APPENDIX E

Military and Law Enforcement Cooperation between Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Introduction

Since they first began in 2002, joint military and law enforcement exercises between member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) have been an important component of strategic regional collaboration under the SCO framework. With troops often numbering in the thousands and staged mass maneuvers showcasing a full complement of military equipment, vehicles, and weaponry, these exercises have, among other things, served to communicate a strong rhetorical message to international audiences that the SCO is prepared to meet ‘terrorist’ threats with full, united force. As with the SCO’s other forms of regional cooperation, the emphasis on the “Three Evils” – terrorism, separatism, and extremism – underlying military and law enforcement cooperation has blurred the line between genuine and permissible counter-terrorism activity and state actions that do not conform with international human rights obligations.

To provide an overview of the scope and implications of these joint military and law enforcement exercises between SCO member states, Human Rights in China has compiled publicly available data on past exercises staged between October 2002 and September 2010, including information on member state participation, geographic locations, numbers of troops and equipment, and stated objectives for joint exercises. This data is presented in a comparative chart that follows.

The picture illustrated by available information is incomplete, in part because the SCO itself has released relatively few details to the public. Accordingly, in addition to official SCO data, Human Rights in China has relied on a variety of supplemental sources, including reporting from state-run news agencies such as Xinhua, People’s Daily, and the PLA Daily. Nonetheless, the overall picture documented in the following chart raises serious concerns about the implications of joint military and law enforcement exercises between SCO member states, including:

- **Tactics of joint intimidation**: Despite the non-threatening names given to these exercises, invoking peace, cooperation, etc., and SCO rhetoric emphasizing deterrence of “terrorist” threats, the stated objectives and geographic locations of the exercises suggest an intention to target “problem” populations. The exercises send a chilling message: threats deemed “terrorist,” “separatist,” or “extremist” in nature will be met with heavy-handed force. The climate of fear perpetuated through these joint exercises has the effect of intimidating and compromising domestic populations, particularly ethnic groups such as Uyghurs, by deterring them from exercising their legitimate rights, including the exercise of freedoms of association, expression, and religion – activities that officials regularly characterize as “separatism” or “extremism.”

- **Increasing militaristic ambition and experimentation**: Joint SCO military exercises marked a number of first-time milestones for China, including participation by the People’s Liberation
Army in a joint military maneuver with a foreign army and the conduct of a long-range bombing mission. Notable exercises included simulated attacks against a nuclear physics institute operating a nuclear reactor, and using propaganda leaflets as “a psychological tactic to shake the enemy’s will.”

- **China’s domestic agenda**: Joint SCO military and law enforcement exercises are of major importance to China, which has participated in nearly every exercise since they began in 2002. Two joint exercises took place near North Korea and three were staged at least partially in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). The exercises complement China’s efforts to enforce social stability and control over XUAR and to demonstrate China’s priorities within the SCO. The timing of PLA exercises in relation to those of the SCO has, on occasion, suggested that China is using SCO exercises as a means to bolster its domestic agenda with respect to XUAR in particular. One example is the conduct of a domestic counter-terrorism exercise in XUAR on August 23, 2003, just eleven days after the conclusion of “Coalition 2003.”

In addition to the joint military and law enforcement cooperation exercises listed in the following chart, there have also been other official joint SCO exercises. For instance, from May 19 to May 22, 2009, China, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Tajikistan participated in the Bogorodsk Joint Disaster Relief Exercise. This exercise took place in the Russian city of Noginsk and involved reconnaissance, inspection, repair, and rescue exercises, including a staged rescue operation involving high-rise buildings. There have also been border protection exercises, including an unnamed training event involving China and Russia that took place along the Heilongjiang border in January 2003. This exercise was aimed at the “apprehension of illegal border crossers.” A similar exercise, the “Border Blockade Exercise,” also involving China and Russia, took place on February 26, 2009, at the Heihe-Blagoveschensk border area.

