



## CICA MINISTERIAL COUNCIL STATEMENT

### on Promoting Volunteerism for Sustainable Development

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), having met for an informal meeting of the CICA Ministerial Council in New York on 21 September 2023,

- *Emphasizing* the importance of integration of volunteerism, as appropriate, into national development planning and strategies;
- *Recognizing* the great potential of volunteering, in line with national policies and priorities, in promoting social cohesion, good neighbourliness, peace and cooperation through non-political and non-profit activities and initiatives;
- *Acknowledging* that volunteering is a powerful and cross-cutting means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- *Recalling* numerous UN General Assembly resolutions, including UNGA Resolution A/RES/73/140 Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNGA Resolution A/RES/70/129 Integrating Volunteering into Peace and Development: the Plan of Action for the Next Decade and Beyond and UNGA Resolution A/RES/76/131 Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations Volunteers Programme and Twentieth Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers;
- *Recognizing* the role of the UN Volunteers Programme in promoting volunteerism worldwide;

- *Giving support* to activities fostering the recognition and promotion of volunteering and shifting from ad hoc and isolated volunteer projects to systematic scaled work to enhance the sustainability of development outcomes;
- *Stressing* the role of volunteerism in reducing unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, environmental degradation, disaster risk and damage caused by pandemics, as well as in promoting good health, quality education and well-being;
- *Underlining* the importance of volunteerism for promoting intercultural dialogue and interaction and its role in strengthening friendly relations, mutual understanding, trust and tolerance among peoples;

Hereby decided to:

1. Acknowledge the importance of volunteerism, especially among the youth as the most socially active group of people, in mitigating the negative impact of unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, environmental degradation, disaster risk, and damage caused by pandemics and other challenges, particularly in exercising an active role in national responses and recovery, promoting good health, quality education and achieving Sustainable Development Goals in accordance with national laws and regulations;
2. Encourage recognition of the volunteers' efforts both at the national and international levels;
3. Support the initiative of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan to declare the International Year of Volunteer Mobilization for Development under the auspices of the United Nations;
4. Support the measures taken by the CICA Member States in order to promote active engagement of citizens in volunteering;
5. Participate in a Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders of the CICA Member States to be held in Astana in 2024 under the auspices of the CICA Youth Council;

6. Encourage volunteers from the CICA Member States to take part in relevant initiatives of each other in order to support and popularize volunteerism at the regional level; also encourage such initiatives with CICA engagement as the UN Volunteer Knowledge Portal on Volunteerism, International Prize and International Civic Participation Forum “We are Together”, ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme;
7. Support the platform of the CICA Youth Council to promote volunteerism as a positive socially amicable phenomenon to unleash and utilize the potential of the youth; use the CICA Youth Council to promote volunteerism in a comprehensive and consensus-based way;
8. Reaffirm CICA’s readiness to share experience, technical know-how and exchange best practices and plans among Member States to promote volunteerism and volunteer exchanges in a transparent and consensus-based manner;
9. Create a favourable environment intrinsic to volunteer work or volunteerism for citizens of the CICA Member States, especially for the youth, to participate in volunteer activities, both onsite and online;
10. Promote the development and implementation of joint volunteer programmes and projects (festivals, conferences, volunteer expeditions, etc.) related to a broad range of issues;
11. Promote volunteers’ participation in programmes and projects related to inter-cultural dialogue;
12. Encourage and promote the creation of a network of volunteer centres, involving organizations, student and youth groups, public associations directly engaged in volunteer activities;
13. Encourage the development of modern databases for volunteers in the CICA Member States;
14. Promote training and courses to develop technical skills and relevant competencies for volunteers;

15. Encourage the Member States to consider integrating volunteerism for sustainable development into the CICA agenda; encourage the Member States to consider sharing information about their policies, strategies, research and best practices on volunteering for sustainable development with the CICA Secretariat for placing at a dedicated section on the CICA website.