

## War games of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization: Drills on the move!

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The SCO is a political, economic and security organization, which started its security policy in arms control and subsequently developed war games. Conversely, the CSTO is a military alliance with collective armed forces. The military exercises of the CSTO are focussed on conventional warfare, peacekeeping, anti-narcotics, counterterrorism, and disaster relief. The SCO conducts counterinsurgency drills, as well as large-scale conventional warfare games. The dominating role of Russia and China in CSTO and SCO is also reflected in the military exercises of these bodies. The views that Central Asian countries put forward in SCO and CSTO are not coordinated on a Central Asian regional level but usually only serve national interests. There is no such thing as a common Central Asian approach to security.*

The objective of this article is to analyse the security policy of the regional organizations in Central Asia, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). This work only focusses on Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, since the fifth Central Asian state, Turkmenistan, conducts a permanent neutral policy, which prevents it from joining the aforementioned organizations (see Table 1).

The involvement of Central Asia has a different background in each of the regional organizations. The predecessor of the SCO, the so-called 'Shanghai Five', was founded to promote disarmament and foster mutual trust between the former Soviet republics and China, after the collapse of the USSR. Hence, bordering China, the Central Asian states played an important role in this arms control process. Especially for trade reasons, later on the SCO turned out to be a practical tool for Central Asia to improve its economic ties with China. Soon after its foundation, the main objective of the CSTO developed into being a buffer zone against the overflow of terrorism and narcotics from Afghanistan. Here, we see a mutual advantage for Central Asia and for Russia. Central Asia serves as a buffer zone between Afghanistan and Russia, and Moscow, with its military power and bases in the region, guarantees security for Central Asia. Especially for the political-military vulnerable Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the Russian security warrant is vital for the survival of these states.

## Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a regional international organisation comprising states in Europe, the Near East, Central Asia and South East Asia.<sup>1</sup> SCO member states have a population of nearly 1.5 billion people, which is less than a quarter of the total world population. Including the observers and dialogue partners, the SCO encompasses nearly half of the world's population. Furthermore, in addition to the member states Russia and China, the observers India and Pakistan bring together four nuclear powers. The size of the armed forces of China and Russia belong to the top three list of the world. The total area occupied by SCO member states is 3/5 of the territory of Eurasia.<sup>2</sup>

The SCO consists of three types of participants. Firstly, China (1996)<sup>3</sup>, Russia (1996), Kazakhstan (1996), Kyrgyzstan (1996), Tajikistan (1996) and Uzbekistan (2001) as member states. Secondly, Mongolia (2004), Iran (2005), Pakistan (2005), India (2005), Belarus (2010) and Afghanistan (2012) as observer states. And thirdly, Sri Lanka (2009), Turkey (2012) Nepal (2015), Cambodia (2015), Azerbaijan (2015) and Armenia (2015), as dialogue partners. Extension of the membership has been – besides its scope of tasks – a lively point of discussion within the SCO. The SCO members decided on the eve of the 2006 Shanghai Summit not to allow any new members, allegedly, because the current member-states had not yet finalised a legal base for new participants.<sup>4</sup> However, it is more likely that there was disagreement within the SCO on which of the observers – the most likely contestants for membership, would be allowed to join. For instance, Iran and India have been the Russian favourites to become observers, whereas Pakistan was supported by China. After many years of discussion, finally, at the Ufa Summit of July 2015, the SCO decided to grant India and Pakistan to be promoted to membership, probably in 2016.<sup>5</sup>

The SCO promotes cooperation in ensuring peace, security and stability in the region, politics, trade and economy, science and technology, culture as well as education, energy, transportation, tourism, environmental protection and other fields.<sup>6</sup> Important ingredients of economic cooperation are (conventional) arms trade – with Russia as supplier – and energy,

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed description of the SCO, see: M. de Haas, *The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: Towards a full-grown security alliance?*, Clingendael Security Paper 3, The Hague: Clingendael Institute (November 2007) [http://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/20071100\\_cscp\\_security\\_paper\\_3.pdf](http://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/20071100_cscp_security_paper_3.pdf) (accessed 20 April 2016).

<sup>2</sup> *Military: Armed forces personnel: Countries Compared*, <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/stats/Military/Armed-forces-personnel> (accessed 2 February 2016); *Brief introduction to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation*, <http://www.sectsc.org/EN123/brief.asp> (accessed 2 February 2016); The SCO members and observers account for some 3 billion people out of some 7 billion of the world population (Source: 2014 World Population Data Sheet, [http://www.prb.org/pdf14/2014-world-population-data-sheet\\_eng.pdf](http://www.prb.org/pdf14/2014-world-population-data-sheet_eng.pdf)).

<sup>3</sup> Year of access.

<sup>4</sup> R. Weitz, 'Shanghai summit fails to yield NATO-style defence agreement', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, August 2006, p. 40.

<sup>5</sup> 'Brief introduction to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation', <http://www.sectsc.org/EN123/brief.asp>; <http://infoshos.ru/en/>; [http://en.sco-russia.ru/about\\_sco/20140905/1013180761.html](http://en.sco-russia.ru/about_sco/20140905/1013180761.html); <http://sco-russia.ru/documents/>; 'Outcome Of SCO Summit', *Iripak* (30 July 2015) <http://www.ipripak.org/outcome-of-sco-summit/#sthash.LCbubtPu.dpbs> (accessed 3 February 2016). In practise the observer states participate in many of the activities of the SCO, such as the annual summits and as observers at military exercises. Their position is specifically mentioned in the regulations of the 'SCO Energy Club'. Therefore, their status is more that of a 2<sup>nd</sup> line member than simply an 'observer'; 'India, Pakistan become full SCO members', *The Hindu* (10 July 2015), <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/india-gets-full-membership-of-the-shanghai-cooperation-organisation-along-with-pakistan/article7407873.ece> (accessed 3 February 2015).

<sup>6</sup> 'Brief introduction to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation', <http://www.sectsc.org/EN123/brief.asp>.

in which Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Iran are big exporters – and China and India are significant importers. Russia and China are the leading actors of the SCO. Comprising a considerable territory in and around Central Asia, a large part of the world population, energy sources, nuclear arms and significant armed forces, the SCO in theory has a formidable economic, political and military potential.

### ***Defence and security policy***

Cooperation in the domain of defence and security comprises aspects such as security policy concepts and agreements, counter terrorism activities and armament deals. Military exercises will be discussed separately. Although the SCO started as a security organization – extending from confidence building measures at the borders to anti-terrorist activities – the SCO members frequently state that this organisation is primarily meant for political and economic cooperation and that military coordination – focussing on domestic security – plays a minor role. Furthermore, its members disagree upon vital issues of security – as was the case with the anti-Western positions in the declaration of the 2005 Astana Summit – concerning Western military deployment in Central Asia – and also on other issues of security cooperation. For instance, as to the international legal connotation of security, there is common understanding within the SCO that ‘non- interference’ in internal affairs is a leading principle. However, when it comes to collective military action against domestic, non-violent uprisings, the 2005 and 2010 uprisings in Kyrgyzstan demonstrated disagreement within the SCO whether to act or not.<sup>7</sup>

*Terrorism* has increasingly become a concern for individual SCO members. Because of its transnational nature it was decided that this problem should be solved at the SCO-level rather than individually. At a SCO summit in June 2002 the Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, announced the founding of a regional antiterrorism agency as part of the SCO.<sup>8</sup> In June 2004 the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, became operational, with analysis of regional terrorist movements, exchanges of information on terrorist threats and advices on counter-terrorist policies. Concrete activities of the RATS are providing the coordination of SCO exercises of combined security forces and efforts to disrupt terrorist financing.<sup>9</sup>

*Armament deals* – with Russia as supplier – are another activity within the SCO. In this field a secondary objective of the Russian-Chinese exercises of August 2005 – not suggested by official sources but by Russian and Western independent reports – might have been arms export. Around 2005 some 45% of Russia’s arms export went towards to China, India amounted to some 40% of Russia’s arms export, and Iran was also an interesting growth market for Russian arms.<sup>10</sup> Although arms trade is primarily a Russian-led bilateral issue, the SCO serves as a convenient platform to conclude such contracts.

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<sup>7</sup> Weitz, ‘Shanghai summit fails to yield NATO-style defence agreement’, pp. 41-42.

<sup>8</sup> Carlson, ‘Central Asia: Shanghai Cooperation Organization Makes Military Debut’.

<sup>9</sup> Weitz, ‘Shanghai summit fails to yield NATO-style defence agreement’, p. 40.

<sup>10</sup> V. Strugovets, ‘Potentsial voyennogo eksporta pochti ischerpan’, *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye*, No. 24 (433), 1 July 2005, p. 6; A. Blua, ‘Joint exercises underscore growing ties between Moscow and Beijing’, *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Russian Political Weekly*, Vol 5, No 28, 9 August 2005; ‘Defense minister says Russia, China, India may hold joint military exercises’, *RFE/RL Newslines*, Vol. 9, No. 195, Part I, 17 October 2005; ‘Russia to increase military-technical cooperation with China’, *RIA Novosti*, 31 August 2005; ‘Putin steps in to revitalize arms sales to China’, *RIA Novosti*, 8 September 2005.