At the end of 2010, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman declined to confirm media reports that China and Russia will hold a joint military exercise in the Sea of Japan in 2011, but “praised the role of such drills in safeguarding regional peace and stability.”

Taken together, these trends in expanding joint military and law enforcement cooperation, with increasing levels of cost, size, and scope of joint exercises, call for closer scrutiny. Instead of promoting greater peace and security in the region, these exercises may in fact be contributing to further militarization, instability of the region, and a climate that is conducive to the undermining of fundamental rights and freedoms.
In addition to information released officially by the SCO, Human Rights in China has drawn on English, Chinese, and Russian sources, including news outlets such as Radio Free Europe and China’s official state-run Xinhua News Agency, press releases from the diplomatic branches of individual SCO member states, and secondary reports, such as those from the Jamestown Foundation.

See, respectively, the October 2002 joint exercise between China and Kyrgyzstan, as well as the September 2010 “Peace Mission” involving China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan.

See, respectively, the March 2006 joint exercise involving all SCO member states, as well as the August 2005 “Peace Mission” between China and Russia.


Roy Kamphausen et al., The PLA at Home and Abroad: Assessing the Operational Capabilities of China’s Military, supra n. 5, 384.

Ibid., 428.

## APPENDIX E

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<th>Name and Date of Joint Exercise</th>
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| Exercise-01<sup>1</sup> October 10-11, 2002 | China-Kyrgyzstan border, in the Pamir-Alay mountain range | China and Kyrgyzstan (Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan observed) | - Hundreds of troops from both sides  
- Border defense units  
- More than ten armored combat vehicles  
- Numerous helicopters | This exercise was “a concrete step to implement the Charter of [the] Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Shanghai Convention on [the] Fight against Terrorism, Splittism and Extremism. It shows the firm determination of the two countries to commit to fight against the three forces and is of great significance for the two sides to strengthen mutual understanding in the military area and safeguard security and stability in the border areas.”<sup>2</sup>  
“...practice coordinated operations against possible incursions by international terrorists onto the territory of either Kyrgyzstan or China.”<sup>3</sup> | - Staged in part in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).  
- First bilateral anti-terror exercise conducted by members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).  
- China’s first joint military maneuver with a foreign army. |
| Coalition 2003<sup>4</sup> August 6-12, 2003 | China-Kazakhstan border, in Yili and XUAR, China; Ucharal, Kazakhstan | China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan | - 1,300 troops (700 from China, as well as Kyrgyz paratroopers)  
- Joint command consisting of officers from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan  
- Chinese main force units composed of mechanized infantry, tanks, artillery, helicopters, and special operations forces | “The high-level military exercise shows that the SCO member states take the same stand and have the same determination to fight terrorism, separatism and extremism.”<sup>5</sup> | - Staged in part in XUAR.  
- The first phase involved exercises against hijackers that held a passenger plane and “eliminating terrorists across the borders.”  
- The second phase involved hostage rescue operations and destroying terrorist camps.  
- First multilateral SCO anti-terror exercise.  
- China’s first participation in multilateral maneuvers. |
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| **Peace Mission 2005**<sup>5</sup>  
August 18-25, 2005 | Shandong Peninsula, China; Vladivostok, Russia | China and Russia | - Approximately 9,800 troops (8,000 from China, 1,800 from Russia)  
- 140 naval ships and submarines  
- From China: four cargo jets modeled after the IL-76  
- From Russia: bombers (including Tu-95S bear strategic bombers and Tu-22M backfire long-range bombers), missile destroyers, submarines, airborne warning and control system aircrafts (including SU-27SM fighters armed with AS-15 3,000-kilometer cruise missiles against naval targets) | “The drill will help both countries protect stability in the region.”<sup>7</sup>  
