



**SECRETARIAT OF THE CONFERENCE ON INTERACTION  
AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES IN ASIA**

**СЕКРЕТАРИАТ СОВЕЩАНИЯ ПО ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЮ  
И МЕРАМ ДОВЕРИЯ В АЗИИ**

**№IO/101**

*Enclosure:  
as stated,  
on 6 pp.*

The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) presents its compliments to the CICA Member States and, with the reference to the item 6 of the Report by the CICA Secretary General on activities of the CICA Secretariat in 2023 presented during the SOC meeting on 12 December 2023, has the honor to convey herewith a draft Concept paper on establishing relations between the CICA Secretariat and the UNESCAP Secretariat.

The Secretariat kindly requests Member States to consider the said Draft and would appreciate receiving comments and suggestions, if any, before 29 February 2024.

The Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the CICA Member States the assurances of its highest consideration.

Astana, 30 January 2024



**MEMBER STATES  
OF THE CONFERENCE ON INTERACTION AND  
CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES IN ASIA**



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**№ IO/101**

Секретариат Совещания по взаимодействию и мерам доверия в Азии (СВМДА) свидетельствует свое уважение государствам-членам СВМДА и, ссылаясь на пункт 6 Доклада Генерального секретаря СВМДА о деятельности Секретариата в 2023 году, представленного в ходе заседания КСДЛ 12 декабря 2023 года, имеет честь препроводить проект концепции установления отношений между Секретариатом СВМДА и Секретариатом ЭСКАТО.

*Приложение:  
упомянутое,  
на 6 лл.*

Секретариат любезно просит государства-члены рассмотреть указанный проект и будет признателен за получение возможных комментариев и соображений, при их наличии, до 29 февраля 2024 года.

Секретариат пользуется случаем, чтобы возобновить государствам-членам СВМДА уверения в своем весьма высоком уважении.

Астана, 30 января 2024 года



**ГОСУДАРСТВАМ-ЧЛЕНАМ  
СОВЕЩАНИЯ ПО ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЮ И  
МЕРАМ ДОВЕРИЯ В АЗИИ**

Қосымша:  
аталған,  
6 п.

Азиядағы өзара іс-қимыл және сенім шаралары кеңесінің (Азия Кеңесінің) Хатшылығы Азия Кеңесіне мүше мемлекеттерге өзінің зор ілтипатын білдіреді және Азия Кеңесі Бас хатшысының 2023 жылғы 12 желтоқсандағы АЛТК отырысы барысында ұсынылған Хатшылықтың 2023 жылғы қызметі туралы баяндамасының 6-тармағына сілтеме жасай отырып, Азия Кеңесі Хатшылығы мен Азия мен Тынық мұхитқа арналған экономикалық және әлеуметтік комиссиясы Хатшылығы арасында қатынастар орнату туралы тұжырымдаманың жобасын жолдауды өзіне мәртебе санайды.

Хатшылық мүше мемлекеттерден аталған жобаны қарауды және ықтимал түсініктемелер мен ұсыныстарды 2024 жылғы 29 ақпанға дейін ұсынуды сұрайды.

Хатшылық осы мүмкіндікті пайдалана отырып, Азия Кеңесіне мүше мемлекеттерге өзінің зор ілтипатын тағы да растайды.

Астана қаласы, 2024 жылғы 30 қаңтар

**АЗИЯДАҒЫ ӨЗАРА ІС-ҚИМЫЛ ЖӘНЕ  
СЕНІМ ШАРАЛАРЫ КЕҢЕСІНЕ  
МҮШЕ МЕМЛЕКЕТТЕР**

# **Concept paper on establishing relations between the CICA Secretariat and the UNESCAP Secretariat**

*Draft as of 29 January 2024*

## **Introduction**

The Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) are regional organizations that focus on cooperation and development in Asia and Asia-Pacific regions. CICA primarily deals with confidence building measures and security in many of its aspects, while UNESCAP has a broad mandate covering economic and social development. It's important to note that while there are commonalities between CICA and UNESCAP in terms of their focus on cooperation, peace, and development in their respective regions, they have distinct mandates, objectives, and areas of emphasis. Therefore, establishing close relations between the CICA Secretariat and the UNESCAP Secretariat, based on their complementarities, can provide an opportunity for greater cooperation and collaboration towards the shared goals, synergizing the potentials of both organizations and expanding their outreach.