## **Military exercises<sup>11</sup>**

From the overview of war games of the SCO (see Table 2: SCO military exercises), the following conclusions can be drawn:

- **Number of drills.** Since 2002, so in 14 years time, the SCO has carried out at least 22 military exercises. Initially, the SCO conducted only one exercise per year, or none at all. Since 2006 the SCO has held one or two war games per year, and only in 2006 even three exercises.
- **Participants.** China has nearly always participated in SCO drills, in 16 war games. Russia with some 14 exercises in total. Three out of the four Central Asian member states of the SCO – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan – have most of the time participated in SCO drills, albeit in different compositions. Kazakhstan has participated in 14 exercises, Kyrgyzstan in 15, Tajikistan in 14. Uzbekistan has only contributed to 4 or 5 drills, hence, Tashkent has mostly abstained from participating in SCO war games.
- **Bi/Multilateral.** Most of the SCO drills, some 14, were executed in a multilateral way, i.e. with contributions of all or most SCO member states. In addition to this, China and Russia have 3 times conducted bilateral SCO war games. The Central Asian SCO members have usually participated in SCO drills together with the leading SCO nations, Russia and China, in total 10 times. Sometimes with one of these two regional powers, and sometimes only the three Central Asian states together. Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan have conducted bilateral exercises with China, each of them only 1 time. In total, China has 4 times carried out drills with Central Asian states, without Russia. Russia has only 1 time exercised with Central Asian states without China. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have 2 times carried out drills together (in different settings), i.e. without the major powers Russia and China.
- **Locations.** SCO drills were conducted 6 times in Russia; 6 times in China, 3 times in Kazakhstan, 5 times in Kyrgyzstan, 3 times in Tajikistan, and 2 times in Uzbekistan.
- **Sequence and type.** A distinction can be made between those war games that usually have 'anti-terror' in the name of the exercise, and the so-called 'Peace-Mission' ('Mirnaya Missiya') exercises. The remainder of the drills have various names, without a common denominator. Considering the division into three groups of exercises, 'anti-terror', other drills and Peace Mission war games, the number of 'anti-terror' exercises is 8. The 'Peace-Mission' exercises also count 8. Hence with 22 drills in total, the remaining undefined are 6 exercises. The war games with 'anti-terror' in the title, started out in 2006, with most SCO members participating. However, gradually, with the growth in importance of the 'Peace-Mission' exercises, the number of participating SCO states in the 'anti-terror' war games reduced. These drills are often executed under the auspices of the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) of the SCO. Furthermore, they are limited to one location, usually mentioned in the title of the exercise. Intelligence services, special forces and law-enforcement agencies contribute. Compared with the Peace Mission war games, the 'anti-terror' SCO drills are the real counterinsurgency exercises, whereas the Peace Mission drills often show large-size conventional warfare. The Peace Mission drills, started in 2005, apparently developed into the standard SCO-exercise, also because its name generated brand awareness for the security policy of the SCO. With the Peace Mission exercise as its centrepiece, the other types of drills received much less attention. In addition to the alleged anti-terror character of the Peace Mission exercises, these drills have often also been used by Russia and China – due to their significant contributions of tanks, artillery, airborne and amphibious landings, bombers, fighters, warships, etc. – as a demonstration of force towards the West / USA, to show that Central Asia and surroundings belong to their sphere of influence.
- **Size.** The following can be said about their size. The size of the 'anti-terror' exercises as well as of the other remaining war games, in terms of troops and equipment, has

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<sup>11</sup> This list of SCO exercises is as complete as possible. However, not all the war games are traceable. Therefore, the number of drills mentioned in this analysis might not be correct.

continuously been quite limited, usually some 300-400 troops. The *Peace Mission* drills demonstrate a varying size. Starting with 10,000 troops in 'Peace Mission-2005', the number of participating military fell back via 7,000 in 2007 to less than 3,000 in 2009. Then varying from 5,000 (2010) via 2,000 (2012) to 7,000 (2014). Nevertheless, it is clear that the 'anti-terror' and the remaining drills are always small in size, both in number of troops, some hundreds, as well as in arms and equipment. Conversely, the Peace Mission war games always have a troop proportion of thousands (2,000-10,000) and also carry a considerable quantity of heavy conventional weaponry.

- **Assessment.** Gradually, a division has grown into the types of SCO war games. The Peace Mission drills, Russian-Chinese led, have developed into the standard exercise, supported with considerable numbers of forces and arms, with a clear message of show-of-force, of who is in command, towards the West/USA as well as to internal, regional adversaries, such as the Uyghurs in China and separatist movements in Central Asia. Conversely, the anti-terror drills, as well as the remaining war games, concentrate on improving counter-terror techniques and related cooperation within the SCO. It is likely that the current status of exercises will be continued, with usually two war games per year. The Peace Mission drills, led by Moscow and Beijing, will continue to be in the lead, and concentrate on conventional warfare, whereas the anti-terror and undefined drills carry on as the smaller sized counterinsurgency exercises.

## Collective Security Treaty Organization

The CSTO is a Russian-led military alliance. The other member states are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.<sup>12</sup> Afghanistan and Serbia joined in 2013 as observers.<sup>13</sup> In the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), a CIS Collective Security Treaty (CST) was signed in Tashkent in May 1992. The treaty reaffirmed the desire of all participating states to abstain from the use or threat of force against one another. Furthermore, in its Article 1, the treaty forbids parties from joining other military alliances. Similar to NATO, the CSTO has a military assistance provision (Article 4), which states that aggression against one party will be considered an attack on all parties.<sup>14</sup>

The CST was set to last for a five-year period unless extended. In 1999 the presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan signed a protocol renewing the treaty for another five-year period. Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Uzbekistan refused to sign and withdrew from it.<sup>15</sup> On 7 October 2002 the six members of the CST signed a charter expanding the treaty and renaming it the CSTO.<sup>16</sup> The main responsibilities of the CSTO are cooperation in defence, the manufacturing of weapons, training of military personnel, and peacekeeping activities. Other areas of cooperation are a common

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<sup>12</sup> For a more detailed description of the CSTO, see: M. de Haas, *The Collective Security Treaty Organization: On its way to a "NATO of the East"?*, Central Asia Policy Brief No. 26 (11 May 2015) Washington DC: Central Asia Program, George Washington University, <http://centralasiaprogram.org/blog/2015/05/11/the-collective-security-treaty-organization-on-its-way-to-a-nato-of-the-east/> (accessed 20 April 2016);

<sup>13</sup> 'Parlamentskiye delegatsii Respubliki Serbiya i Islamskoy Respubliki Afganistan poluchili status nablyudateley pri Parlamentskoy Assambleye ODKB', [www.odkb-csto.org](http://www.odkb-csto.org) (12 April 2013) [http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=1776](http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=1776) (accessed 23 February 2016).

<sup>14</sup> *Dogovor o kollektivnoy bezopasnosti* (Collective Security Treaty), Tashkent, 15 May 1992, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=126](http://www.odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=126) (accessed 28 January 2016).

<sup>15</sup> "Sochi Summit: more symbolism than substance?" *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Newslines*, 17 August 2006.

<sup>16</sup> *Basic Facts*, CSTO website (in English), [http://www.odkb.gov.ru/start/index\\_aengl.htm](http://www.odkb.gov.ru/start/index_aengl.htm) (accessed 28 January 2016).

integrated air defence system, energy security, and the fight against terrorism and narcotics, in Central Asia in particular.<sup>17</sup>

### **Structure and cooperation areas**

The CSTO has established its joint headquarters in Moscow. The organization's top body is the Council for Collective Security, in which the Heads-of-State reside, and which takes all major decisions. Next is the Standing CSTO Council, which implements the decisions, the Secretary General, a Secretariat, and a Joint Military Staff. Furthermore, the CSTO comprises Councils of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of Defence, and a Committee of the Secretaries of the Security Councils, which are not only consultative but also executive bodies. In addition to this, the CSTO has supporting bodies, which deal with military-economic cooperation, counter-narcotics, Afghanistan, information security, illegal immigration, and disaster relief.<sup>18</sup> The organizational structure of the CSTO evidences the fact that the tasking of this alliance has moved from classical collective defence (against external aggression) to modern security threats, such as terrorism, narcotics, cyber warfare, and illegal immigration. To that extent, the CSTO's development is congruent with that of NATO.