The drill reportedly provided training for an operation to “intervene in a state besieged by terrorists or in political turmoil, using combined land, sea, and air elements.”<sup>8</sup>  
Both countries indicated that the war games were not aimed at any third country or meant to hurt the interests of any other country. | - Reported cost of $5 million.  
- Both locations are near North Korea.  
- Airborne drills included attacking enemy positions under the leadership of an airborne command center, paratroopers.  
- Bombs carrying propaganda leaflets were fired onto enemy positions “in a psychological tactic to shake the enemy’s will.”<sup>9</sup> |
| **Vostok-Antiterror / East-Antiterror 2006**<sup>10</sup>  
March 2-5, 2006 | Ulugbek and Tashkent, Uzbekistan | China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan | - Personnel from special forces and law enforcement bodies as well as troops from all SCO member states | Exercise reportedly “focused on preventing terrorist groups from damaging state infrastructure, as well as joint actions to rescue hostages.”<sup>11</sup>  
The exercise focused on neutralizing terrorists that hatch plans to prepare and commit large-scale terrorist acts in important state facilities.<sup>12</sup> | - A simulated attack was launched against the Institute of Nuclear Physics (INP) of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences. This center owns a nuclear reactor.  
- Exercises carried out by the SCO’s Regional Anti-Terror Structure (RATS).  
- Involved the training of special forces for a potential hostage situation at the INP. |
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<td><strong>Tianshan I 2006</strong>&lt;sup&gt;14,15&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Almaty, Kazakhstan; Yining and XUAR, China</td>
<td>China and Kazakhstan</td>
<td>- Law enforcement bodies and special services from Kazakhstan and China (700 from China including the Xinjiang border police force and Xinjiang anti-terror special force) - Gunship helicopters - Armored anti-riot vehicles</td>
<td>“. . . implementing the consensus reached at an SCO summit in June on enhancing security cooperation among SCO member states, and improving coordination between law enforcement bodies and special forces.”&lt;sup&gt;14&lt;/sup&gt; “. . . enhance cooperation between law-enforcement and security departments of the two countries and display determination in joint anti-terror efforts so that security and stability can be maintained in border areas.”&lt;sup&gt;15&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>- First part staged in the Almaty region of Kazakhstan. - Second part staged in part in Yining, XUAR and included a simulated battle between border police and international terrorists.</td>
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<td><strong>Coordination 2006</strong>&lt;sup&gt;16&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Kulyab, Tajikistan</td>
<td>China and Tajikistan</td>
<td>- Over 450 troops (including over 150 from a Chinese reinforced company and over 300 from Tajikistan’s artillery, infantry, and airborne divisions) - Helicopter unit from China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA)</td>
<td>“This exercise abroad would test [Chinese] troops’ capabilities of long-range projections . . . so as to probe into ways and accumulate experience for holding larger scale joint exercises overseas with foreign troops in the future.”</td>
<td>- This was a mountain warfare exercise: troops practiced joint exercises in fire attack, three-dimensional attack, and armed hostage rescue. - The exercise was a “pilot”&lt;sup&gt;18&lt;/sup&gt; for the joint military exercises among SCO member countries to be held in 2007.</td>
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<td><strong>Peace Mission 2007</strong>&lt;sup&gt;19&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Russia (Chelyabinsk, Ural mountains); China (Urumqi, XUAR)</td>
<td>China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan</td>
<td>- Over 6,500 troops (1,600 from China, 2,000 from Russia, 143 from Kazakhstan, 120 from Tajikistan) - Mechanized-infantry combat vehicles; Armored personnel carriers; Artillery systems - Ground-attack jets; Bombers; Fighters; Helicopters; Unmanned aerial vehicles</td>
