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**Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's remarks at a plenary session of the 7th
CICA Summit, Baku, October 15, 2026**

Mr Chairman,

Your Excellency,

Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues,

I would like to start by thanking our Azerbaijani friends for the warm hospitality and conveying to every member of the audience the best wishes for a successful meeting from President Vladimir Putin.

Despite the challenges of the past four years, Astana and then Baku, which were at the helm of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), have made notable progress in strengthening our regional platform.

New mechanisms have been put in place, including a financial summit, a women's council, and a partnership of leading universities. The Secretariat has been significantly strengthened in terms of quality, including through wider geographical representation among staff.

CICA's voice is being heard increasingly often at various multilateral events. The growing interest in its activities attests to the Conference's appeal. In this regard, we welcome Laos as a new member.

The system of international relations is undergoing a period of profound change. Before our very eyes, a new and more just multipolar world order is emerging.

Given the circumstances, a clear message is coming from Greater Eurasia: countries need to pursue positive development together and ensure equal and indivisible security for all, where no country can try to enhance its own security at the expense of another country. This philosophy is expressly set out in the final declaration to be adopted at the conclusion of our meeting.

This shared vision encourages our efforts to create a stable and predictable political and economic environment across Eurasia that would foster deeper mutually beneficial practical cooperation.

We invite our partners to join us in drafting a policy document on diversity and multipolarity in the 21st century that would be applicable throughout Eurasia. We discussed this initiative with many of the countries represented here on the sidelines of the events held during the high-level week of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly in New York, and we will continue these discussions at the 4th Eurasian Security Conference in Minsk in early November.

Regional organisations that are focused on promoting practical cooperation are playing an increasingly important role in this process. Organisations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation with its multifaceted mandate are setting the pace in this regard.

At a recent SCO summit in Bishkek, this mandate was expanded through agreements on pressing issues of international information security, artificial intelligence, and emergency response.

The SCO's philosophy and activities have much in common with ASEAN's agenda. The Eurasian Economic Union operates within the same paradigm.

It is no coincidence that three above integration platforms have established ties with one another and are seeking to strengthen them with a view to creating a unified network of partnership mechanisms.

We see CICA as a member of this network. The Conference has established good working contacts with the Eurasian Economic Commission, the SCO Secretariat, and the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure.

We are convinced that CICA's transformation in line with a pan-Eurasian vision and the demands of the times is an objective and natural path for our organisation.

Many member states are Eurasian by their very nature, and some also by virtue of their geographical location. Our common goal is to adapt the Conference to new realities and harness its potential to promote growth and prosperity across the continent.

Russia has always advocated the evolution of CICA through pragmatic engagement focused on achieving specific results. This principle guided us when, in conjunction with Kazakhstan, we proposed in 2023 that volunteerism be added to the Conference's humanitarian agenda.

The importance of this expression of civic responsibility in the modern world can hardly be overstated. We should also consider launching cooperation in sports. Next week, Krasnoyarsk will host the 14th International Sports Forum, Russia: Country of Sports. We would be delighted to welcome the CICA Secretariat's senior officials to the event.

Cooperation in ICT is gaining momentum. In 2021, we succeeded in establishing it as one of the Conference's priorities.

We see strong interest among member states in further expanding this dialogue. As the coordinator of this dimension within CICA, Russia has drafted a concept for cooperation on security in the use of ICT for 2026-2027.

We continue to coordinate our efforts within CICA to support small and medium-sized enterprises. This sector provides the foundation for innovation-driven development, technological sovereignty, and employment.

We have teamed up with our partners to develop a programme for interaction in this area among member states over the next two years. Priorities include exchanging experience and best practices, particularly in supporting technology companies and creative industries, promoting tourism and business contacts, and integrating small and medium-sized enterprises into supply chains operated by major companies.

We are also committed to advancing CICA's academic track. The Institute of China and Contemporary Asia of the Russian Academy of Sciences has established a national CICA research centre, whose experts are contributing to the development of a comprehensive analytical foundation for our work.

Safety in the mining industry is a new and promising area of cooperation. In response to the sustained interest shown by member states, Russia has not only hosted a number of sector-specific events but has also proposed adding this subject to the economic section of the CICA Catalogue of Confidence-Building Measures.

No other multilateral platform in Asia currently has such an area of cooperation, and CICA has every chance of becoming a pioneer in this field.

Colleagues,

The constructive atmosphere within our platform today is sustained by a shared commitment to broad-based pragmatic cooperation. CICA is not burdened, not least because of its membership, by various political contrivances such as the so-called "rules-based order" or bloc-based approaches founded on the principle of benefits and comfort exclusively for one's own group.

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay for his active and professional engagement and six years of dedicated efforts to develop and promote our forum and to strengthen its institutional foundations.

I wish Azerbaijan continued success in its capacity as Chair of our Conference.



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