In addition to the aforementioned standing elements of the CSTO's top-level structure, which cements it as a mature security organization, this alliance keeps on developing new areas of cooperation. The security of oil and gas pipelines against terrorist attacks has become a CSTO task. Since 2004 the CSTO had been responsible for the protection of railway lines, which – similar to energy – are also related to strategic economic interests. During the CSTO's joint military exercises conducted in Belarus in June 2006, one of the objectives was the protection of oil and gas pipelines, which further confirmed the CSTO's conceptual development towards energy security tasking.<sup>19</sup> In January 2015 the CSTO discussed strengthening the role of military educational establishments and scientific organizations, improving the military training of CSTO member states' Ministries of Defence, as well as developing a CSTO Partnership Institute. This Partnership Institute would be open for up to 22 non-CSTO members wishing to cooperate.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the CSTO will establish a Crisis Response Center to help member states deal with major security threats. The Center, to be created with Moscow's assistance, is expected to coordinate with Russia's new National Defence Control Center, and aims to bring together the leadership of defence and security structures in real time.<sup>21</sup>

### **Collective Forces**

In October 2007, at the initiative of Putin, the CSTO Summit in Dushanbe decided to form a **CSTO Peacekeeping Force**.<sup>22</sup> Since 2011, the CSTO has been able to bring together some 4,000 military personnel for peacekeeping operations. The structure of CSTO peacekeeping forces include contingents from a number of specially trained military, militia (police) and

<sup>17</sup> M. Kaczmarek, "Russia creates a New System to Replace the C.I.S.," *Power and Interest News Report*, 21 December 2005. "Moscow reinforces military cooperation with CIS allies," *RFE/RL*, 24 June 2005. 'Korotko: Mirotvortsy ot ODKB', *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye (NVO)*, 26 May 2006.

<sup>18</sup> *Struktura ODKB*, <http://www.odkb-csto.org/structure/> (accessed 28 January 2016).

<sup>19</sup> I. Plugatarev, "Karaul u truboprobodov mozhet prinyat ODKB," *NVO*, 9 June 2006; "ODKB budet zashchitat' truboprovody," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta (NG)*, 16 June 2006. S. Blank, "The great game goes to sea: naval rivalries in the Caspian," *Central Asia – Caucasus Analyst*, 11 January 2006.

<sup>20</sup> "Okolo 22 stran mogut voyti v sozdavaemyy ODKB institut partnërstva," *interfax.by*, 12 April 2012.

<sup>21</sup> "Bordyuzha: vse ucheniya Kollektivnykh sil ODKB budut bnezapno," *TASS*, 15 January 2015, <http://itar-tass.com/politika/1698449> (accessed 28 January 2016).

<sup>22</sup> A. Gabuev and V. Solovyev, "Gendarme of Eurasia," *Kommersant*, 8 October 2007, [http://www.kommersant.com/p812422/CIS\\_CSTO\\_Russia\\_Lebedev/](http://www.kommersant.com/p812422/CIS_CSTO_Russia_Lebedev/) (accessed 28 January 2016).

civilian personnel. The number includes more than 3 thousand armed forces troops and about 1,000 law enforcement officers. The first CSTO peacekeeping exercise was conducted in Kazakhstan, in October 2012. This peacekeeping force is the only component to be deployed abroad, under the banner of the United Nations. The CSTO's peacekeeping contingent is dominated by a Russian brigade, Kazakhstan contributes with a battalion, the others with smaller units.<sup>23</sup>

On 4 February 2009, the CSTO agreed to create **Collective Rapid Reaction Forces** (*Kollektivnyye sily operativnogo reagirovaniya*, KSOR). Uzbekistan made some objections. KSOR can be used to repel military aggression, conduct anti-terrorist operations, fight transnational crime and drug trafficking, and neutralize the effects of natural disasters. KSOR is permanently based in Russia and placed under a single command, with CSTO member countries contributing special military units.<sup>24</sup> KSOR has currently 20,000 military, consisting mainly of Russian (an airborne division and an airborne brigade) and Kazakh (an air assault brigade) elite military units. Other CSTO members offer no more than a battalion.<sup>25</sup> KSOR includes units of Russia's army base in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, and Russia's airbase in Kant, Kyrgyzstan.<sup>26</sup> Considering the overspill of terrorism and radicalism from Central Asia to its own territory, but also to maintain or even increase its political clout on these Central Asian countries, Russia supports its Central Asian neighbours in the fight against terrorist organizations by helping them to strengthen border control, support for local special services and by use of the CSTO Rapid Reaction Forces.<sup>27</sup>

The CSTO also aims at a **joint Air Defence System**.<sup>28</sup> In October 2014 seven CIS/CSTO member nations conducted a training of the Joint CIS Air Defence System. Nearly 100 aircraft (fighter jets, bomber aircraft, long-range aviation, and helicopters), and sub-units of radar and missile troops from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Russia participated in the training, which was conducted in the air space of these countries. The Command Center of the Russian Aerospace Defence Forces supervised these drills.<sup>29</sup>

In 2013 the CSTO took the initiative of forming **Collective Aviation Forces**. The CSTO Aviation Forces would mainly consist of units in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia, since the other CSTO members lack the means to be able to participate. A draft proposal on Collective Aviation Forces was agreed on 30 September 2014. The Collective Aviation

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<sup>23</sup> 'Mirotvorcheskiye ucheniya ODKB "Nerushimoye bratstvo-2014".'. TASS (29 July 2014) <http://tass.ru/info/1346904> (accessed 1 March 2016); R. McDermott, "CSTO Stages First Peacekeeping Exercises," *Eurasia Daily Monitor (EDM)*, 16 October 2012. *Strategiya mirotvorchestva*, 3 May 2012, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/information/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=163](http://www.odkb-csto.org/information/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=163) (accessed 28 January 2016).

<sup>24</sup> "CSTO's rapid-reaction force to equal NATO's – Medvedev," *Sputnik*, 4 February 2009, <http://sptnkne.ws/acy> (accessed 28 January 2015).

<sup>25</sup> R. McDermott, "CSTO Proposes Cooperation with NATO on Afghanistan," *EDM*, April 10, 2012; "CSTO exercises rapid reaction forces in Armenia," *EDM*, 18 September 2012.

<sup>26</sup> The Kant airbase comprises Su-25 Frogfoot ground attack aircraft, Mi-8 helicopters and some 400 military ("Russia to beef up military presence in Kyrgyzstan – Defence Minister," *Russia Today (RT)*, 4 February 2014, <http://on.rt.com/nxe514>, accessed 28 January 2016). Some 7,000 Russian troops with tanks, infantry carriers, artillery and helicopters are stationed in and around Dushanbe; Russia's largest military contingent deployed abroad (A. Kanzantsev, "Russian military base in Tajikistan is most of all needed to ensure the security of Tajikistan itself," 22 March 2012, [http://russiancouncil.ru/en/inner/?id\\_4=270#top](http://russiancouncil.ru/en/inner/?id_4=270#top), accessed 28 January 2015).

<sup>27</sup> *Ready to Go? ISIS and Its Presumed Expansion into Central Asia*, pp. 1, 9-10; J. Paraszczuk 'Implicit Criticism Of West, Russia's FM Calls For 'More Serious' Fight Against IS', *RFE/RL* (13 January 2015).

<sup>28</sup> *Organizatsii ODKB*, <http://www.odkb-csto.org/structure/> (accessed 28 January 2016).

<sup>29</sup> "Sem stran SNG nachali sovместnuyu trenirovku v ramkakh Obyedinnenoy sistemy PVO," *CA News*, 21 October 2014, <http://ca-news.org/news:1128220> (accessed 28 January 2016).

Forces were to include air formations of military transport and special aviation of the armed forces, units of internal affairs (police), internal troops, security agencies, special services, as well as of agencies for disaster relief. The number of aircraft from each country, the place of dislocation, and the quantity of personnel was to be specified. However, in autumn 2015, at the meeting of heads of CSTO member states' delegations in Dushanbe, the forming of a coalition (collective) air force, as well as of a united air and missile defence system were still in the stage of discussion.<sup>30</sup>

### **Military exercises<sup>31</sup>**

From the outline of drills of the CSTO (see Table 3: CSTO military exercises), the following conclusions can be derived:

- **Number of war games.** Since 2003, the CSTO has carried out at least 38 military exercises, hence with an average of some three per year. Initially, the CSTO conducted only one exercise per year. Between 2006 and 2011 this alliance usually held two to three war games per year. Since then the number of annual drills has increased: In 2012 and 2013 five exercises; in 2014 four, and in 2015 even six drills.
- **Participants and multilateral character.** At least 15 of the CSTO war games demonstrated a setting in which all six member states (Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) contributed to the exercises. Russia has usually taken part in CSTO exercises, if not in all 38. The Central Asian member states of the CSTO – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan – have generally all three together joined CSTO drills, in some 23 exercises, with at least Russia. Kazakhstan has participated in at least 26 exercises, Kyrgyzstan in 24, Tajikistan in 26. Uzbekistan has only contributed to 2 drills, in 2010 and 2012. In addition to the reluctance of Tashkent towards CSTO (and SCO) exercises, considering these as a possible infringement on its sovereignty, another reason for the lack of contribution of Uzbekistan was its absence from the CSTO, until mid-2006 and again since mid-2012, when it once more suspended its membership.
- **Locations.** CSTO drills were conducted 14 times in Russia, 8 times in Kazakhstan, 6 times in Kyrgyzstan, 8 times in Tajikistan, and none at all in Uzbekistan.
- **Type, sequence and size.** The military exercises of the CSTO demonstrate operations in conventional warfare, peacekeeping, anti-narcotics, counterterrorism, and disaster relief.<sup>32</sup>
  - *VZAIMODEYSTVIE*. War games, in which the rapid reaction forces KSOR are trained, come under the name “*VZAIMODEYSTVIE*” (Interaction/Cooperation), which are held since 2003, and number 10 altogether. These drills test crisis management and conventional warfare, in particular the containment of armed conflict. Their size varies between 600 and 12,000 troops, with an average personnel strength of 2,000-3,000 military. These drills have taken place varied in all CSTO member states.

