

SCO calls for global front to fight terror groups

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) has resolved to fight terrorism, separatism and extremism with a renewed vigour in the next three years, and called for a unified global counter-terrorism front under the coordination of the UN.

The grouping of eight countries, including China, India and Russia, came out with a declaration at the end of its two-day annual summit here on Sunday, with a resolve to deepen cooperation to contain terrorism, extremism and separatism.

In his address at the summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke about challenges of terrorism and cited as example its effects in Afghanistan.

“The member states strongly condemn all forms of terrorism and consider it necessary to make efforts to promote the creation of a unified global counter-terrorism front with the central coordinating role of the UN on the basis of international law, without politicisation or double standards,” the Qingdao declaration said.

However, the declaration did not mention any terror group.

Peaceful settlement

It said all the member countries were for reaching a consensus on adopting the UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, and emphasised the importance of comprehensive measures to reach a peaceful settlement of international and regional conflicts.

The SCO leaders adopted a Joint Appeal to Youth, in which they asked them not to get influenced by extremist ideologies.

The declaration said the SCO would work to stop the spread of terrorist ideology and eliminate factors and conditions that facilitated terrorism and extremism, acknowledging that there can be no justification to any act of terrorism or extremism.

“The member states note that the interference in the domestic affairs of other states under the pretence of combating terrorism and extremism is unacceptable, as well as the use of terrorist, extremist and radical groups for one’s own purposes,” the declaration said.

The SCO called for “effectively fulfilling” the requirements of specialised UN Security Council resolutions to counter any forms of financing of terrorism and providing material and technical support to it. In relation to the developments in West Asia, the SCO talked about the growing threat from foreign terrorists who returned to their countries or find shelter in third countries to continue their terrorist and extremist activity within the bloc.

“The member states will work to improve the information exchange mechanisms regarding these people and their movements, and speed up procedures to extradite foreign terrorists in accordance with the national legislation of the SCO member states and boost international cooperation both on the political level and between the security services,” it said.

Three evils

In the summit, the leaders also talked about the special role of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure in the fight against “the three evils” — terrorism, extremism and separatism — to ensure

regional security.

It said a cooperation programme among the member countries to fight terrorism, separatism and extremism would be prioritised in the next three years.

The SCO members reaffirmed their concern about the risk of weapons of mass destruction ending up in the hands of terrorist groups.

“The leaders advocate the strengthening of the international legal framework to counter this threat and support the initiative to draft an international convention against chemical and biological terrorist attacks at the Conference on Disarmament,” the declaration said.

It said the member states would strengthen their cooperation in combating the spread and propagation of terrorist ideology through the Internet, including publicly justifying terrorism.

The SCO countries reaffirmed their commitment to improve the mechanism of cooperation within the bloc to combat illegal drug trafficking.

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Qingdao declaration

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