## **Background**

CICA since its inception in 1992 has been gradually developing into a large-scale multilateral mechanism for dialogue, cooperation and promoting peace, stability and prosperity in Asia. CICA grew from 15 Member States in 1999 to 28 in 2022. Its network of external ties has also been developing steadily, acquiring 9 Observer States, 5 Observer and 6 Partner Organizations by 2022.

CICA was conferred observer status by the United Nations General Assembly at its 62nd session in December 2007. In order to develop relations with other organizations the CICA Secretariat signed Memoranda of Understanding with the International Organization for Migration (2008), the Economic Cooperation Organization (2008), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO, 2014), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2015), the Eurasian Economic Commission (2022), as well as Protocol on Cooperation with the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of SCO (2017).

Since 1994 UNESCAP has formalized partnerships with 42 international organizations, forums, institutes and other entities, including Shanghai

Cooperation Organization, ASEAN, Eurasian Economic Commission and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

In 2020 Kazakhstan for the 2nd time took over the Chairmanship in CICA for the period of 2020-2022 (extended for another term 2022-2024). One of the priorities of Kazakhstan Chairmanship is the expansion of CICA external relations pursuant to the Guidelines for CICA's External Relations (2007).

UNESCAP has been constantly reaching out to CICA, including through its Subregional Office for North and Central Asia, extending invitations to a number of meetings under ESCAP's auspices. The CICA Secretariat has been regularly sending its delegations to the Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Forums, as well as to the ESCAP Commission sessions. CICA also participates in the activities of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), supported by UNESCAP and UNECE. By joining many thematic ESCAP seminars and workshops CICA Secretariat experts have gained invaluable knowledge and experience. In turn, UNESCAP representatives have been joining CICA activities, including the CICA Business Council and Business Forum, providing valuable expertise.

Throughout 2021-2023 the CICA Secretary General had several meetings with the UNESCAP Executive Secretary where both parties confirmed the potential of further strengthening relations between CICA and ESCAP. During their meeting in May 2023, it was once again noted that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) could be signed between the CICA Secretariat and the UNESCAP Secretariat.

For this purpose, the current Concept Paper has been produced.

## **Objectives**

The main objectives of this Concept Paper are:

- 1) to outline the benefits of closer cooperation and collaboration between the two organizations, including drafting and signing a Secretariat-to-Secretariat MoU;
- 2) to identify the potential areas of collaboration between the two organizations to be included in the draft MoU;
- 3) to identify mechanisms for communication and exchange of information between the Secretariats;
- 4) to identify an indicative plan of action to achieve the set objectives.

## **Rationale**

- 1) **Geographic Focus:** Both CICA and UNESCAP primarily focus on the Asian region. They aim to promote cooperation, dialogue, and development among countries in this region.
- 2) **Multilateral Framework:** Both organizations operate within a multilateral framework, bringing together multiple countries and stakeholders to address common challenges and opportunities.
- 3) **Cooperation and Dialogue:** Both CICA and UNESCAP promote cooperation and dialogue among their member states and partners to enhance mutual understanding, build trust, and foster peaceful relations in the region.
- 4) **Economic Development:** While their primary focuses may differ, both organizations contribute to economic development in Asia. UNESCAP focuses on economic and social development, trade, investment, and infrastructure, while CICA also recognizes economic cooperation as one of its core areas.
- 5) **Capacity Building:** Both organizations engage in activities related to capacity building, technical assistance, and knowledge-sharing among member states and partners. This could involve training programs, workshops, seminars and the exchange of expertise to promote sustainable development.
- 6) **Promotion of Regional Stability:** CICA's core goal is to ensure peace, security, and stability in the region, while UNESCAP's efforts also indirectly contribute to stability through economic development, poverty reduction, and addressing social issues. Complimenting efforts of both organizations by enhancing regional economic cooperation will promote peace and security.
- 7) **Inclusivity:** Both organizations are open to the participation of a wide range of Asian countries, fostering inclusivity and diversity in their efforts.
- 8) **Research and Analysis:** UNESCAP engages in research, analysis, and policy recommendations to support sustainable development, and CICA also emphasizes research and academic cooperation among member states through its advisory bodies such as the CICA Think Thank Forum.
- 9) **Networking and Partnerships:** Both organizations facilitate networking and partnerships among member states, regional organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to achieve common goals.

## **Potential areas of collaboration**

When CICA's interaction dimensions and ESCAP's program works are examined, the areas of the Economic, Environmental, and Human dimensions seem to be suitable for interaction, such as Trade and Investment; Information Technology, Agriculture (including Food Security), Energy Security, Transport Connectivity, Natural Disaster Management, Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development.