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<sup>30</sup> R. McDermott, “Moscow Promotes Airpower and Peacekeeping on Afghanistan-Linked CSTO Agenda (Part One),” *EDM*, 30 April 2013. “Postoyanniy sovet ODKB soglasoval document po sozdaniyu Kollektivnykh aviatsionnykh sil...,” 1 October 2014, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=4043&SECTION\\_ID=91](http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=4043&SECTION_ID=91) (accessed 28 January 2016); D. Urazova, ‘Joint air defense system discussed by CSTO’, *Tengrinews* (6 June 2015) <http://en.tengrinews.kz/military/Joint-air-defense-system-discussed-by-CSTO-260658/> (accessed 23 February 2016).

<sup>31</sup> This list of CSTO exercises is as complete as possible. However, not all the war games are traceable. Therefore, the number of drills mentioned in this analysis might not be correct.

<sup>32</sup> “Ucheniya ODKB ‘Vzaimodeystvie-2014’. Dosye,” *TASS*, 18 August 2014, <http://tass.ru/info/1386036>. *Ucheniya*, <http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/>; <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/start/index.htm>; [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=2951&SECTION\\_ID=95](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=2951&SECTION_ID=95) (accessed 28 January 2016).

- RUBHEZ. The anti-terror warfare games, titled “RUBHEZ” (Frontier) also involve KSOR. They have been executed practically each year since 2004 and count 11 in total. Their size varies between 1,000 and 2,500 troops and the majority of the drills take place in Central Asia, i.e. in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.
- KOBALT. The counter-terrorism drills are named “KOBALT”, with only 2 exercises conducted since 2010. The KOBALT war games are organized in Russia, involve special units of the Interior (police), other law enforcement agencies and Special Forces, and have a limited number of some 500 troops.
- GROM. Since 2012 the CSTO has conducted counter narcotics drills, called “GROM” (Thunder), 3 overall. The war games were located in Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Special forces, anti-drug agencies and services, internal security forces, law-enforcement bodies, organs of state security and internal affairs contribute to GROM.
- NERUSHIMOE BRATSTVO. The exercises of the CSTO Peacekeeping Force are called “NERUSHIMOE BRATSTVO” (Indestructible Brotherhood), with 4 conducted drills since 2012. The size varies between 600 and 4,000 troops, but typically numbers 600-700 military. Each drill takes place in a different member state.
- TSENTR. Large scale conventional warfare exercises called “TSENTR” (Centre) have been executed 3 times, in 2008, 2011 and 2015. TSENTR is by far the largest CSTO exercise, with a personnel strength increasing from 9,000, via 12,000 up to 95,000, also comprising huge quantities of tanks, armoured vehicles and artillery pieces; attack aircraft, fighter jets, military transport aircraft, helicopters and ships. In addition to defence forces, operative groups of MVD (Interior), the Federal Security Service FSB and the Ministry of Emergency Situations also participated. All three drills were held in Russia; one of them also had training locations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.
- In addition to the aforementioned type of drills, the CSTO conducted 6 other exercises, amongst them disaster relief drills.
- **Assessment.** The CSTO features a large variety of military exercises, aiming at different objectives such as conventional warfare, peacekeeping, anti-narcotics, counterterrorism, and disaster relief. Since 2011 the CSTO conducts four to six drills per year, which is an impressive number. RUBHEZ (anti-terror), VZAIMODEYSTVIE (conventional warfare) and NERUSHIMOE BRATSTVO (peacekeeping) have apparently been adopted as the typical annual standard drills, since these are the ones most organized. TSENTR, which is organized every 3-4 years, seems to be the show-case of CSTO military power, considering the huge amount of troops and weaponry. Since all six member states (Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) commonly participate in the war games, the CSTO drills clearly foresee in their needs.

## Assessment and Outlook

### *War Games of SCO and CSTO*

#### **Dissimilarity of the organizations**

The summaries of drills of SCO and CSTO (Tables 2 and 3), lead to the following deductions. Making a comparison between these two organizations is not entirely valid, because of the differences between them. Even though most of the time both institutions have comprised six member states, with Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as members of both. As to the dissimilarities, first of all, SCO is more of a political-economic entity with a security component, whereas the CSTO sees itself as a full-fledged military

alliance. Secondly, in the SCO there are two dominating actors, Russia and China, of which the latter more and more becomes the senior partner, due to its economic and military leverage. In the CSTO Russia is the one and only ruling actor. Taking into account the military nature of the CSTO, it is not surprising that this alliance has conducted much more exercises than the SCO; some 38 CSTO drills versus 22 SCO war games. Consequently, the number of annual drills is in the CSTO (average of some 3 per year) much higher than that of the SCO (average of some 1.5 per year); SCO has about half the size of the average annual war games.

### **Level of participation in military exercises**

Corresponding with their vanguard roles, China and Russia have participated in most of the SCO (China and Russia) and CSTO (Russia) war games. Likewise, the locations of joint SCO and CSTO exercises were primarily chosen in China and Russia, and to a much lesser extent on the territory of other member states. The Central Asian member states of CSTO and SCO – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan – have always been ‘loyal citizens’, by very frequently contributing to the joined drills. Other than Uzbekistan, which because of its reluctance towards CSTO and SCO exercises, has only rarely joined the common war games. Tashkent’s aversion is related to its fear of breaches to its territory by collective forces, but also because President Karimov cherishes his independent, non-aligned stance, and regards Uzbekistan as the lead-nation of Central Asia.

### **Nature and size of the drills**

The military exercises of the CSTO are focussed on conventional warfare, peacekeeping, anti-narcotics, counterterrorism, and disaster relief. Concerning the SCO, its ‘anti-terror’ drills are the real counterinsurgency exercises, whereas the Peace Mission war games consist of demonstrating large-size conventional warfare. Hence, as expected due to its character of a military alliance, the CSTO comprises a broader scope of exercises than the SCO. The most common CSTO exercises, in which the Collective Rapid Reaction Forces KSOR are trained and others in large-scale conventional warfare is practised, contain an average personnel strength of each at least some 1,000 up 12,000. The SCO Peace Mission exercises are of a similar scale, with an average of some 3,000 up to 7,000 troops. However, large war games are in the CSTO a couple of times per year conducted, whereas in the SCO once per year or even only every couple of years.

### ***Military leverage of Moscow and Beijing***

The dominating role of Russia and China in the SCO is clearly also reflected in the military exercises of this organization. Although these two major powers have a strong influence on the security policy of the SCO, of which war games are an instrument, their ruling position does not exclude that the Central Asian SCO members make their own choices, with whom to cooperate. The enumeration of SCO exercises gives evidence to the fact that the Central Asian states vary their cooperation with other parties. Uzbekistan, as often, takes an independent position and is reluctant in participating in SCO drills. As long as the new ‘Cold War’ between Russia and the West – as a result of the former’s interventions in Ukraine – goes on, so will Russia’s deepened interest of conducting war games with China. However, Beijing keeps all options opened. With its growing economic cooperation in Central Asia, in due course, as a result of its emergent military power, China might also expand its military cooperation in this region, thus further ousting Moscow from its traditional (Soviet/Russian) sphere of influence in Central Asia.

Considering the overflow of narcotics and terrorism from Afghanistan, the political-economic weak states of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan must be very pleased with the security umbrella that the CSTO, and its lead-nation Russia in particular, provides. These two countries hold large Russian air respectively army bases, which Moscow has double-headed, also under the banner of the CSTO. Without this Russian/CSTO security guarantee the survival of these

regimes would be at stake. On its turn, the Kremlin is also served by an operational strong CSTO, since Central Asia forms a buffer zone between Afghanistan and Russia. Although there is a close military cooperation within the CSTO, as demonstrated in the joint war games, it must be emphasized that Russia's military power by far dominates that of the other CSTO states. This also applies to Moscow's ruling share in troops and weaponry in the joint CSTO exercises. Without Russia's leading involvement, the CSTO would just be a weak, toothless organization.

