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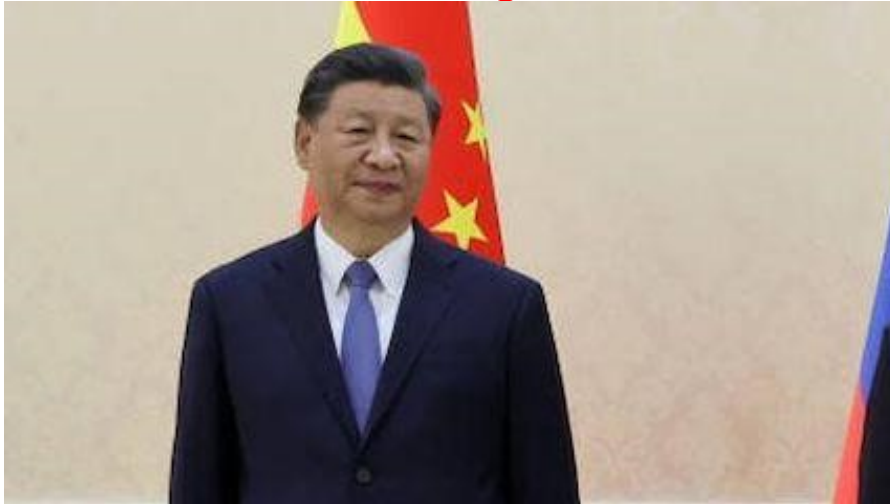
European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

By Jorge Elbaum

28.09.2022

## *Orient Express*



**Sources:** The Rocket to the Moon

### *Russia and China's response to NATO*

On September 16, the XXII meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Cooperation Organization (CSO) in Uzbekistan concluded, and five days later President Vladimir Putin decreed a partial mobilization of his country's reservists, a situation that represents an escalation of the conflict initiated by NATO in Ukraine in 2014. The proximity of both events highlights the continuity of geopolitical transformations that diversify the centers of global power and establish an eastern axis that articulates Moscow with Beijing, facing the North Atlantic Organization (NATO).

The CSO conference concluded with three important developments. The first was the full incorporation of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The second consisted of Turkey's request –

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for now informal – to join the body. And the third is the commitment assumed by all the members to redefine and expand cooperation schemes in areas of security and common defense. The summit was held in the city of Samarkand, a town that was part 20 centuries ago [of the ancient Silk Road](#), which connected China with the Mediterranean. Unlike the Atlanticist articulation, which at its last [Summit in Madrid](#) decided to directly challenge Moscow and Beijing, the CSO reaffirmed its defensive format, without nominating the existence of explicit enemies.

The summit was Xi Jinping's first trip outside his country since the pandemic began in Wuhan in late 2019. It was also the first face-to-face meeting between the leaders of Russia and China since the beginning of the war in Ukraine in February this year. The last conclave between the two had taken place at the opening of the Winter Olympic Games, an event in which they announced "convergence without limits", pledging to support themselves unconditionally in the challenges posed by Atlanticism against their countries. Since the start of the Special Operation, proposed by Moscow, to support the Donbas militias, trade between China and Russia grew by 35%, and joint work commissions in intergovernmental areas have multiplied, especially those related to cybersecurity and satellite technologies. The bilateral meeting between the Russian and Chinese leaders was the 38th since Xi took office nine years ago.

The SCO is a body recognized by the United Nations. It brings together more than a third of the world's population, contains 67% of the Eurasian territory and a quarter of the world's territorial extension. It brings together half of the world's nuclear powers (Russia, China, India and Pakistan) and its members support a quarter of the world's GDP. The organization has had a rapid anti-terrorist deployment office, the RATS, based in Uzbekistan, since 2004, and since 2006 it has been coordinating joint anti-terrorist initiatives. The incorporation of the Islamic Republic of Iran – convulsed in recent days by demonstrations against theocratic authorities – will allow its full membership from April 2023. In this way, a large number of the countries unilaterally sanctioned by Washington have managed to partner to limit the damage capacity of Atlanticism, overcoming the commercial and economic isolation planted by the West.