At the initial stage, avenues for cooperation could include, but not be limited to them, in particular:

**Trade and Investment:** This field holds significant importance in terms of employment, economic growth, foreign direct investment, and the development of the private sector. It directly contributes to the economies of countries. By analyzing the investments of member countries within CICA and ESCAP in alignment with sustainable development goals, several projects can be formulated, that involve the private sector and government agencies concerned. An exchange system for the most optimal investment ideas can be devised. The significance of sound investment and trade practices can be conveyed through dedicated online seminars to companies, institutions, and individuals contemplating investments. Furthermore, investments that align with the theme of green transformation can be actively supported.

**Information Technology:** Information Technology, facilitated by widespread digitalization, enhances the efficiency of data collection, analysis, and sharing, which is indispensable for monitoring and attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). CICA and ESCAP can play a pivotal role in ensuring more precise resource allocation and fostering innovative solutions, ultimately contributing to the realization of the SDGs among their member states. They can carry out regular assessments of member states' progress in adopting digitalization solutions on the path to achieving the SDGs and organize seminars to provide practical recommendations to their constituents. As the global landscape evolves towards digital and circular economies, CICA and ESCAP can offer the best digital practices to guide their members in this transformative journey.

**Agriculture (Food Security) and Energy Security:** CICA and ESCAP have the opportunity to collaborate on initiatives aimed at fostering more viable food

and energy security solutions for member states. Additionally, both organizations can engage in the exchange of best practices related to food distribution systems, the efficient utilization of energy, and the introduction of advanced agricultural technologies. Collaborative efforts can extend to the realm of energy security, particularly in light of the increasing adoption of renewable energy, the judicious consumption of energy resources, and the exploration of alternative energy supply routes.

**Transport Connectivity:** CICA and ESCAP can cooperate to promote various modes of transport linkages and sustainable connectivity, development of secure and effective systems of transportation corridors, including simplification of operational functions, customs procedures and electronic data interchange processes.

**Natural Disaster Management:** CICA and ESCAP continue their activities in the geography where natural disasters frequently occur. Considering that Asia is fragile against natural disasters, the collaboration that can be developed in this area is of great importance. Strategies that can be developed against natural disasters, sharing of best practices of member states, training on precautions to be taken in emergency situations and increasing the awareness of citizens in fragile regions can be developed, with special focus on ICT solutions for greater resilience, disaster risk reduction, early warning systems and interoperability.

**Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development:** CICA and ESCAP can collaborate effectively to protect the environment and promote sustainable development in a few different ways. One way in which they can work together is policy coordination. They can align their goals and objectives to ensure a harmonious approach to addressing environmental challenges in the region. Organizing joint side events on specific topics can raise awareness and encourage synergy among member states, meaning they can work together more effectively. Sharing data and research is essential. Both organizations can swap information about environmental matters, collaborating on research projects to obtain a better grip on the specific challenges faced in Asia and the Pacific. Capacity building programs and training sessions for member states can help spread knowledge and skills. They can also work together to encourage the use of green and sustainable technologies across member states, making it easier to transfer technology and share know-how. ESCAP's expertise can be particularly helpful. They can contribute to the CICA high-level environmental conference in 2024, bringing their experience to the table to



tackle certain issues, especially on green transformation. Ultimately, these combined efforts can lead to a stronger and more environmentally responsible future.

### **Mechanisms for communication and exchange of information**

To enhance collaboration between the CICA Secretariat and UNESCAP Secretariat it is important to maintain mechanisms for regular communication and exchange of information, such as:

- 1) consultations between the Secretariats to identify areas of common interest, explore potential collaboration opportunities and review planned and implemented activities and the results achieved;
- 2) the exchange of information and best practices through workshops, seminars, training programs, participating in events conducted within the framework of CICA and ESCAP;
- 3) designation of focal points.

### **Proposed plan of action**

- 1) CICA Member States review the proposed Concept Paper and provide their comments and suggestions. Following that the Concept Paper is submitted for consideration by the UNESCAP Secretariat.
- 2) The UNESCAP Secretariat studies the Concept Paper and provides its feedback and vision on the establishment of relations between the two Secretariats in accordance with its internal review procedures.
- 3) Following the review of the Concept Paper, CICA Member States shall make a relevant decision at the Senior officials' level.
- 4) The CICA Secretariat will prepare a draft MoU between the CICA Secretariat and the UNESCAP Secretariat which will be submitted for consideration and approval by the CICA Member States and UNESCAP Secretariat.
- 5) Following the approval, the parties shall sign the MoU at the appropriate time.