<td>Exercise scenario described as: “under the support of an international terrorist organization based in the north border of country N, a terrorist organization of country A launched an anti-government movement. At the headquarters of the joint drill, commanders from the six SCO members decide to annihilate the terrorists.”&lt;sup&gt;20&lt;/sup&gt; This exercise “demonstrated determination of the SCO member states in the fight against three evil forces: extremism, terrorism and separatism, as well as the common desire to ensure security and stability in the region, stimulate the general development and prosperity.”&lt;sup&gt;21&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>- Reported cost of $77 million. - Staged in part in XUAR. - Modeled around the events that took place in Andijan that resulted in a violent suppression by the Uzbek government. - From August 14-18, President Hu Jintao observed the final stages of the exercise and attended the SCO summit in Bishkek. - First time complete PLA organizational units had taken part in a joint anti-terrorism military exercise outside China.</td>
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<td>Cooperation-2007&lt;sup&gt;22&lt;/sup&gt; September 4-6, 2007</td>
<td>Russia (Khabarovsk, Moscow)</td>
<td>China and Russia</td>
<td>1,000 troops (600 from China including the 30-member Snow Leopard Commando from the 13th Special Brigade of the People’s Armed Police, 400 from Russia including domestic security forces and a special task force unit) - Two Chinese II-76 military transport planes</td>
<td>“China and Russia are expanding cooperation in combating illegal immigration, smuggling and international crime.”&lt;sup&gt;23&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>- The drill was reportedly conducted “in accordance with the principles of the [SCO].”&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt; - The final stage of the exercises included a conditional operation to free hostages seized by terrorists at the airport of Khabarovsk. - The 13th Special Brigade was established in 2002 and has handled “major urgent cases.”&lt;sup&gt;25&lt;/sup&gt; - First international anti-terrorism exercise outside China for the People’s Armed Police.</td>
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<td>Volgograd Antiterror 2008 Exercises&lt;sup&gt;26&lt;/sup&gt; August 18-September 4, 2008</td>
<td>Russia (Volgograd)</td>
<td>Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan</td>
<td>Members of anti-terrorist units from Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan</td>
<td>“Training and exercises of such format will help improve cooperation of all agents of anti-terrorist activity of SCO member countries and effective multilateral development.”&lt;sup&gt;27&lt;/sup&gt; Stage One from August 18 to 28 emphasized cooperation regarding “subversive and terrorist groups” within the territories of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Russia.&lt;sup&gt;28&lt;/sup&gt; Stage Two, which took place on the premises of the Lukoil Volgograd oil refinery, was designed to determine the practical steps for operational combat units landing in crisis areas to conduct special operations to free hostages and neutralize terrorists in environmentally hazardous facilities.&lt;sup&gt;29&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>- Russia’s National Antiterrorist Committee coordinated the drills. - The joint strategic command post exercises were held in accordance with the SCO’s Cooperation Plan on combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism for 2007 to 2009. - State and private security forces cooperated in joint anti-terrorist exercises.</td>
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<td><strong>Norak Anti-Terror 2009</strong>&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt; &lt;br&gt;April 17-19, 2009</td>
<td>Tajikistan (Fakhrabad training grounds)</td>
<td>China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan</td>
<td>- Operational groups and special units of the armed forces from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia; Tajik national guard and Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense &lt;br&gt; - Armored vehicles &lt;br&gt; - Two C-139 operational trainers &lt;br&gt; - Two MI-8 helicopters and other aircrafts &lt;br&gt; - Various types of weapons and ammunition</td>
<td>“... coordination of cooperation of the participants in the organization of various antiterrorist operations, increase of vocational training and battle training, exchange of experience and practical skills, as well as further readiness in opposition to international terrorism, political extremism and separatism.”&lt;sup&gt;31&lt;/sup&gt; “The Norak-Anti-Terror 2009 exercise underscored the high level of military preparedness of the SCO forces, their ability to resist international terrorism, religious extremism and separatism.”&lt;sup&gt;32&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>- The exercises demonstrated the work of the operational headquarters for the counter-terrorist operations, the landing of special forces in crisis situations, negotiations with terrorists, and the release of “hostages.” &lt;br&gt; - After the exercises, &quot;the parties acknowledged the expediency of continuing the practice of regular staging of joint counter-terrorism drills.&quot;&lt;sup&gt;33&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td><strong>Peace Mission 2009</strong>&lt;sup&gt;14&lt;/sup&gt; &lt;br&gt;July 22-26, 2009</td>