### **Central Asian security policy**

Security cooperation in the Central Asian region is organized through the CSTO, with Russia in the lead, and to a lesser extent through the SCO, with firstly China and secondly Russia as principle actors. A common Central Asian security policy and / or corresponding organization does not exist. I recognize two reasons for this. First, because the Central Asian states feel comfortable in the current security settings of CSTO and SCO, which saves them from organizing their own collective security entity. Secondly, and probably even more likely, because of the lack of unity among the Central Asian states. The ongoing regional Central Asian disputes on water, energy and borders clearly demonstrate that there is no such thing as a united Central Asian approach; not on these issues, nor on security.<sup>33</sup> Moscow fills this collective Central Asian security gap by providing bilateral military support. Other than Moscow, Beijing is not interested in political clout, China only has economic and energy interests. Therefore, China is an easier and more favourable partner for Central Asian states. Consequently, the Central Asian states might well be more interested in the SCO. However, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are economically and militarily heavy dependent on Russia. Hence, these countries have no other option than to follow Russia. Due to its economic and military clout, Kazakhstan has the capability of making its own, independent stance, possibly contradicting views from the Kremlin. The same applies to Uzbekistan, concerning its posture in the SCO. Astana and Tashkent can afford this independent attitude, Dushanbe and Bishkek cannot.

The views that Central Asian countries put forward in SCO and CSTO are not coordinated on a Central Asian regional level but usually only serve national interests. There is no such thing as a Central Asian political vision. The border, energy and ethnic conflicts within or among Central Asian states testify that a common Central Asian feeling / policy is absent. The fact that there is no regional organization, consisting solely of Central Asian states, also proves this assumption. The neutral stance of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan further underlines the lack of unity in Central Asia. This absence of a common Central Asian posture makes the region weak. Vulnerable towards external threats, e.g. those from Afghanistan, and at risk to be overruled by the two big players, Russia and China. A united Central Asia could better resist these threats and powers. However, considering their current national and conflictual attitude, such a Central Asia harmony is not soon to be expected.

**Table 1: Central Asian participation in SCO and CSTO**

Organization	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Uzbekistan	Turkmenistan
SCO	X	X	X	X	
CSTO	X	X	X		

<sup>33</sup> M. de Haas, 'Security Policy and Developments in Central Asia: Security Documents Compared with Security Challenges', *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (June 2016) pp. 1-24.



**Table 2: SCO military exercises<sup>34</sup>**

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
1.	10-11 Oct 2002 <sup>35</sup>	China, Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyzstan	<p><b>'Exercise-01' anti-terrorist exercise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the armed forces of Kyrgyzstan held a joint anti-terror military exercise on the border of the two countries.</li> </ul>
2.	06-12 August 2003 <sup>36</sup>	Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	Kazakhstan Almaty oblast; <b>China:</b> Xinjiang region	<p><b>'Coalition-2003' anti-terror exercise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cross-border anti-terrorist exercises.</li> <li>It was the first of its kind within the framework of the SCO and also the first time China participated in multilateral joint military manoeuvres.</li> <li>More than 1,300 troops; aircraft, artillery, armoured vehicles.</li> </ul>

<sup>34</sup> This list of SCO exercises is as complete as possible. However, not all the war games are traceable. Sources that provide an overview of SCO drills are: <http://www.globaltimes.cn/daily-specials/peace-mission-2014/>; [http://russian.cntv.cn/program/news\\_ru/20100901/103991.shtml](http://russian.cntv.cn/program/news_ru/20100901/103991.shtml); <http://russian.cri.cn/841/2010/09/11/1s352425.htm>; <http://old.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5565>; [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-09/10/c\\_13489722.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-09/10/c_13489722.htm); <http://vpk-news.ru/articles/26192>; <http://desantura.ru/news/68150/> (accessed 3 March 2016).

<sup>35</sup> 'Backgrounder: SCO anti-terror military drills', *Xinhua* (10 September 2010) [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-09/10/c\\_13489722.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-09/10/c_13489722.htm) (accessed 3 March 2016); [http://russian.cntv.cn/program/news\\_ru/20100901/103991.shtml](http://russian.cntv.cn/program/news_ru/20100901/103991.shtml); <http://russian.people.com.cn/31521/6707479.html>; <http://russian.people.com.cn/31521/6325388.html>; <http://russian.cri.cn/841/2010/09/11/1s352425.htm>; <http://old.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5565>.

<sup>36</sup> C. Carlson, 'Central Asia: Shanghai Cooperation Organization Makes Military Debut', *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty* (RFE/RL), 5 August 2003; R. Weitz, 'Shanghai summit fails to yield NATO-style defence agreement', *Jane's Intelligence Review* (August 2006) p. 42; G. Wacker, *The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation – Regional Security and Economic Advancement*, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 20 August 2004; R. Weitz, 'Military Exercises Underscore The SCO's Character', *CACI Analyst* (25 May 2011) <http://old.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5565> (accessed 3 March 2016); 'Backgrounder: China-Russia joint military exercises since 2003', *Xinhua* (5 July 2013) [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-07/05/c\\_132516470.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-07/05/c_132516470.htm) (accessed 3 March 2016); 'Backgrounder: SCO anti-terror military drills', *Xinhua* (10 September 2010); <http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1061153340>; [http://russian.cntv.cn/program/news\\_ru/20100901/103991.shtml](http://russian.cntv.cn/program/news_ru/20100901/103991.shtml); [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2003-08/12/content\\_254135.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2003-08/12/content_254135.htm).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
3.	18-25 August 2005 <sup>37</sup>	Russia, China	<b>Russia:</b> Vladivostok; <b>China:</b> Shandong Peninsula	<b>'Peace Mission-2005'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal objectives: Anti-terrorist exercise; Enhance combat readiness against new threats. De-facto objectives: Practise of modern conventional warfare; Show-of-force against the West.</li> <li>Although SCO members sent observers, this manoeuvre was primarily a Russian-Chinese event. China and Russia held their first joint anti-terror military exercises.</li> <li>10,000 troops (8,000 Chinese and 2,000 Russians).</li> </ul>
4.	2-5 March 2006 <sup>38</sup>	Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan	<b>Uzbekistan</b>	<b>'East-Antiterror-2006'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uzbekistan affirmed its elevated commitment to the SCO by hosting this multilateral exercise.</li> <li>The SCO's anti-terrorist drill was under the auspices of the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) based in Tashkent.</li> <li>300 personnel of special services.</li> </ul>
5.	Aug 2006 <sup>39</sup>	China and Kazakhstan		<b>'Tianshan-1'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>China and Kazakhstan held joint anti-terror exercises, to train units of their public security forces.</li> </ul>
6.	22-23 Sep 2006 <sup>40</sup>	China and Tajikistan	<b>Tajikistan:</b> Kulyab	<b>'Coordination-2006' exercises ('Vzaimodeystviye-2006')</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>China and Tajikistan held their first joint anti-terror military exercise.</li> <li>About 450 troops: more than 300 Tajik troops from artillery, infantry and airborne, as well as a reinforced company of more than 150 Chinese troops.</li> </ul>

<sup>37</sup> M. de Haas, *Russian-Chinese military exercises and their wider perspective: Power play in Central Asia*, Russian Series 05/51, Swindon: Conflict Studies Research Centre, UK Defence Academy, October 2005; 'China to lead regional anti-terrorism drill "Peace Mission – 2014"', *globaltimes.cn* (24 August 2014) <http://www.globaltimes.cn/daily-specials/peace-mission-2014/> (accessed 2 March 2016); Weitz, 'Military Exercises Underscore The SCO's Character';

'Backgrounder: China-Russia joint military exercises since 2003', *Xinhua* (5 July 2013).

<sup>38</sup> "Uzbekistan hosts SCO drill", *RFE/RL Newslines*, Vol. 10, No. 45, Part I, 10 March 2006; R. McDermott, 'Uzbekistan Hosts SCO Anti-Terrorist Drill', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Volume: 3 Issue: 50 (14 March 2006) [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=31474&no\\_cache=1#.Vthqco-cEb4](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=31474&no_cache=1#.Vthqco-cEb4) (accessed 3 March 2016); Weitz, 'Military Exercises Underscore The SCO's Character'; <http://vpk-news.ru/articles/26192>; <http://regnum.ru/news/polit/603454.html>; <http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1142229300>; <http://www.pr.kg/old/archive.php?id=6138>.

<sup>39</sup> Weitz, 'Military Exercises Underscore The SCO's Character'; 'Antiterroristicheskiye ucheniya SHOS', *CNTV* (1 Sep 2010).

