



THE SHANGHAI CO-OPERATION ORGANISATION

IRAN WELCOME IN CHINA'S NEW SPHERE

THE KINGS OF THE NORTH & THE KINGS OF THE EAST

JUNE 13, 06. Iran's controversial president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is flying to Shanghai tomorrow to take part in a summit that will seal China's plans to lead an Asian rival to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

The Shanghai Co-operation Organisation - whose meeting has forced the shutdown of much of the city this week - is celebrating its fifth anniversary, and is preparing to expand its membership well beyond the present **China, Russia** and four strategic central Asian states: **Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan** and **Tajikistan**.

Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Li Hui refused at a briefing to disclose the countries that wished to become observers or full members, beyond saying: "A lot of countries in Asia and other continents have applied, demonstrating the SCO is broadening its influence."

Other leaders who will attend the summit include the presidents of **Pakistan** and **Mongolia** - formal observer states, like **Iran** and **India** - and **Afghanistan**.

Most of the members share a huge potential - and, in China's case, an appetite - for increased energy production. India is sending its Oil and Gas Minister.

In the past, they have also shared a focus on combating Islamist terror. But Iran's participation in this summit and its eagerness to become a full member appear to point the organisation in a different direction: a corral of countries capable of countering Western influence.

Mr Li, while claiming the organisation was "very transparent", was unable to disclose items on the agenda. He said he had not been briefed on whether China, Russia and Iran would discuss separately the current international controversy over Iran's nuclear ambitions. "To China, this is one of the most important diplomatic events of this year. The organisation is developing and getting stronger," he said.

President Hu Jintao will chair the summit.

The group's foreign and defence ministers and parliamentary speakers have already held meetings this year, as the pace of enmeshment accelerates. The organisations' members have begun holding joint military exercises, most recently in March in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and next year in Russia.

Such exercises are "crucial for combat against the three evil forces," said Mr Li -- separatism, terrorism and extremism.

Last week SCO secretary-general Zhang Deguang told journalists in Beijing, when questioned about the participation of Iran: “We cannot abide other countries calling our observer nations sponsors of terror. We would not have invited them if we believed they sponsored terror.”

The SCO’s charter speaks of creating “a new international political and economic order.”

David Wall, a research associate for Cambridge University’s East Asia Institute, wrote recently in *The Japan Times* that the SCO states “only common denominators are a communist past or present, and autocratic to ruthless dictatorial governments. He said it had become “an important multilateral institution of global Geopolitical significance.”

At last year’s summit, Beijing and Moscow initiated discussion about the fate of American bases in central Asia. The resulting statement said: “As the active military phase in the anti-terror operation in Afghanistan is nearing completion, it is time to decide on the deadline for the use of temporary infrastructure and for their military contingents presence” in member countries.

Uzbekistan has since asked the US military to leave but Kyrgyzstan continues to host a base.

Through the SCO, China has developed connections that will ensure at least some of the massive oil and gas reserves in Central Asia flow east and not west. It has extended loans and made growing investments in the “-stan” economies, as part of its careful cultivation of the region, and is stepping up its purchases of Iranian oil, this year reaching 13 per cent of all its oil imports.

Mr Hu and President Saparmurat Niazov of Turkmenistan, a country not yet in the SCO, recently signed an agreement on a pipeline to take gas to China via Uzbekistan.

A gas pipeline is also being built from Kazakhstan to China. And China is building a railway linking Uzbekistan to its own western Xinjiang province, passing through Kyrgyzstan.

- By Rowan Callick, *The Australian*, 13 June 06. Used by permission of News Limited

The above report sheds some light on a growing alliance between “The Kings of the North” and “the Kings of the south” of which Daniel prophesied would come against the Antichrist during the world war early in the 7-year Great Tribulation:

“He (*the Antichrist*) will invade *many* countries, overwhelming and sweeping through them. He will also invade the Beautiful Land (*Israel*).

“Many *countries* will fall ... He will extend his power over *many* countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. But reports from **the East** and from **the North** will alarm him, and he will go out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many.” (Daniel 11:40-42, 44)

INDIA MAY BE OFFERED FULL SCO MEMBERSHIP

FEB 14, 07. Speaking to an invited group of press persons at the Russian Embassy in New Delhi, Ambassador Trubnikov said the “triangle” of Russia,

India and China, whose Foreign Ministers have met, was being “filled with economic and geopolitical substance.”

He signaled that countries, which are currently “observers” (like India, Iran and Pakistan) in the China-Russia led Shanghai Cooperation Organisation could be offered **full membership** of the SCO.

Asked whether India would be invited to participate in military exercises under the SCO aegis, the Ambassador said Russia would like other countries to join in. He also pointed to greater outreach in the SCO’s anti-terrorist cooperation initiatives.