<td>Russia (Khabarovsk); China (Taonan Tactical Training Base, Jilin)</td>
<td>China and Russia</td>
<td>- 2,600 troops (1,300 from each side); Paratroops &lt;br&gt; - Tanks; Self-propelled guns; Armored personnel carriers &lt;br&gt; - Helicopter Gunships; Fighter planes; Jet transports &lt;br&gt; - Surface-to-air missiles</td>
<td>Observers note that the operations may have been intended “to verify operation plans and capabilities to respond to unexpected incidents under the unstable environment of countries and regions.”&lt;sup&gt;35&lt;/sup&gt; “The exercise is not targeted at any particular third party but will showcase the abilities and resolutions of both sides to jointly cope with various kinds of security threats and crack down on terrorist, separatist and extremist forces.”&lt;sup&gt;36&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>- Both locations are near North Korea. &lt;br&gt; - The exercises were carried out within the framework of the SCO and were a “logical continuation of Russian-Chinese military exercises ‘Peace Mission 2005’ and ‘Peace Mission 2007.’”&lt;sup&gt;37&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td><strong>2010 Law Enforcement Exercises</strong>&lt;sup&gt;28°&lt;/sup&gt; &lt;br&gt;August 16-28, 2010</td>
<td>Russia (Saratov region)</td>
<td>Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia participated (India, Mongolia, and Pakistan, observed)</td>
<td>- Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Russian law enforcement agencies and special services</td>
<td>“... organize cooperation among national antiterrorism centers, special services and law enforcement bodies of the SCO member states to implement a complex of measures to prevent acts of terrorism in crowded places.”&lt;sup&gt;39&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>- Representatives of the CIS anti-terror center and the Collective Security Treaty Organization attended the exercises. &lt;br&gt; - The exercises included a mock anti-terrorist operation in a place with large numbers of people. &lt;br&gt; - There was a meeting of the security service and special services leaders of the SCO countries.</td>
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| **Peace Mission 2010**<sup>90</sup> September 9-25, 2010 | Kazakhstan (Almaty, Otar, Matybulak air base) | China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan | - Over 5,000 troops (over 1,000 PLA army and air force officers and soldiers; over 1,000 troops from Russia)  
- At least one operational-tactical group from each member state  
- More than 1,600 tanks and armored vehicles, 32 fighter planes, 100 artillery and rocket batteries, and 25 helicopter gunships  
- From China: tanks, armored cars, bombers, and fighters  
- From Russia: 130 armored vehicles (tanks, artillery systems, infantry fighting vehicles), over 100 trucks, over 10 airplanes, and helicopters | The purpose of the exercise was reportedly to “test the interoperability of the SCO armed forces in rendering assistance to a member state involved in an internal armed conflict or subjected to a mass terrorist attack.”<sup>41</sup>  
". . . show the determination and capacity of SCO members in combating terrorism, separatism and extremism, their mutual trust, high level and pragmatic cooperation.”<sup>42</sup>  
"The strategy behind the SCO anti-terror military drill is to unite countries in Central Asia and help them crack down on extremists who conduct terrorist activities through international organizations that may pose a threat to the safety of a legitimate government.”<sup>43</sup>  
"By carrying out [a mid-air refueling] in the war games, the Chinese Air Force is trying to build an integrated air battle group encompassing early warning, command, long-distance bombing, escort and air refueling.”<sup>44</sup> | - China’s troops and weapons were transported by train from a military training base in Zhurihe, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.  
- For the first time, Chinese air force implemented a long range bombing mission. There was mid-air refueling.  
- Helicopters conducted night shooting drills. |
An asterisk denotes a joint SCO exercise between law enforcement or special service forces, as opposed to a joint military exercise.


8 McDermott, supra n. 1, at 6-7.


11 CEF Weekly Newsletter, no. II, supra n. 10.


25 Ibid.


