

# Who is the 9th member to join SCO?

A. China

B. India

C. Iran

D. Pakistan

Show Answer...

**Correct Answer: C (Iran)** 

# The Shanghai Cooperation **Organization (SCO)**

On July 4, 2023, Iran officially became a full member of the SCO, marking a significant milestone in the organization's evolution. Iran's accession grants the country a greater influence in regional affairs and potential economic benefits. The decision was announced during the 23rd summit of the SCO Council of Heads of State, which was hosted by India and held virtually.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) evolved from its predecessor, the Shanghai Five, which was established in 1996 by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. The five nations initially joined forces to promote regional stability and cooperation. In June 2001, leaders from these countries, along with Uzbekistan, convened in Shanghai to announce the formation of a new organization aimed at fostering deeper political and economic collaboration.

Since its inception, the SCO has undergone significant growth and expansion. In June 2017, the organization expanded its membership to include eight states, with the inclusion of India and Pakistan. This move broadened the SCO's reach and influence in South Asia. Furthermore, in July 2023, Iran joined the SCO, further expanding its membership and adding to its diversity of regional participants.

It is worth noting that the SCO also engages with various countries as observers or dialogue partners. These engagements serve as avenues for fostering



constructive relationships and facilitating cooperation with nations beyond the core member states.

The SCO continues to be an essential platform for member states to strengthen political, economic, and cultural ties. It promotes regional stability, enhances security cooperation, and encourages economic development among its member states. The organization's growth and engagements reflect its relevance in shaping regional dynamics and its commitment to promoting mutual understanding and collaboration.

The SCO now comprises nine member countries, including China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Iran. This expansion further strengthens the organization's capabilities to address regional challenges and promote cooperation among member states.

The SCO's primary objectives include fostering regional stability, promoting economic integration, and enhancing cooperation in areas such as security, trade, culture, and energy. Through joint initiatives and projects, member countries collaborate to counter terrorism, combat drug trafficking, and facilitate cultural and educational exchanges. The SCO serves as a platform for dialogue and discussion, facilitating diplomatic efforts and trust-building among member states.

China, as a founding member of the SCO, has played a pivotal role in driving the organization's expansion. Alongside Russia, China has actively worked towards increasing the SCO's membership and influence in recent years. The addition of Iran to the SCO is seen as a means to counter Western influence in the region, ensuring a more balanced and diverse regional representation.

Despite concerns expressed by the United States and its allies, the SCO emphasizes that it is not a military alliance and poses no threat to any country. The organization continually denies allegations that it serves as a tool for Russian and Chinese influence. Instead, the SCO aims to promote regional cooperation, stability, and development, while providing a platform for dialogue and collaboration among member states.

Iran's membership in the SCO is expected to have significant implications for regional politics and security. As a full member, Iran will actively participate in



shaping the organization's future and contribute to its goals of regional peace and prosperity.

In conclusion, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has played a vital role in promoting regional cooperation and stability since its establishment. With Iran joining as the 9th member, the SCO has gained further diversity and potential to address emerging challenges. The organization's expansion signifies a growing regional influence in the Eurasian landscape, fostering dialogue, cooperation, and economic integration among its member states.

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