

Shanghai Cooperation Organization Discusses Syria in Bishkek

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, or SCO, met in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on Friday for a discussion that focused largely on Syria and other international defense issues.

Responding to Friday's news that Syria intends to join the Chemical Weapon Convention, President Vladimir Putin told the gathered leaders of the other SCO states — China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan — that he hoped that news might help resolve the country's conflict.

"I think that we must welcome this decision by Syrian leaders. I want to express the hope that this will be a serious step towards the resolution of the Syrian crisis," Putin said.

The meeting was joined by SCO observer states Iran, Afghanistan and Mongolia, representatives from India and Pakistan, the general secretaries of the Eurasian Economic Community and Collective Security Treaty Organization, the executive secretary of the

Commonwealth of Independent States and the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, RIA Novosti reported.

The member states stood behind Russia's initiative to have Syria place its chemical weapons under international control so as to avoid foreign military intervention and also agreed to work towards summoning a conference devoted to bringing peace to the Middle Eastern country.

Concerning Iran, the participants noted their concern towards Iran's nuclear program but stood against "the threat of military force and one-sided sanctions of individual governments," as noted in the Bishkek Declaration, signed at the close of the meeting.

As for North Korea, the SCO states declared that "negotiations and consultations are the single effective way to preserve peace and stability on the Korean peninsula," and called for "renewal of six-way negotiations concerning the [North Korean] nuclear problem."

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