

UNRCCA Programme of Action for 2026-2030

The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), a special political mission, was established in December 2007 at the initiative of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Its creation followed several years of consultations between the United Nations and the governments of the Central Asian states. In putting forward this proposal, the governments of the region considered numerous threats and challenges facing Central Asia, including international terrorism and extremism, drug trafficking, organized crime, and environmental degradation.

UNRCCA began its operations in the summer of 2008, following the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Asia, who also serves as the Head of Mission.

Since 2008, five Programmes of Action have been formulated to align activities with the strategic engagement priorities of UNRCCA, as identified in close consultation with the Central Asian states and relevant partners.

The Centre's new Programme of Action for the period 2026-2030 is based on its mandate (UN documents S/2007/279 and S/2007/280), the General Assembly resolutions on UNRCCA, including A/RES/72/7 (17 November 2017); A/RES/72/283 (22 June 2018); A/RES/75/251 (16 April 2021); A/RES/77/L.53 (24 February 2023) and other UN strategies and guiding documents, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UN80 Initiative, the Strategic Plan of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan, the UN System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, the Women, Peace and Security, and Youth, Peace and Security agendas, and the UN Youth Strategy.

The Programme of Action reflects the Pact for the Future, adopted at the 2024 Summit of the Future, in which Member States reaffirm their dedication to preventive diplomacy, the peaceful resolution of disputes, and the value of inter-State dialogue, underscoring the role of the United Nations in advancing these efforts, and highlighting the importance of strengthened partnerships with regional and subregional organizations to prevent and resolve conflicts in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The Programme of Action is built on the previous activities of UNRCCA and takes into account numerous initiatives of the Central Asian states relevant to preventive diplomacy, as well as current trends and political developments in the region and beyond.

According to the Centre's mandate, UNRCCA has the following functions:

- To liaise with the Governments of the region and, with their concurrence, with other parties concerned on issues relevant to preventive diplomacy.
- To monitor and analyze the situation on the ground and to provide the Secretary-General of the United Nations with up-to-date information related to conflict prevention efforts.

- To maintain contact with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and other regional organizations, encourage their peacemaking efforts and initiatives, and facilitate coordination and information exchange with due regard to their specific mandates.
- To provide a political framework and leadership for the preventive activities of the United Nations country teams in the region; and to support the efforts of the Resident Coordinators and those of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, in promoting an integrated approach to preventive development and humanitarian assistance.
- To maintain close contact with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to ensure a comprehensive and integrated analysis of the situation in the region.

Key Priorities for 2026-2030

The UNRCCA Programme of Action for 2026-2030 contains five priorities corresponding to the functions indicated in the Centre's mandate, namely: (I) Promoting preventive diplomacy among state authorities, civil society, academic and experts communities of Central Asia; (II) monitoring and early warning in support of conflict prevention; (III) building partnerships for prevention with regional and sub-regional organizations; (IV) strengthening United Nations preventive diplomacy in Central Asia; and (V) supporting the engagement of the Central Asian states in addressing challenges related to Afghanistan, in close coordination with UNAMA, and grounded in the analysis of security-related developments.

I. Promoting preventive diplomacy among state authorities, civil society, academic and expert communities of Central Asia

Preventive diplomacy remains at the core of UNRCCA's mandate. A key instrument in advancing this priority is the Good Offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Asia. Upon request of the Central Asian states, the SRSG conducts consultations and fact-finding missions, and explores avenues for a consolidated UN response to existing and emerging challenges.

UNRCCA works in close partnership with the governments of the region to reinforce and sustain momentum toward closer cooperation and the promotion of good neighborly relations. A central pillar of UNRCCA's engagement is the facilitation of high-level dialogue among the Central Asian states, with the aim of strengthening cooperation on issues vital to regional peace and stability. UNRCCA convenes regularly high-level meetings, including the meetings of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Central Asian states, which are essential for effective implementation of the mandate.

UNRCCA provides support to the annual Consultative Meetings of the Central Asian Heads of State through the Central Asian Expert Forums, organized in partnership with the Institutes for Strategic and Regional Studies under the Presidential Administrations of respective Central Asian states.

The Centre actively endeavors to identify emerging opportunities to advance conflict prevention and foster cooperative responses to shared regional challenges, including the sustainable use of natural resources, the impacts of climate change, the prevention of violent extremism and counter-terrorism, as well as the promotion of the meaningful participation of women and youth in decision-making processes.

Regarding preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism, UNRCCA in close partnership with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and other UN entities, conducts activities based on the updated Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia endorsed by the regional states in 2022. Special attention is paid to early warning, cybersecurity, phenomena of foreign terrorist fighters, combating the financing of terrorism, border security, promotion of the role of women and youth in preventing violent extremism.

Water diplomacy continues to be one of the core functions of UNRCCA. The Centre provides a political platform for consultations and exchanges among the Governments of Central Asia, to promote dialogue, build trust, and identify elements that could ultimately form a sustainable solution for water-sharing in the region in accordance with international law, and taking into account the interests and needs of all the countries affected. UNRCCA will base its engagement on the Strategy on Supporting Cooperation between the Countries of Central Asia on Water, Energy, Environment and Climate for 2026-2030.

UNRCCA, responding to increasing needs of the Central Asian states for greater regional connectivity, as a means for enhanced regional security through shared goals and incentives for peace and stability, in cooperation with the respective state authorities, provides political support to regional initiatives aimed at enhanced connectivity, and when needed provides a platform for dialogue. UNRCCA works closely with specialized UN agencies and programs, including the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), having in mind important regional infrastructural and transport projects and initiatives that positively contribute to peace, and security through enhanced regional collaboration.

