

# **SCO Forum on People-to-People Friendship & the Forum on Friendship Cities Qingdao Initiative**

To implement the important initiative put forth by Chinese President Xi Jinping, the SCO Forum on People-to-People Friendship & the Forum on Friendship Cities, are jointly hosted on June 15, 2023, in Qingdao, China, by the Good Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation Commission of the SCO, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, and the Shandong Provincial People's Government. The forums are warmly hailed by various member states. Under the theme of "Promoting Friendly Cooperation, Carrying Forward the Shanghai Spirit," we, representatives of SCO member states, observer states and dialogue partners, hold in-depth discussions and reach extensive consensus on such topics as people-to-people friendship, friendship through city-to-city cooperation, scientific and technological innovation, educational exchange, and poverty relief.

**We agree that** SCO countries always uphold the Shanghai Spirit, advocate dialogue between civilizations, seek common ground while shelving differences, and pursue common development under the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. We have created a new paradigm

featuring mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit among countries regardless of their size, have provided an engine for driving integrated regional economic development, and built a bridge of friendship, inclusiveness, and mutual learning among diverse cultures.

**We believe that** people-to-people and city-to-city diplomacy have unique strengths and should play a more significant role in pooling the strength and enhancing the friendship of the peoples of SCO countries, so as to forge deeper people-to-people connections, promote city-to-city collaborations and mutually beneficial cooperation, thus building a closer SCO community with a shared future.

**To consolidate the outcomes of the forums, we propose the following five initiatives:**

**First, we need to strengthen people-to-people interactions.** We support the organization of future sessions of the Forum on People-to-People Friendship, the Forum on Traditional Medicine and the Women's Forum. We seek to use these opportunities to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation with people-to-people friendship organizations in SCO countries, and to promote the constant development of people-to-people friendship among SCO countries.

**Second, we need to strengthen cooperation among friendship cities.** We seek to promote closer friendly exchanges between local governments and establish more friendship relationships between provinces, states, and cities. We also seek to continue deepening cooperation between friendship cities in various fields including economy and trade, science and technology, and culture and youth. We intend to facilitate specific exchanges and communication and sustainable development in friendship city cooperation, to share development achievements, and bring the people a stronger sense of gain, happiness, and belonging.

**Third, we need to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation.** By leveraging the platform of the China-SCO Local Economic and Trade Cooperation Demonstration Area, we seek to promote the establishment of a data and information sharing hub that incorporates governments, companies, industrial parks and zones, business associations, and other related organizations, so as to promote coordinated local and private economic development in various countries, and to translate complementary advantages into a synergistic driving force for economic development. We welcome the aim of the China-SCO Technology Transfer Center to carry out, under a multilateral framework, exchanges between local governments, cooperation between colleges and schools, and mutually beneficial collaboration between companies; to regularly

hold scientific and technological innovation activities such as the SCO Member States Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition; and to build the network for scientific and technological innovation collaboration among SCO countries.

**Fourth, we need to strengthen people-to-people exchanges.** For this purpose, we plan to hold the SCO Children's Painting Exhibition, the Youth Summer Camp, and the Youth Sports and Culture Festival. We will continue to carry out the Lifeline Express Journey of Vision, and make full use of mechanisms such as the SCO Hospital Cooperation Alliance and remote medical platforms, as well as the Medical Cooperation Development Conference, to improve people's health and well-being. We encourage middle and primary schools and universities to establish international friendship relationships and support universities to strengthen joint programs in such fields as math, surveying and mapping, and mining. We support schools and educational institutions of all types and at all levels to engage in regular exchanges and to jointly build the International Cultural Air Corridor. We intend to enhance mutual understanding and people-to-people connections, and to consolidate the foundation of popular opinions for building a community of a shared future for mankind, by holding such events as the SCO International Marathon, the International Team Chess Tournament, and the Fareast Cup International Regatta.

**Fifth, we need to strengthen experience exchanges and cooperation in poverty alleviation.** We intend to hold poverty alleviation training programs in order to share effective practices in poverty mitigation and elimination and rural revitalization, so as to provide new and constructive frameworks for the poverty alleviation endeavors of SCO countries. Moreover, we intend to assist SCO countries to explore methods and to implement measures for poverty alleviation and rural development and modernization, so as to strengthen their ability to alleviate poverty and to create impetus for sustainable development.

All participants agree that we will carry forward the Shanghai Spirit, deepen friendship and mutual trust between friendship cities, promote mutually beneficial cooperation at the local level, promote sound and sustainable development of the SCO, jointly build a peaceful, stable, prosperous, and beautiful SCO Family, and create a bright future for the Eurasian Continent together.