

Dear friends,

We come together at a time in which the rifts in our global community of nations are seemingly broadening only to be further aggravated by eroding faith in multilateral forums. Against this type of cynicism, CICA stands as an oasis of cooperation and partnership.

Israel was always here from the beginning at the initiative of the late Shimon Peres back in the 90s and we are very proud of it. It is most fitting that we come together in Azerbaijan, a nation that is truly synonymous with impressive regional partnership, tolerance and confidence building measures. Under President Aliyev's wise leadership, Azerbaijan has become a paragon of stability, enjoying incredible economic growth and forging ties with nations across the region. Throughout its chairmanship, Azerbaijan has energized CICA with this same vision.

During a period of rising global tension and declining faith in international cooperation, Azerbaijan has kept CICA fully focused on what matters most, constructive dialogue, ongoing partnership, and the search for common ground. It must be said, dear friends, that the strength of this institution rests on the singular vision put forth at the United Nations in 1992 by Kazakhstan. Gradually CICA grew from an idea into an established institution. I want to thank president of Kazakhstan Kassym Jomrat Tokayev for his prominent role in solidifying CICA and indeed for demonstrating his leadership in Kazakhstan and across the region. And I want to congratulate you dear president on your words. on the challenges of artificial intelligence. The world needs to listen to that. I must also express my gratitude to Secretary General Kairat Sarybay who will soon be concluding his post. Mr. Sarybay, Secretary General, your contribution will endure for generations and I wish great success to the new Secretary General to be appointed soon. I wish also to express my sincere appreciation to CICA chair Azer Musayev for his dedicated leadership and tireless efforts to build consensus and advance our shared work.

Dear friends, in Israel, we have lived experience that declarations of friendship in and of themselves are never enough. The relationships that endure are those that foster real connections, support practical collaboration, and identify areas of shared common interests. That is the promise of CICA. We've also seen the power of this approach firsthand through the Abraham Accords. We have two partners with us here today, the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, which demonstrate how converging interests can transform political realities. Relationships that just a few years back seemed impossible to imagine are now a living, breathing reality, providing a future of partnership and brotherhood in within this grasp. I sincerely hope and pray that we will be able to see a vision of peace in the Middle East with Lebanon, with Syria, with Gaza and the Palestinians, our neighbors, and fight together terror in all its forms.

It is clear that direct engagement and dialogue are essential because in our interconnected 21st century world cooperation is not a luxury. It has become a necessity. When terror, pollution, famine, disease, and other transnational challenges still spill across political borders, no country in the world can confront these global threats on its own. Nor can any country benefit from economic development and technological advancement if it stands alone.

I would like to welcome in this instance, the announcement of the future visit of Secretary of State of the United States Marco Rubio to this region in his meeting in the next few days in Samarkand with the leaders and representatives of Central Asian countries. I think it's very important and by this opportunity also to mention the memory of a dear friend who I grew up with was former Congressman Stephen Solarz who back in the 90's established the Central Asian-American Enterprise Fund under the instructions of President Clinton and I hear your speeches and this region has done fantastically, impressively and I wish all of you great success.

Dear friends, the cultural heritage of the nations of Asia spans centuries of history and philosophy, science and arts.

Just as the Jewish people have enriched the Asian tradition, I firmly believe that Israel has much to contribute to Asia here in the 21st century in technology and science, digital connectivity and innovation, water management, advanced agricultural practices, energy, tourism, fintech, artificial intelligence, health care, climate change and so much more. We truly see ourselves as part of this continent and want to contribute to it.

We also have so much to gain from the extraordinary knowledge, innovations, and capabilities represented by the countries at this gathering. I say to all neighboring countries, to the nations in this region and in Asia that Israel desires and strives to enhance further collaboration and partnerships and have joint developments with all of you. As for the noble cause of peace, and our desire for peace in the world. It must be clear peace cannot exist with terror and cooperation cannot thrive with boycotts.

Members in this institution have the right to live freely and peacefully without their existence being constantly threatened. I thank you ladies and gentlemen for your commitment to working together here at CICA. As we move forward, let us continue building striving for common ground, choosing dialogue over division and engagement over hostility. Let us dedicate ourselves to a future of shared prosperity and our joint commitment to the common purpose of CICA.

Thank you