Considering the rapid advancement of information technologies, UNRCCA promotes digital cooperation in the region, in line with the objectives of the Global Digital Compact under the Pact for the Future. This effort aims to facilitate the sharing and utilization of the benefits of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), while also addressing associated challenges—particularly those related to security and human rights.

UNRCCA promotes regional cooperation to support the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and advance gender equality across Central Asia. Through its active support to the Central Asia Women Leaders' Caucus — an initiative launched under UNRCCA's auspices — the Centre facilitates regional dialogue on women's participation, peace and security, and gender equality, engaging governments, civil society, and other stakeholders.

UNRCCA, through its Preventive Diplomacy Academy, works with youth and provides training courses on preventive diplomacy, multilateral cooperation, human rights and other subjects.

UNRCCA maintains support and guidance to the Academy's Alumni Network, which uses obtained knowledge and capacity to promote interaction in the region.

UNRCCA also supports the country's specific efforts to proceed with national strategies and plans covering political, security and socioeconomic reforms, the rule of law and human rights. In particular, UNRCCA uses its experience to assist in developing counter-terrorism strategies and work plans.

Against the background of funding constraints, UNRCCA remains committed to pursue innovative and cost-effective approaches when delivering on its mandate.

II. Monitoring and early warning in support of conflict prevention

UNRCCA maintains ongoing monitoring and analyses of the developments in Central Asia through high and working level meetings with state authorities, engagement with the civil society, academia and other experts. UNRCCA has regular consultations with the Permanent Members of the Security Council, and other interested parties, and information exchange with UN entities, international and regional organizations. Conclusions of regional and country specific events are also important input for analysis, particularly in such areas as preventing violent extremism and transboundary water management. Monitoring security, political and socio-economic trends on global, sub-regional and country-specific levels through open sources is an established practice to analyze developments in Central Asia in the broader context.

Furthermore, concerning information on specific issues, such as human rights and drug trafficking, UNRCCA is in contact with the Regional Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); the UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and its Regional Office for Afghanistan, Central Asia, Iran and Pakistan. Concerning analyses of economic developments in Central Asia, UNRCCA maintains contact with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

UNRCCA delivers political analysis to the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials, through the DPPA. Analysis on developments in Central Asia and information on the implementation of the mandate are also provided to the Security Council through regular briefings of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Special attention is paid to the evolution of regional peace and security in the context of global polarization, the increasing number of regional conflicts and the development of new technologies, including the expansion of communication tools.

III. Building partnerships for prevention with regional and sub-regional organizations

This priority centers on strong partnerships and coordination of the activities with regional and sub-regional organizations, which are crucial for the success of preventive diplomacy. In implementing its mandate, UNRCCA partners with a wide range of regional and sub-regional organizations, including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of SCO (RATS SCO), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and its Anti-Terrorism Centre (CIS ATC), the European Union, and the Central Asian

Regional Information and Coordination Centre for Combating Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and their Precursors (CARICC).

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2025, UNRCCA collaborates with the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) and its subsidiary bodies. It will also continue its cooperation with the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA).

This cooperation primarily entails the exchange of information and analysis, mutual support for preventive diplomacy efforts, and other joint initiatives, all carried out within the scope of respective organizations' mandates.

IV. Strengthening United Nations preventive diplomacy in Central Asia

UNRCCA actively pursues partnerships with UN entities across the region and beyond to strengthen the coherence of United Nations preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding efforts in Central Asia, enhancing existing synergies and creating new ones.

UNRCCA offers a political framework and strategic leadership for the preventive efforts of United Nations Country Teams across the five Central Asian states, that work under the guidance of their respective Resident Coordinators. It also collaborates close contacts with the United Nations Development Coordination Office for Europe and Central Asia in Istanbul (DCO), which provides managerial support and oversight for the Resident Coordinator system throughout the broader region.

Particularly close partnership and synergy exists with the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism/United Nations Counter Terrorism Centre (UNOCT/UNCCT) on implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, as well as close coordination with the UN Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), and UNODC.

In addressing human rights challenges and concerns relevant to sustainable peace, UNRCCA maintains close contacts with OHCHR, particularly with its regional office in Bishkek.

Regarding water issues and climate change, UNRCCA works primarily with UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as maintains working contacts with the UN-Water. Concerning the implementation of the Women Peace and Security agenda, closet partners for the Centre are the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women.

UNRCCA also works with a range of other Agencies, Funds and Programmed, including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

V. Supporting the engagement of Central Asian states in addressing challenges related to Afghanistan, in close coordination with UNAMA and grounded in the analysis of security-related developments.

Afghanistan remains among the key factors for long-term security, stability and development in the region. The Central Asian states maintain close contacts with Afghan counterparts developing cross-border businesses and assisting Afghanistan in addressing socioeconomic and humanitarian challenges.

In this context, UNRCCA collaborates with the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), with regular meetings held between the leadership of both missions. Additionally, staff-level talks between UNRCCA and UNAMA are conducted to facilitate information exchange across a wide range of regional engagement areas.

The leadership of UNAMA regularly takes part in the annual meetings of the Deputy Foreign Ministers of the Central Asian states, convened by UNRCCA. UNAMA also engages in other UNRCCA activities, particularly those focused on counter-terrorism and transboundary water management, including on climatic risks in the wider Aral Sea Basin.

Depending on developments on the ground, where applicable, UNRCCA, in partnership with UNAMA, also practices engagement of the representatives from Afghanistan in UNRCCA's programmatic activities.