

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh addresses Combined Meeting of Defence Ministers of SCO, CSTO & CIS Member States in Moscow;

Stresses that peace and security in SCO region demands a climate of trust and cooperation, non- aggression, respect for international rules and norms

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Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has emphasised that, "Peaceful, stable and secure region of SCO member states – which is home to over 40 per cent of global population, demands a climate of trust and cooperation, non-aggression, respect for international rules and norms, sensitivity to each other's interest and peaceful resolution of differences." He was addressing the Combined Meeting of Defence Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Member States in Moscow today. "If I may borrow an idea articulated by our Prime Minister in a different context, our goal should be 'Security and Growth for all in the Region'." he added.

Referring to the threats faced by the world today, Shri Rajnath Singh said, "We need institutional capacity to deal with both traditional and non-traditional threats – above all, terrorism, drug-trafficking and transnational crime. As you all are aware, India unequivocally condemns terrorism in all forms and manifestations, and condemns its proponents. India values the works of SCO Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS). We laud RATS' recent work in the cyber domain to prevent the spread of radicalism and extremism. The adoption of anti-terror measures by the SCO Council to counter extremist propaganda and de-radicalisation is a significant decision."

Raksha Mantri expressed his deep concern about the situation in the Persian Gulf Region. He said, "India has vital interests and links of civilisation and culture with all States in the Gulf. We call upon countries in the region – all of which are dear and friendly to India, to resolve differences by dialogue based on mutual respect, sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs of each other."

Speaking about the situation in Afghanistan, Shri Rajnath Singh said, "Security situation in Afghanistan remains a concern. India will continue to support the efforts of the people and Government of Afghanistan for an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled inclusive peace process. The SCO Contact Group on Afghanistan is useful for exchanging notes among SCO member States."

Raksha Mantri reaffirmed India's commitment to evolution of a global security architecture which will be open, transparent, inclusive, rules-based and anchored in international laws. Raksha Mantri thanked Russian Federation for organising the annual anti-terror exercise 'Peace Mission', which has contributed to building trust and sharing of experience among Defence Forces.

Shri Rajnath Singh is on an official visit to Moscow from September 3-5 at the invitation of Defence Minister of Russian Federation General Sergei Shoigu.

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