

Statement by the Expert of the First Category of the Secretariat of Shanghai Cooperation Organization Mr. Shohin Samadi at the Third International Conference "Vienna Cyber Security Week: Protection of Critical Infrastructure"

10-15 March 2019, Vienna

Dear participants,

On behalf of the SCO Secretariat leadership I would like to convey our gratitude to the organizers for the invitation to participate and to share information about the efforts of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the field of cyber security.

I wish to start with stating the fact that the SCO for a relatively short historical period demonstrated an effective model of multilateral cooperation based on mutual trust, equality, harmonious coexistence of different cultures and civilizations. Our Organization became a new type of regional partnership.

During the last 18 years, the SCO has made a significant contribution to security and development in the region. Despite growing challenges and threats to security, tensions in several regions of the world, the SCO area, which includes up to 60 percent of Eurasian continent, remain stable. This achievement was reached thanks to effective interaction of the Member States of SCO.

Joint efforts of SCO Member States created a solid legal framework and established effective mechanisms for cooperation in the political, trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres. Huge practical work on the security dimension is conducted on the basis of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure, which has significant results in countering terrorism, separatism and extremism. Effective work has been done to identify, prevent and suppress the manifestations of these "three evils", to eliminate their causes and conditions of occurrence and spread, as well as to counteract the spread of their ideology and propaganda.

Dear participants,

Providing information and cyber security are among SCO's key priorities. In doing so, back in 2006, the Declaration of the Heads of the SCO Member States on International Information Security was adopted, which states that information and communication technologies have created a significant potential for the development of human capabilities and effective functioning of society and the country, as well as the formation of a global partnership. In the 2006 Declaration a serious concern was expressed at the real risk of the use of ICTs for destructive purposes. The Declaration clearly defined the SCO's vision for international

information security in the near future.

On the same year, in 2006, the Group of Experts of the SCO Member States on IIB was established, in 2009 the Intergovernmental Agreement of the SCO Member States on Cooperation in the Field of Ensuring International Information Security was signed. These documents have become a solid basis for cooperation within the SCO.

The SCO Development Strategy of 2015 emphasizes the need to strengthen cooperation in the field of Internet control, to prevent its use in activities undermining security and stability in the region. To this end, the intention is to improve the mechanism of cooperation in combating the use of ICTs for terrorist purposes and countering cyber threats to the security of SCO countries.

On the basis of abovementioned documents the SCO has done a lot during these years. Talking about facts - only in 2017 in the framework of counteraction to use of the internet for terrorist and extremist purposes the efforts of the SCO Regional Structure limited access to more than 80 thousand Internet resources containing 500 thousand materials. We have foiled activity of 360 members of terrorist organizations, religious and extremist internet communities. Over 100 criminal cases were instituted against founders and moderators of the websites.

SCO also conducts purposeful work on youth policy. Today, over 3.2 billion people live in the Organization's space. More than 800 million of this amount is young people between 15 and 24 years old. They are most exposed to risks and threats in the information space.

Statistics show that the majority of crimes related to extremist activity and violence in the world are committed by people aged under 30, including minors.

According to experts, about 300 thousand young people under 18 are today members of religious extremist organizations.

According to the latest data, the youth environment, by virtue of its advancement, is exposed to increasing threats and challenges spreading through social and information networks, using information and communication technologies. UNESCO research of 2017 "Youth and Violent Extremism in Social Networks" shows the growing use of social networking sites - Facebook and Twitter, as well as YouTube - by extremists. These sites are used to advocate, recruit and raise funds for subversive activities.

Taking these tendencies, the SCO is taking appropriate measures aimed at counteracting the involvement of young people in the activities of terrorist, separatist and extremist structures.

The Organization's position on youth, current problems, challenges and how to address them is set out in the Joint Address of the Heads of SCO Member States and in the Programme of Action for the Implementation of its Provisions. Both these major documents were adopted during the SCO summit in Qingdao, China in June 2018 and aimed at strengthening cooperation in the confrontation between various destructive forces, involving young people in modern knowledge, including information and communication technologies, strengthening of interethnic and civil harmony and mutual understanding, and the upbringing of patriotism and internationalism.

SCO Member States are also investing in the prevention and combating of cybercrime. This aspect is also stated in the Joint Address and aimed at promotion of joint economic and humanitarian initiatives to involve young people in entrepreneurial activities and innovative projects, intensifying scientific and technical exchange and joint research, establishment of cooperation between youth organizations for joint struggle against international terrorism, separatism and extremism.

Dear participants,

The SCO also permanently coordinates its approaches to the IIB within the UN. Recently, on 5 December 2018, the UN General Assembly resolution entitled "Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security" was cosponsored by the SCO Member States.

In the SCO Qingdao Summit Declaration of 2018 is noted that Member States call on the international community to work towards the establishment of a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative orderly information space. They underline the central role of the UN in elaborating universal international norms, rules and principles of responsible conduct of countries in the information space. Our Member States vote for necessity to create within the UN the special working mechanism to develop norms, rules and principles of responsible conduct of countries in the information space and their formalization through the adoption of the relevant UN General Assembly resolution.

The SCO votes for equal participation of all countries in the development and management of the Internet. The managerial structure of key Internet resources should be international, more representative and democratic.

At the outset I would like to note that the SCO intends to deepen international cooperation in combating the harmful use of ICTs, in particular for terrorist and criminal purposes, and calls for the development under the auspices of the UN of an international legal document on combating the use of ICT for criminal purposes.

Thank you for your attention!