

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

**Joint Statement by President Biden and Leaders of the Central Asia Five Nations—
The New York Declaration: C5+1 Resilience Through Security, Economic, and
Energy Partnership**

September 21, 2023

This week, we—the presidents of the United States, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan—met on the occasion of the first-ever C5+1 Presidential Summit, held during the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York City and commit to the following principles of further interaction.

Resilience through Partnership

United in an unwavering commitment to uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter, our partnership is founded on respect for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all states. We commend the considerable progress made on shared objectives since the first C5+1 ministerial meeting in 2015. The establishment of the C5+1 Secretariat in 2022 and the Working Groups on Economy, Energy and the Environment, and Security have further deepened our engagement. We remain committed to enhancing our partnership through the C5+1 platform.

Dedicated to our pursuit of peace and prosperity, we share a vision for sustained cooperation to address the region's complex challenges and emerging threats. Collectively, we embrace the C5+1 goal of seeking regional solutions to global challenges. Together we affirm our commitment to activities in Central Asia that enhance security, improve economic resilience, support sustainable development, combat climate change, and promote peace.

Achieving our shared vision requires sustained partnership that is rooted in mutual respect and accountability to our people. Undertaking this ambitious agenda marks the next chapter for cooperation between the United States and the countries in Central Asia and further underscores the importance of the C5+1 mechanism.

Expanded Security Cooperation

We reaffirm our commitment to strengthening security cooperation as a necessary cornerstone to addressing shared regional security challenges and maintaining the sovereignty and independence of the Central Asian states. Recognizing that the situation in Afghanistan remains an important factor in security and stability for Central Asia, we remain committed to cooperation on defense, law enforcement, and counterterrorism issues. We affirm our desire to deepen cooperation, including through expanded information sharing; cooperation on border security and safe migration; support for repatriation of nationals from northeast Syria; and the sharing of best practices on countering terrorism and preventing radicalization leading to violence. These long-term efforts will require greater capacity, and Central Asian leaders welcome the United States' commitment to prioritizing security assistance tools and other resources to sustain and enhance U.S.-Central Asian security partnerships. The C5+1 members recognize the benefit of enhanced dialogue on these issues, including at the ministerial level. Finally, all countries in the region and the broader international community should continue to support a sovereign and self-reliant Afghanistan that is free of terrorism, respects human rights and fundamental freedoms, including for women and girls, is at peace with itself and its neighbors, and establishes an inclusive government representative of all its ethnic, religious, and

political groups. We further affirm our support for recognizing Central Asia as a zone of peace, trust, and cooperation that promotes the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

C5+1 Economic and Energy Corridor

Strengthening the conditions that underpin long-term economic resilience is necessary to increase access to global markets and attract sustainable international investment to Central Asia, including in the green economy. This, in turn, will set the stage for the region to unlock inclusive economic growth through a dynamic trade corridor. To that end, we are determined to accelerate regional cooperation and connectivity, and we commit to advance efforts to create a more favorable business environment for U.S. private sector trade and investment in Central Asia, including by working toward permanent normal trade relations. We intend to take significant steps to enhance alternative trade routes, facilitate new connections among U.S. and Central Asian businesses, and create a regional network of young professionals receiving English language and professional development training. The U.S. Department of State and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE)—an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—will work to establish a private-sector business platform to complement the C5+1 diplomatic platform and strengthen U.S.-Central Asia economic ties.

Continued investment in and development of the Trans-Caspian Trade Route, or the so-called "Middle Corridor," as well as energy infrastructure and extension of transportation networks connecting Central Asia to South Asia are also necessary to diversify transport routes. To further C5+1 economic goals, the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGI) will evaluate opportunities to scale infrastructure investments to accelerate the economic development, energy security, and connectivity of the Middle Corridor. We affirm that we stand ready to leverage economic tools available through the U.S. Department of State, Development Finance Corporation, the U.S. Export-Import Bank, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to support infrastructure across PGI priorities, including critical transport, clean energy and critical minerals supply chains, and digital connectivity. We will also continue our dialogue on regional economic collaboration and discuss concrete actions for the C5+1 countries to take to drive inclusive, sustainable economic development at the USAID C5+1 Connectivity Ministerial in October.