<sup>40</sup> 'Backgrounder: SCO anti-terror military drills', *Xinhua* (10 September 2010); 'Antiterroristicheskiye ucheniya SHOS', *CNTV* (1 September 2010).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
7.	30-31 May 2007 <sup>41</sup>	Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan	<b>Kyrgyzstan:</b> Lake Issyk Kul	<b>'Issyk-Kul Antiterror-2007'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intelligence services, special forces and law-enforcement agencies.</li> <li>• Terrorist attacks inspired by those in the North Caucasus in 1999 and 2000, including exercises in mountainous terrain and hostage scenarios, were simulated.</li> </ul>
8.	9-17 August 2007 <sup>42</sup>	Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan	<b>China:</b> Urumqi; <b>Russia:</b> Chelyabinsk region	<b>'Peace Mission-2007'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The armed forces of all six full SCO members participated on this occasion.</li> <li>• Anti-terrorist exercise. Mostly Special Forces but also Russian Internal, Border and Justice Troops. The largest drills of its kind within the framework of the SCO so far.</li> <li>• Some 7,000 troops, mainly Russian (4,700) and Chinese (1,700); 80 aircraft.</li> </ul>
9.	Sep 2008 <sup>43</sup>	Russia and?	<b>Russia:</b> Volgograd	<b>"Volgograd-Antiterror-2008"</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-terrorist exercises, to develop cooperation in the protection of environmentally hazardous infrastructure.</li> </ul>
10.	17-19 April 2009 <sup>44</sup>	Tajikistan and?	<b>Tajikistan</b>	<b>"Norak-Antiterror-2009"</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint command-staff antiterrorist exercises, which focused on joint actions in case of penetration of extremists from Afghanistan.</li> </ul>

<sup>41</sup> 'SCO conducts counter-terrorism exercises in Kyrgyzstan', *UzDaily* (30 May 2007) <http://www.uzdaily.com/articles-id-432.htm> (accessed 3 March 2016); S. Peyrouse, 'Military Cooperation between China and Central Asia' *Jamestown China Brief* 5/3/10 (6 March 2010) [http://www.ocnus.net/artman2/publish/Defence\\_Arms\\_13/Military-Cooperation-between-China-and-Central-Asia\\_printer.shtml](http://www.ocnus.net/artman2/publish/Defence_Arms_13/Military-Cooperation-between-China-and-Central-Asia_printer.shtml) (accessed 3 March 2016).

<sup>42</sup> M. de Haas, *The 'Peace Mission 2007' exercises: The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation advances*, Central Asian Series 07 / 28, Shrivenham: Advanced Research and Assessment Group, UK Defence Academy, September 2007; 'China to lead regional anti-terrorism drill "Peace Mission – 2014"', *globaltimes.cn* (24 August 2014); Weitz, 'Military Exercises Underscore The SCO's Character'; 'Backgrounder: China-Russia joint military exercises since 2003', *Xinhua* (5 July 2013).

<sup>43</sup> 'Protivodeystviye terrorizmu v ramkakh shos', *mid.ru* (28 October 2011) [http://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/rso/-/asset\\_publisher/0vP3hQoCPRg5/content/id/187762/pop\\_up?\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_0vP3hQoCPRg5\\_viewMode=tv&\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_0vP3hQoCPRg5\\_qrInde x=0](http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/rso/-/asset_publisher/0vP3hQoCPRg5/content/id/187762/pop_up?_101_INSTANCE_0vP3hQoCPRg5_viewMode=tv&_101_INSTANCE_0vP3hQoCPRg5_qrInde x=0) (accessed 3 March 2016).

<sup>44</sup> 'Protivodeystviye terrorizmu v ramkakh shos', *mid.ru* (28 October 2011).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
11.	22-27 July 2009 <sup>45</sup>	Russia, China	<b>Russia:</b> Khabarovsk, <b>China:</b> Shenyang	<b>'Peace Mission-2009'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large-scale conventional exercises involving combined arms operations against terrorists in an urban setting.</li> <li>• About 2,600 troops (1,300 military personnel from each country).</li> </ul>
12.	16-26 Aug 2010 <sup>46</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan	<b>Russia:</b> Saratov Region	<b>'Saratov-Antiterror-2010'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint anti-terrorist exercises of security agencies of the SCO member states, with law enforcement bodies and internal security forces.</li> </ul>
13.	09-25 Sep 2010 <sup>47</sup>	Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan	<b>Kazakhstan</b> Almaty; Gvardeisky.	<b>'Peace Mission-2010'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uzbekistan pulled out of participation at the last minute, all other SCO members contributed.</li> <li>• "Peace Mission 2010" was the largest SCO military exercise outside of Russian and Chinese territory. With a duration of 15 days, one week longer than "Peace Mission 2007".</li> <li>• More than 5,000 troops (1,000 troops each from China, Russia, and Kazakhstan; and 150 each from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan).</li> <li>• 1,600 armed vehicles, 100 cannons and mortars, and 50 combat aircraft and helicopters.</li> </ul>
14.	5-8 May 2011 <sup>48</sup>	China, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	<b>China:</b> Xinjiang Uygur region	<b>'Tianshan-2' or 'Tianshan-2011'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counter-terrorist exercises; With a coordinating role of the RATS SCO, antiterrorist units conducted a joint exercise of special forces and law enforcement agencies.</li> </ul>

<sup>45</sup> 'China to lead regional anti-terrorism drill "Peace Mission – 2014"', *globaltimes.cn* (24 August 2014); Weitz, 'Military Exercises Underscore The SCO's Character'; 'Backgrounder: China-Russia joint military exercises since 2003', *Xinhua* (5 July 2013); [http://russian.cntv.cn/program/news\\_ru/20100901/103991.shtml](http://russian.cntv.cn/program/news_ru/20100901/103991.shtml); [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=35433&cHash=34ba0dd177#.VtgUE4-cEb4](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=35433&cHash=34ba0dd177#.VtgUE4-cEb4); <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/peacemission2009/>; <http://en.people.cn/90001/90776/90883/6709137.html>; <http://russian.people.com.cn/31857/97285/> (accessed 6 March 2016).

<sup>46</sup> 'Protivodeystviye terrorizmu v ramkakh shos', *mid.ru* (28 October 2011); Weitz, 'Military Exercises Underscore The SCO's Character'.

<sup>47</sup> 'China to lead regional anti-terrorism drill "Peace Mission – 2014"', *globaltimes.cn* (24 August 2014); Weitz, 'Military Exercises Underscore The SCO's Character'; 'Backgrounder: China-Russia joint military exercises since 2003', *Xinhua* (5 July 2013); [http://russian.cntv.cn/special/peaceful\\_mission/homepage/index.shtml](http://russian.cntv.cn/special/peaceful_mission/homepage/index.shtml); <http://russian.people.com.cn/31521/7141658.html>; <http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2010/10/29-asia-war-games-boland>; [http://www.china.org.cn/world/2010-09/20/content\\_20972793.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/world/2010-09/20/content_20972793.htm); [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=37018&cHash=0af06e912a#.VtggHI-cEb4](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=37018&cHash=0af06e912a#.VtggHI-cEb4) (accessed 7 March 2016).

<sup>48</sup> 'Protivodeystviye terrorizmu v ramkakh shos', *mid.ru* (28 October 2011); Weitz, 'Military Exercises Underscore The SCO's Character'.

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
15.	05-12 June 2012 <sup>49</sup>	Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan	<b>Uzbekistan:</b> Jizzakh region.	<b>'East-Antiterror-2012'</b> anti-terrorist exercises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• War games carried out under the coordination of the Executive Committee of the RATS SCO.</li> </ul>
16.	8-14 June 2012 <sup>50</sup>	Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan	<b>Tajikistan;</b> Khudzhand.	<b>'Peace Mission-2012'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A multilateral anti-terror military drill. Uzbekistan chose to avoid the event.</li> <li>• More than 2,000 troops. The smallest Peace Mission drills since 2003.</li> </ul>
17.	June 2013 <sup>51</sup>	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	<b>Kazakhstan</b> Shymkent	<b>'Kazygurt-Antiterror-2013' antiterrorist drills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The drill stimulated a situation where terrorists enter Kazakhstan by helicopters and automobiles, hijacked hostages in a bordering village to conduct terrorist activities.</li> </ul>
18.	27 July until 15 Aug 2013 <sup>52</sup>	China, Russia	<b>Russia:</b> Chelyabinsk, Ural region	<b>'Peace Mission-2013'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenario was to neutralize terrorists who hijacked a peaceful settlement.</li> <li>• Equipment consisting of tanks, infantry fighting vehicles and aircraft, 250 units of equipment in total; and a joint air group includes more than 20 aircraft and helicopters.</li> </ul>

<sup>49</sup> 'Kazakhstan prinyal uchastiye v uchenii SHOS «Vostok-Antiterror-2012»', *sunna.kz* (13 June 2012) <http://sunna.kz/ru/news/view?id=2006> (accessed 7 March 2016).

<sup>50</sup> 'China to lead regional anti-terrorism drill "Peace Mission – 2014"', *globaltimes.cn* (24 August 2014); 'Backgrounder: China-Russia joint military exercises since 2003', *Xinhua* (5 July 2013); R. McDermott, 'China Leads SCO Peace Mission 2012 in Central Asia', *EDM*, Volume: 9 Issue: 121 (26 June 2012); [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=39538&no\\_cache=1#.VtgJQo-cEb4](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=39538&no_cache=1#.VtgJQo-cEb4); <http://www.sectsc.org/EN123/show.asp?id=343>; <http://en.people.cn/90786/7846872.html>; <http://www.rferl.org/content/sco-military-exercises-tajikistan/24607689.html>; <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/tajikistan/9315111/Tajikistan-hosts-China-and-Russia-lead-military-exercises.html>; A. Sodiqov, 'SCO Peace Mission 2012: Lessons For Tajikistan', *CACI Analyst* (27 June 2012); <http://old.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5809> (accessed 7 March 2016).

