

# 19th Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

October 29, 2020

In news

India hosted the **19th Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Ministers responsible for Foreign Economy and Foreign Trade Activities.**

Key takeaways from the meeting

In the meeting, four documents were adopted. These were-

1. Statement on the response to Covid-19. It reinforces the need for greater cooperation for access to medicines and facilitation of trade.
2. Statement on the Multilateral Trading System of Ministers of SCO Countries who are WTO Members. This statement highlights the importance of the rules based multilateral negotiations.
3. Statement on SCO Cooperation on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). It relates to cooperation of intellectual property and includes sharing information/experience on legislation and enforcement, cooperation in international organisations and other areas.
4. Action Plan for Implementation of MOU to stimulate cooperation within the framework of SCO in the field of MSMEs. It looks at a number of areas of cooperation among MSMEs, including exchange of information, organisation of events and collaboration on research and capacity building.

**About the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation SCO**

- SCO is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation
- The **creation of SCO was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai** (China) by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan
- The **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Charter was signed during the St.Petersburg SCO Heads of State meeting in June 2002**, and entered into force on 19 September 2003.
- During the meeting of Heads of State Council of SCO ON 8-9 June 2017 in **Astana the status of a full member of the Organization was granted to the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.**
- **SCO's main goals are as follows:**
  - strengthening **mutual trust and neighbourliness** among the member states;
  - promoting their effective **cooperation in politics, trade, the economy, research**, technology and culture, as well as in education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, and other areas
  - making joint efforts to maintain and **ensure peace, security and stability in the region;** and
  - moving towards the **establishment of a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order.**
- **The organisation has two permanent bodies** – the SCO Secretariat based in Beijing and the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) based in Tashkent.
- The SCO Secretary-General and the Director of the Executive Committee of the SCO RATS are appointed by the Council of Heads of State for a term of three years.
- The Heads of State Council (HSC) of SCO is the **supreme decision-making body in the SCO**. It **meets once a year**

and adopts decisions and guidelines on all important matters of the organisation.

- **The SCO Heads of Government Council (HGC) meets once a year** to discuss the organisation's multilateral cooperation strategy and priority areas, to resolve current important economic and other cooperation issues, and also to approve the organisation's annual budget.
- **The SCO's official languages are Russian and Chinese.**
- **In addition to HSC and HGC meetings, there is also a mechanism of meetings at the level of heads of parliament;** secretaries of Security Councils; ministers of foreign affairs, defence, emergency relief, economy, transport, culture, education, and healthcare; heads of law enforcement agencies and supreme and arbitration courts; and prosecutors general.
- The Council of National Coordinators of SCO Member States (CNC) acts as the SCO coordination mechanism.