We also intend to leverage partnerships with the international financial institutions to support investment and a business environment that enables inclusive economic growth in C5+1 countries. This includes through new innovative financing mechanisms at the World Bank and Asian Development Bank to spur investments to address global challenges like climate change, and by supporting a capital increase for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Enhancing Energy Security and Combating the Effects of Climate Change

To enhance Central Asia's energy security, we remain committed to integrating regional energy systems to diversify and expand new energy export routes and reliably supply global markets. We also commit to redoubling efforts to increase clean energy production, methane mitigation projects, development of sustainable hydropower capacity, and energy efficiency, particularly by mobilizing public and private financing aimed at energy transition. Through C5+1 programs such as USAID Power Central Asia, the United States and Central Asian states will unlock the economic benefits of regional, clean energy trade and a clean economy future. We are committed to deepening cooperation to develop the capacity to meet growing global clean energy demands, including by potentially providing the world with safe, secure, and sustainable nuclear fuel supplies. Our attention to energy security in the region includes building diverse, resilient, and secure critical minerals supply chains; developing new technologies for the extraction and processing of raw materials; and adding value through regional industrial cooperation to reduce strategic dependencies and meet our respective economic, energy security, and climate goals.

Demand for critical minerals, which are essential for clean energy and other technologies, will expand significantly in the coming decades. To further develop Central Asia's vast mineral wealth and advance critical minerals security, we will launch a C5+1 Critical Minerals Dialogue. It will provide a forum in which the C5+1 can share information about critical minerals challenges and opportunities, promote connections between government officials and private sector industry, catalyze investment, and collaborate on critical minerals supply chains.

We are invested in enhancing Central Asia's water security and environmental quality, working to increase regional cooperation on water and ecological issues that take into account food security, sanitation, agriculture, and energy sector linkages. USAID programs in Central Asia have provided meteorological software, training, and scholarships to better forecast water inflows and outflows, improve data quality and information-sharing, develop climate-adaptable agriculture, and preserve endangered species habitats, including in snow-covered areas. We affirm our commitment to further strengthen cooperation in order to improve the efficiency of water resource management and the introduction of water-saving technologies in Central Asia to increase stability, economic prosperity, and the health of the region's ecosystems. Through the USAID Regional Water and Vulnerable Environment program, we plan to collaborate to address water, energy, food, and environmental needs that simultaneously combat climate change with appropriate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience measures. Further, we reaffirm our support for glacier preservation and commit to increasing capacity for community adaptation.

Partnership through People

Our richest relationships are among our people, and we recognize the importance of incorporating the human dimension in all C5+1 activities. We reaffirm our commitment to working together to promote the rule of law and democratic governance. We will continue to support and strengthen connections between the United States and Central Asia through support for educational capacity building, vocational training, youth development, and exchange opportunities. We are determined to continue support for institutions of higher education in Central Asia that serve male and female students from across Central Asia and Afghanistan as a means of increasing regional connectivity and cross-cultural understanding. Moreover, we challenge our governments to identify new opportunities to expand cooperation in the cultural, educational, scientific, and social spheres and develop closer people-to-people ties. We affirm our commitment to protecting human rights, including the rights of women, children, and persons with disabilities.

Towards A New Atmosphere of Partnership

We recognize the new atmosphere of partnership under the C5+1 framework, reaffirm the value of the format, and commit to strengthen cooperation, regional security, and sustainable development through regular dialogue and joint action. The commitments made during this Summit are rooted in a shared vision for a more resilient, secure, and prosperous Central Asia. As we work to implement these commitments, we seek to model a sustainable path based on trust to promote inclusive prosperity and security.

This joint vision will guide us as we enter the most consequential period in the history of the C5+1 partnership. To that end, our teams will meet regularly, bilaterally and collectively, and we commit to continue our engagement through C5+1 Ministerial meetings on subjects such as trade, energy, climate, and security. We will endeavor to maintain a high-level dialogue to collectively address emerging challenges, and to ensure our partnership continues to deliver practical results for our people.

September 21, 2023

President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan

President Sadyr Japarov of the Kyrgyz Republic

President Emomali Rahmon of the Republic of Tajikistan

President Serdar Berdimuhamedov of Turkmenistan

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. of the United States of America

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of the Republic of Uzbekistan

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Categories: Joint Statements : Central Asia Five Nations, leaders.

Names: Berdimuhamedov, Serdar; Japarov, Sadyr; Mirziyoyev, Shavkat; Rahmon, Emomali; Tokayev, Kassym-Jomart.

Subjects: Afghanistan, reconstruction and development; Central Asia Five Nations, relations with U.S.; Civil and human rights, U.S. promotion efforts; Clean energy transition in developing countries, international assistance; Climate change; Critical minerals, supply chain improvements; Infrastructure development, international assistance for developing countries; Kazakhstan, President; Kyrgyzstan, President; Methane emissions, reduction efforts; Renewable energy sources and technologies; Syria, civil war and sectarian conflict; Tajikistan, President; Turkmenistan, President; Uzbekistan, President; Water management policy, improvement efforts; World Bank.

DCPD Number: DCPD202300821.