

Farewell Dinner for SCO Secretary General

Honorable Secretary General Norov

Madam Norov

Excellencies

Distinguished diplomats

Friends & colleagues

Good evening, Ni Hao and greetings of peace to you all

On behalf of my wife and colleagues at the Embassy, I wish to thank you all for joining us this evening to honour Secretary General Viladimir Norov, Madam Norov as he completes his term at SCO.

Secretary General Norov is a distinguished politician and a diplomat who served his country with distinction in many important assignments. He was Ambassador of Uzbekistan in Berlin and Brussels then also spearheaded the foreign policy of his country as Foreign Minister for four years. He hails from Bukhara, a historic city in Uzbekistan along the silk route, and well known for its contributions to education and Islamic thoughts.

Excellency Norov thus brought a reservoir of wisdom and experience and his own charisma to the post of SCO Secretary General. I would specifically like to commend his active role in bringing a new focus to cooperation in the fields of trade, IT, culture and tourism. I have travelled to many cities of China along with SCO Secretary General and I must appreciate the effective and forceful manner he projected the importance of SCO in various forums and conferences.

In these challenging times of Pandemic restrictions, ensuring that ongoing cooperation and work continues uninterrupted is no small task, and I must commend the Secretary General and his team for this achievement.

Friends,

This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of SCO. In these last 20 years, SCO started as an organization of six countries and has become a bigger family of eight full members, and now nine with inclusion of Iran, 3 Observers and 9 Dialogue Partners. It represents 44% of the World's population, covering a quarter of the global landmass and accounting for a quarter of the global GDP.

No doubt, the SCO has emerged as a vibrant and promising platform to promote the regional development agenda.

Friends,

As a full Member since 2017, Pakistan has been actively participating in all SCO mechanisms and processes, and contributing towards its forward drive for mutual cooperation, regional peace and economic development.

We fully support further cooperation in the fields of peace and security, trade, economy, finance, investments, culture and people-to-people exchanges. Pakistan will continue its constructive role along with all member states to achieve our common objectives to build a peaceful, safe, prosperous, and environmentally-clean planet. We welcome the admission of Iran as a full SCO Member State, and Egypt, Qatar and Saudi Arabia as new Dialogue Partners.

Friends,

I take this opportunity to extend our best wishes and full support to H.E. Ambassador Zhang Ming, the new SCO Secretary General from 2022 onwards. I am confident that his illustrious career as a seasoned diplomat, especially his insights into West Asian, Middle Eastern and African affairs as well as his knowledge of regional organizations, is not only going to strengthen the SCO as the most important organization within the Eurasian region but also drive the SCO agenda for regional cooperation and development to new milestones.

Let me also extend our felicitations to Tajikistan and Kazakhstan for successful holding of the SCO CHS and CHG Meetings this year, and our best wishes and support for Uzbekistan and China for the CHS and CHG Meetings next year.

Finally, let me again thank and congratulate Secretary General Norov for a successful mission. We wish you good health, well-being of your family and a bright and positive future ahead.