The meeting in Uzbekistan was prefaced by two initiatives that frame the convergence: from September 1 to 7, the military exercises "Vostok 2022" – in the Russian Far East –

were held in which 50,000 troops from the 14 states that joined the maneuvers participated. The second event, also held in Vladivostok, was the 7th Eastern Economic Forum, held from 5 to 8 September under the slogan "Gateway to a multipolar world", in which 60 countries participated, including delegations from Latin America and Africa.

The conclave was chaired by Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, *head pro tempore* of the organization that coordinated the debates in which both the Russian president and Xi Jinping participated, and Narendra Modi for India. Also from the party were the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shehbaz Sharif and the Heads of State of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Kyrgyzstan, Sadyr Zhaparov, and of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon. Representatives of observer states were joined by the leaders of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, Iran, Ebrahim Raisi, and Mongolia, Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh. Recep Erdogan of Turkey joined the deliberations as a special guest.

### **Between NATO and CSO**



*Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukrainian President.*

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is a political, economic and security bloc founded in 2001, formed a decade after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Its constitution had as its fundamental motivation to limit the unilateral hegemonism of the United States, prioritizing cooperation agreements respectful of the internal characteristics of each of its members. Since its creation, the [CSO](#) has expanded its membership to nine states: the six that made it up in 2017 were joined by India and Pakistan in 2017.

At the conclusion of the Samarkand Summit, the incorporation of the Islamic Republic of Iran was reported. The origins of the Shanghai collective can be traced back to the Four Plus One (4+1) cooperation treaty signed by Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and China in the late 1980s, when these republics – four of them then integrated into the Soviet Union – agreed to ease border and military tensions in the area. The 4+1 treaty allowed the Sino-Soviet agreements of 1991 to be continued, which managed to overcome almost entirely the border problems that existed between Moscow and Beijing.

The application for membership of the CSO enunciated by the Turkish president in Uzbekistan produced a tremor within the European Union and in the NATO Command led by the Norwegian Jens Stoltenberg. Ankara is part of the Atlantic Organization but maintains conflict situations with Greece, while bidding to be accepted into the EU for a decade. In 2013 Erdogan had suggested the possibility of joining the CSO as an alternative to the postponement of Brussels for accepting Turkey as a member. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz – one of Washington's most disciplined spokesmen – was in charge of responding on behalf of the EU: "That is not an organization that is making an important contribution to good global coexistence," the German premier said last Tuesday at the UN General Assembly in New York. after meeting with Erdogan.

At the close of Samarkand, Chinese President [Xi Jinping](#) noted that "the world is experiencing accelerated changes not seen in a century, and has entered a new period of uncertainties and transformations. Human society is at a crossroads and facing unprecedented challenges. Under the new circumstances, the SCO ... must courageously face international vicissitudes, grasp the trend of the times, strengthen solidarity and cooperation and promote the construction of a community with a shared future." Regarding the conflict in Ukraine, Chinese Foreign Ministry Wang Yi insisted at the Summit on the need to respect territorial integrity and sovereignty ... taking into account the legitimate security concerns of all countries." The Chinese leader referred, indeterminately, to the two pressure territories chosen by NATO to weaken Russia and China: Ukraine and Taiwan.

After the meeting ended, Vladimir Putin announced the increase of Russian troops in Ukraine and accused NATO of using Ukrainians as "mere pawns of the military machinery of the West." He also endorsed the referendums of the four regions of Ukraine

in Donetsk and Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhia, and warned of the possible use of more powerful weapons in the conflict. What was initially a Special Operation will now morph into a war. And what was a tactical military support to the Donbas militias will become an open war conflict without limitations. NATO, as announced six months ago, achieved its long-awaited task: to extend the war to the last Ukrainian fighter.

Source: <https://www.elcohetalaluna.com/expreso-de-oriente/>

**Rebellion 27.09.2022**