty legal base of the Organization.

The ministers of (law and) justice discussed the role of law (legal system) during the pandemic, emphasizing that no state can combat the virus alone, and all must work together to overcome its effects and improve legal systems, programmes and strategies to cope with the current realities.

The Ministers of (Law and) Justice exchanged views on the provision of free legal aid to citizens in accordance with national legislation and noted that specific initiatives to improve the system of free legal aid should be based on the results of scientific and practical and social research.

The participants of the Meeting, having discussed the role of the Ministries of Law and Justice in combating corruption, noted the threat that corruption poses to human society, and, sharing the concern of the global community about this problem, consider it timely and important to exchange best practices between the SCO member states in the fight against corruption.

The interested parties took into consideration the work of the working group on preliminary discussion of the draft SCO Convention on Legal Assistance and Legal Relations in Civil Cases, and also noted the importance of the sphere of legal services and implementation of information and communication technologies, including electronic platform mechanisms in these spheres.

The ministers of (law and) justice emphasized that the establishment of the rule of law based on the principles of respect, protection and promotion of human rights in all spheres of social, political and economic life is a major factor in the stability, sustainability and successful development of the SCO member states.

Noting the mutual understanding reached on the development of the legal systems of the SCO member states, taking into account the agreements and tasks set forth in the SCO Development Strategy until 2025, the ministers of (law and) justice of the SCO member states declare the following:

1. Strengthen the work on the implementation of the Agreement on Cooperation between the Ministries of Justice of the SCO Member States signed in Dushanbe on August 18, 2015.
2. Strengthen interaction between the ministries of (law and) justice of the SCO member states in order to preserve and expand mutual trust, good neighbourliness and friendship among the SCO member states.
3. To make efforts to hold regional conferences on the provision of free legal aid to citizens, organize mutual visits of representatives of institutions and services involved in the provision of free legal aid in the SCO member states, and exchange experience in this area.

4. Establish an exchange of experience between the ministries of (law and) justice of SCO member states in the field of combating corruption, taking into account the improvement of national legislation and the introduction of new technologies.

The Ministers of (Law and) Justice noted the importance of continuing regular dialogue.

The Ministers of (Law and) Justice appreciated the efforts made by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan in preparing and holding the Meeting, and expressed appreciation for the creation of a favourable working environment.

The next Meeting will be held in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in 2022. Specific dates and venue will be agreed upon additionally through diplomatic channels.

This Joint Statement is signed on August 6, 2021 by each party in one copy in the Russian and Chinese languages, both texts being equally authentic.

The original of this Joint Statement shall be kept at the SCO Secretariat, which will send a certified copy to the SCO member states.

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

**For the Ministry of Justice
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**

**To 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**