<sup>51</sup> 'Ucheniya spetssluzhb stran SHOS po presecheniyu teraktov zavershilis' v Kazakhstane', *Tengrinews* (13 June 2013) [http://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan\\_news/ucheniya-spetsslujb-stran-shos-presecheniyu-teraktov-236102/](http://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan_news/ucheniya-spetsslujb-stran-shos-presecheniyu-teraktov-236102/); J. Kucera, 'A Diminished SCO Exercises In Kazakhstan', *eurasianet.org* (17 June 2013) <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/67128> (accessed 7 March 2016).

<sup>52</sup> 'China to lead regional anti-terrorism drill "Peace Mission – 2014"', *globaltimes.cn* (24 August 2014); J. Kucera, 'Chinese Troops Exercise In Russia, But Where's Rest Of The SCO?', *eurasianet.org* (6 August 2013) <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/67350>; <http://www.1tv.ru/news/social/239737>; [http://ria.ru/defense\\_safety/20130815/956557624.html](http://ria.ru/defense_safety/20130815/956557624.html); <http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=1118382>; <http://www.vz.ru/news/2013/8/15/645837.html> (accessed 7 March 2016).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
19.	24-29 August 2014 <sup>53</sup>	China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	<b>China:</b> Zhurihe Training Base, Inner Mongolia	<b>'Peace Mission-2014'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allegedly the largest SCO drills so far. As usual, Uzbekistan abstained from participation.</li> <li>The exercise scenario involved an international terrorist organization supporting a separatist movement in a country, plotting coups, and aiming for violent regime change.</li> <li>More than 500 multiple arms, e.g. unmanned aerial vehicles, air-defence missiles, tanks, armoured vehicles, and special operations units. Some 70 aircraft, including fighter planes, airborne early warning aircraft, armed helicopters, and surveillance and combat drones.</li> <li>7,000 troops in total.</li> </ul>
20.	21-24 April 2015 <sup>54</sup>	Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan	<b>Kyrgyzstan:</b> Tokmok, Shamsi Gorge, Chui region	<b>Antiterrorist exercises</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Special forces units tested their cooperation abilities in mountain conditions, with joint actions to block and destroy illegal armed groups in mountainous areas and techniques for operating high-altitude and mountainous equipment.</li> </ul>
21.	15-17 Sep 2015 <sup>55</sup>	Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan?	<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	<b>'CentrAsia-Antiterror – 2015'</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint command-staff antiterrorist exercises.</li> </ul>

<sup>53</sup> R. Weitz, 'SCO Military Drills Strengthen Russian-Chinese Regional Hegemony', *CACI Analyst* (01 October 2014) <http://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/13054-sco-military-drills-strengthen-russian-chinese-regional-hegemony.html>; <http://tass.ru/info/1393512>; <http://mir24.tv/news/community/11140373>; <http://www.1tv.ru/news/world/265657>; [http://tvzvezda.ru/news/vstrane\\_i\\_mire/content/201408241328-o1q9.htm](http://tvzvezda.ru/news/vstrane_i_mire/content/201408241328-o1q9.htm); [http://ria.ru/defense\\_safety/20140819/1020512197.html](http://ria.ru/defense_safety/20140819/1020512197.html); <http://www.sldinfo.com/analyzing-peace-mission-2014-china-and-russia-exercise-with-the-central-asian-states/>; <http://www.globaltimes.cn/daily-specials/peace-mission-2014/> (accessed 7 March 2016).

<sup>54</sup> 'SCO member states to hold joint military exercise', *en.sco-russia.ru* (15 April 2015) <http://en.sco-russia.ru/news/20150415/1013342851.html>; <http://www.rbc.ru/rbcfreenews/553659d39a79477338a43762>; <http://www.newsru.com/world/21apr2015/kirgiziya.html>; (accessed 7 March 2016).

<sup>55</sup> 'V Kirgizii prokhodyat antiterroristicheskiye ucheniya SHOS', *regnum.ru* (16 September 2015) <http://regnum.ru/news/polit/1972573.html> (accessed 7 March 2016).



**Table 3: CSTO military exercises<sup>56</sup>**

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
1.	2003 <sup>57</sup>			« <b>VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2003</b> » (“ <b>Interaction 2003</b> ”) (P.M.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSTO Collective Rapid Response Forces (Kollektivnyye sily operativnogo reagirovaniya — KSOR).</li> </ul>
2.	2-6 Aug 2004 <sup>58</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan	<b>Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan;</b> Balykchy	« <b>RUBEZH-2004</b> » (“ <b>Frontier 2004</b> ”) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large-scale military exercises of the CSTO Collective Rapid Reaction Forces (CRRF).</li> <li>• More than 2,000 troops</li> </ul>
3.	29 Mar - 6 Apr 2005 <sup>59</sup>	Tajikistan, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan	<b>Kyrgyzstan; Tajikistan;</b> Khatlon region	« <b>RUBEZH-2005</b> » (“ <b>Frontier 2005</b> ”) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenario of external attempts to destabilize the socio-political situation in the country.</li> <li>• More than 1,000 of troops; some 300 pieces of arms and equipment.</li> </ul>
4.	June? 2006 <sup>60</sup>		<b>Belarus (?)</b>	« <b>VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2006</b> » (“ <b>Interaction 2006</b> ”) (P.M.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSTO Collective Rapid Response Forces (KSOR).</li> </ul>

<sup>56</sup> This list of CSTO exercises is as complete as possible. However, not all the war games are traceable. Sources that provide an overview of the CSTO war games: G. Voloshin, “CSTO Launches War Games amid Growing Regional Uncertainty.” *EDM* (7 August 2012)

[http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx\\_tnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=39737&no\\_cache=1#.Vs7I3I-cEb4](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_tnews%5Btt_news%5D=39737&no_cache=1#.Vs7I3I-cEb4); <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/ub/a.htm>; [http://military-kz.ucoz.org/index/vojska\\_odkb\\_ksor/0-63](http://military-kz.ucoz.org/index/vojska_odkb_ksor/0-63) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>57</sup> [http://military-kz.ucoz.org/index/vojska\\_odkb\\_ksor/0-63](http://military-kz.ucoz.org/index/vojska_odkb_ksor/0-63) (accessed 2 March 2016).

<sup>58</sup> ‘V Kirgizii nachnuty krupnomasshtabnyye ucheniya ODKB’, <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/u/aza.htm> (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>59</sup> ‘Informatsiya po SKSHU «Rubezh-2005»’, <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/u/azy.htm>; [http://old.redstar.ru/2005/04/02\\_04/1\\_01.html](http://old.redstar.ru/2005/04/02_04/1_01.html) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>60</sup> [http://military-kz.ucoz.org/index/vojska\\_odkb\\_ksor/0-63](http://military-kz.ucoz.org/index/vojska_odkb_ksor/0-63) (accessed 2 March 2016); I. Plugatarev, “Karaul u truboprobodov mozhet prinyat ODKB,” *Nezavisimoye Vojennoye Obozreniye*, 9 June 2006; “ODKB budet zashchishat’ truboprovody,” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta (NG)*, 16 June 2006.

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
5.	23-25 Aug 2006 <sup>61</sup>	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.	Kazakhstan near Aktau on the Caspian Sea	<p><b>«RUBEZH-2006» (“Frontier 2006”)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint antiterrorist exercises of the Collective Rapid Deployment Forces of the Central Asian Region of the CSTO, with the use of aircraft, artillery and landing of amphibious assault.</li> <li>• More than 2,500 troops.</li> <li>• More than 60 armoured vehicles, 50 artillery pieces and mortars, more than 35 aircraft and helicopters, as well as 14 warships and support vessels.</li> </ul>
6.	2007 <sup>62</sup>	Russia, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan	Tajikistan	<p><b>«RUBEZH-2007» (“Frontier 2007”)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenario of combatting terrorist groups that broke into the territory of Tajikistan.</li> <li>• Several battalions, as well as tanks and aircraft.</li> </ul>
7.	18-22 Aug 2008 <sup>63</sup>	Russia, Armenia	Armenia; site Marshal Baghramyan	<p><b>«RUBEZH-2008» (“Frontier 2008”)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the first time “Rubezh” drills in the Caucasus.</li> <li>• For the first time not only the military component, but all government agencies were involved.</li> <li>• About 2,500 troops.</li> <li>• Armoured vehicles, artillery, antiaircraft weapons, air defence systems, air forces.</li> </ul>
8.	31 Aug until 15 Sep 2008 <sup>64</sup>	Russia	Russia; Orenburg region.	<p><b>«TSENTR-2008» (“Centre 2008”)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drills aimed at the organization of territorial and civil defence, the destruction of terrorist groups, the annihilation of their bases, warehouses, and securing the military district.</li> <li>• At that time the largest military exercise, held in Russia since the early 1990's.</li> <li>• More than 9,000 troops.</li> <li>• More than 1,000 tanks, armoured vehicles and artillery pieces; attack aircraft, fighter jets, military transport aircraft and helicopters.</li> </ul>

<sup>61</sup> ‘V Kazakhstane Proshli Ucheniya "Rubezh-2006"’, <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/u/azzn.htm>; <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/u/azzo.htm> (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>62</sup> ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=108&SECTION\\_ID=94](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=108&SECTION_ID=94) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>63</sup> ‘Na "RUBEZHE-2008"’, <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/ub/azi.htm>; <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/ub/azj.htm>; ‘KONTRTERRORISTICHESKIY "RUBEZH"’, <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/ub/azk.htm> (accessed 29 February 2016).

