

Participation by India in various forums of discussions of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States, Justice Ministers Meeting (JMM) and Prosecutors General Meeting (PsGM)

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a permanent Inter-Governmental Multilateral Organisation, established on 15th June, 2001 in Shanghai, China by the Leaders of China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan & Uzbekistan. India and Pakistan joined SCO as full-fledged member in the historic meeting of the Heads of State Council of the SCO during 8-9th June, 2017 at Astana.

2. The SCO's main goals are as follows: strengthening mutual trust and neighborliness 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.

3. In addition to these, there are mechanisms for regular meetings of Heads of Parliament, Ministers of Defence, Emergency Situations, Economy/Trade, Transport, Culture, Education, Health, Justice, Supreme Courts, Prosecutors General, Secretaries of National Security Councils, etc. The official working languages of the Shanghai Cooperation organization are Chinese and Russian.

4. There are four Observers States of SCO viz. Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia. In addition, the SCO has six dialogue partners namely, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey and Sri Lanka.

(i) Meeting of Ministers of Justice of the SCO Member States:

The Department of Legal Affairs, at various levels has been participating in the Sessions of the Minister of Justice of the SCO in the recent past, wherein the 5th & 6th Sessions of the Ministers of Justice of SCO were attended by the Indian side. This Forum of Ministers of Justice is preceded by preparatory meeting of the officials of SCO Member States to take up various issues relating to legal assistance and legal relations/services in the civil and criminal/forensic activities. The last Session (7th) of Ministers of Justice of SCO Member States was hosted by India in October, 2020.

The 8th Session of the Ministers of Justice of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States was held on 6th August, 2021 through Video Conferencing, preceded by First Expert Meeting on 11th June, 2021 and Second Expert Meeting on 4-5th August, 2021. A joint statement declared by SCO Members state during the 8th Justice Ministers meeting was signed.

(ii) Prosecutors General meeting of SCO Member States:

As part of various forum of discussion within the multilateral framework of the SCO, the meeting of the Prosecutors General of SCO Member States is held every year by rotation. The Forum is, inter-alia, utilised by the SCO Member States to discuss and exchange experiences in the Prosecutors Office of the SCO Member States, modern practice and effective mechanism for countering and combating corruption. In the past, after becoming full-fledged member, India has participated in the 15th - 18th meeting of the Prosecutors General during 2017-2019.

The next i.e. the 19th Prosecutors General Meeting shall be hosted by India on 22nd October, 2021, as decided in concert with Ld. Attorney General of India. This will be preceded by Experts / Officials level meeting proposed to be held on 22nd - 23rd September, 2021.
