

**Intervention by CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybay
at High-Level Round Table 1**

**“Strengthening the three pillars of social development:
poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for
all, and social inclusion”**

4 November 2025, 15.00-18.00

**Thank you, Mr Chair.
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen!**

30 years ago, the international community took a decisive step by placing people at the heart of development agenda. I am glad that today, world leaders recommitted to the **Copenhagen Declaration** and Program of Action by adopting the historic **Doha Declaration**.

Specifically, the international community once again recognizes that **social development is indispensable for peace and security**.

This conviction lies at the heart of the philosophy of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (**CICA**) that I am honoured to represent. CICA has evolved from a dialogue platform into a **mature organization**, with broad agenda and diverse institutions, capable of bringing high-added value to its 28 Member States covering 90% of Asia, committed to the UN Charter.

The agenda of the CICA **Chairmanship of Azerbaijan** prioritizing connectivity, digitalization and sustainable growth, with a particular focus on transport, SMEs, women entrepreneurship and green economy, is pertinent to the topic of our roundtable.

Let me clarify these **synergies with the three pillars** of social development.

First. Realizing that **SMEs** are the backbone of national economies, our Member States collaborate and exchange best practices within the CICA **Business Council**. The agenda of the Council highlights the importance of digital transformation, with ongoing efforts to equip SMEs with tools and training in digital marketing, e-commerce, and data management.

Second. Unfortunately, **young people** still experience higher levels of unemployment, informal employment and working poverty. The CICA **Youth**

Council provides a dynamic platform for collaboration and innovation among young leaders and policymakers. In particular, the upcoming “**SDGs in Action**” side event next week in Baku will be a showcase of successful youth-driven projects and will facilitate open dialogue on current challenges in SDG.

Amid rapidly evolving labor markets facing mounting pressure to adapt to swiftly changing realities and demands, the **Partnership Network of Leading Universities** can provide a valuable avenue for sharing innovative approaches to education, skills development, and employment resilience.

Third. CICA Member States contributed to

- global women empowerment efforts by establishing the Women Council, aligning with the 1995 Beijing Declaration;
- boosting economic cooperation and discussing international financial governance by establishing the CICA Finance Summit – both in September 2025.

Excellencies!

The Azerbaijani Chairmanship prioritizes enhancing CICA’s existing **partnerships** and building new ones. As a UN observer, CICA has been engaged in some **joint actions with the United Nations**:

- a joint project with **ESCAP** on transport connectivity and digitalization and continue the good practice of joint CICA-ESCAP events;
- a side event with the **UN Volunteers programme** on best volunteerism practices in CICA Member States on the margins of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2026.

Within the **environmental** agenda, CICA intends to contribute to:

- the UN Regional Environmental Summit, **Kazakhstan**, April 2026;
- World Environment Day, **Azerbaijan**, June 2026;
- COP17 of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, **Mongolia**, August 2026
- UN Water Conference, **UAE**, co-hosted by **Senegal**, December 2026.

Thus, being a pan-Asian organization, CICA can serve as a bridge-builder between the global level and regional stakeholders in pursuing peace, security, and social development in a cooperative manner.

I thank you.