<sup>64</sup> ‘Voyennyye ucheniya “Tsentri-2008” pereshli v aktivnuyu fazu’, *Pravda.Ru* (11 September 2008) <http://www.pravda.ru/news/society/11-09-2008/282933-ucheniya-0/>; <http://politrussia.com/vooruzhennye-sily/tsentr-sily-510/> (accessed 1 March 2016).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
9.	2008 <sup>65</sup>			<p>«<b>VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2008</b>» (“<b>Interaction 2008</b>”) (P.M.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSTO Collective Rapid Response Forces (KSOR).</li> </ul>
10.	Sep 2009 <sup>66</sup>	Tajikistan	Tajikistan	<p>«<b>RUBEZH-2009</b>» (“<b>Frontier 2009</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the scenario of the exercises, about 300 militants infiltrated into the country from Afghanistan. The terrorists tried to hide from air strikes by coalition against terrorism.</li> </ul>
11.	7-16 Oct 2009 <sup>67</sup>	Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan.	Russia; Moscow; Belarus; Kazakhstan Matybulak	<p>«<b>VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2009</b>» (“<b>Interaction 2009</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSTO Collective Rapid Response Forces (KSOR).</li> <li>• Some 7,000 troops.</li> </ul>
12.	20-24 April 2010 <sup>68</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan.	Tajikistan; Sughd oblast	<p>«<b>RUBEZH-2010</b>» (“<b>Frontier 2010</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint anti-terrorist operation, to block and destroy militant groups and illegal armed groups.</li> <li>• CSTO Rapid Deployment Forces of the Central-Asian Region.</li> </ul>
13.	9 June 2010 <sup>69</sup>	Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan.	Russia; Rostov region	<p>«<b>KOBALT-2010</b>» (“<b>Cobalt 2010</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>First</b> time drills of special units of the Interior (police), other law enforcement agencies of CSTO member states, and Special Forces of KSOR.</li> <li>• 450 troops.</li> <li>• 43 pieces of transport and special vehicles, armoured vehicles and air assets.</li> </ul>

<sup>65</sup> [http://military-kz.ucoz.org/index/vojska\\_odkb\\_ksor/0-63](http://military-kz.ucoz.org/index/vojska_odkb_ksor/0-63) (accessed 2 March 2016).

<sup>66</sup> ‘Voyennyye otrabatyvayut vzaimodeystviye na "Rubezhe"’, newstube.ru (24 September 2009) <http://www.newstube.ru/media/voennye-otrabatyvayut-vzaimodeystvie-na-rubezhe> (accessed 29 February 2014).

<sup>67</sup> ‘Sovmestnoye kompleksnoye izucheniye Organizatsii Dogovora o kollektivnoy bezopasnosti proydet tochno v ustanovlennyye sroki’ [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=235&SECTION\\_ID=93](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=235&SECTION_ID=93) (accessed 1 March 2016).

‘Ucheniya ODKB "Vzaimodeystviye-2014"’, TASS (18 August 2014) <http://tass.ru/info/1386036> (accessed 24 February 2016).

<sup>68</sup> ‘KONTRTERRORISTICHESKIY "RUBEZH"’, <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/ub/azk.htm> (accessed 29 February 2014).

<sup>69</sup> ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=110&SECTION\\_ID=95](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=110&SECTION_ID=95) (accessed 25 February 2016).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
14.	25-28 Oct 2010 <sup>70</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan.	Russia; Chebarkul training ground, Chelyabinsk region.	<p>«VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2010» (“Interaction 2010”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSTO Collective Rapid Response Forces KSOR.</li> <li>• Exercises aimed at the containment of armed conflict.</li> <li>• More than 1,700 troops.</li> <li>• 270 pieces of arms and equipment, 30 aircraft and helicopters.</li> </ul>
15.	June 2011 <sup>71</sup>		Russia; near St. Petersburg	<p>«RUBEZH-2011» (“Frontier 2011”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The search for wounded and evacuating them from the battlefield, carrying out complex operations in the field, fighting the spread of epidemics, minimize losses among conditionally affected personnel.</li> </ul>
16.	19-22 Sep 2011 <sup>72</sup>	Russia, Belarus Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan.	Russia; Orenburg region; <b>Kazakhstan</b> <b>Tajikistan</b> ; “Lyaur” range, near Dushanbe; <b>Kyrgyzstan</b> .	<p>«VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2011» (“Interaction 2011”) / «TSENTR-2011» (“Center-2011”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Command-and-staff exercises of KSOR and tactical exercises of the Collective Rapid Deployment Forces of the Central Asian CSTO region in the framework of the strategic exercise "Centre-2011".</li> <li>• Special operations to destroy illegal armed formations.</li> <li>• 12,000 troops.</li> <li>• 50 aircraft, more than 1,000 pieces of arms and equipment. Also a navy component of 10 combat and support ships, as well as operative groups of MVD, FSB, Federal Security Service and the Ministry of Emergency Situations.</li> </ul>

<sup>70</sup> ‘Ucheniya ODKB "Vzaimodeystviye-2014"’; ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=109&SECTION\\_ID=93](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=109&SECTION_ID=93) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>71</sup> ‘Na poligone pod Sankt-Peterburgom prokhodit taktiko-spetsial'noye ucheniye «Rubezh-2011»’, (21 June 2011) <http://syria.mil.ru/news/more.htm?id=10549286@egNews> (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>72</sup> ‘Ucheniya ODKB "Vzaimodeystviye-2014"’; <http://www.dkb.gov.ru/start/index.htm>; <http://politrussia.com/vooruzhennye-sily/tsentr-sily-510/> (accessed 1 March 2016).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
17.	06-10 Aug 2012 <sup>73</sup>	Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan	Russia; Chebarkul, Chelyabinsk region	<p>«<b>RUBEZH-2012</b>» (“<b>Frontier 2012</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective Rapid Deployment Forces of the Central Asian CSTO region.</li> <li>• Joint attack on a well-protected camp, presumably established by an organized criminal group.</li> <li>• More than 1,000 troops</li> <li>• 100 armoured vehicles; aviation group of combat helicopters and fighter jets.</li> </ul>
18.	14 Sep 2012 <sup>74</sup>	Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan	Russia; Moscow region	<p>«<b>GROM-2012</b>» (“<b>Thunder 2012</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>first</b> CSTO anti-drug exercise.</li> <li>• KSOR operational and tactical exercises of the rapid reaction anti-drug agencies and bodies of internal affairs of the CSTO members.</li> </ul>
19.	15-19 Sep 2012 <sup>75</sup>	Russia, Armenia	Armenia; shooting range Marshal Baghramyan	<p>«<b>VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2012</b>» (“<b>Interaction 2012</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise aimed at CSTO KSOR forces in the Caucasus region.</li> <li>• 2,000 troops (defence forces, security forces, troops of the Interior Ministry, Emergencies Ministry, and rescue services)</li> <li>• More than 500 arms and equipment, 50 artillery systems and more than 200 vehicles.</li> </ul>
20.	8-17 Oct 2012 <sup>76</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan.	Kazakhstan Almaty region	<p>«<b>NERUSHIMOYE BRATSTVO-2012</b>» (“<b>Unbreakable Brotherhood 2012</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>first</b> joint CSTO peacekeeping exercise</li> <li>• Scenario of collective CSTO peacekeeping forces, conducting a mission in an imaginary CSTO member-country of Central Asia.</li> <li>• 950 troops.</li> <li>• 70 transport vehicles and 35 armoured vehicles, 4 helicopters.</li> </ul>

<sup>73</sup> Voloshin, “CSTO Launches War Games amid Growing Regional Uncertainty.”; ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=1198&SECTION\\_ID=94](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=1198&SECTION_ID=94) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>74</sup> ‘V Rossii proshli pervyye antinarkoticheskiye ucheniya ODKB «GROM-2012»’, <http://www.panarmenian.net/rus/news/123100/>; ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=1203&SECTION\\_ID=95](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=1203&SECTION_ID=95) (accessed 1 March 2016).

<sup>75</sup> ‘Ucheniya ODKB "Vzaimodeystviye-2014"’; ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=1157&SECTION\\_ID=93](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=1157&SECTION_ID=93) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>76</sup> ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=1199](http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=1199); ‘V Kazakhstane nachalis' ucheniya ODKB «Nerushimoye bratstvo-2012»’, [rosbalt.ru](http://www.rosbalt.ru/exussr/2012/10/08/1043573.html) (8 October 2012) <http://www.rosbalt.ru/exussr/2012/10/08/1043573.html> (accessed 1 March 2016).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
21.	27 Oct 2012 <sup>77</sup>	Russia	Russia; Moscow region	<b>Demonstration of special operations units of the Russian Interior Ministry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special forces of the CSTO KSOR.</li> <li>• Neutralization of armed gangs, hostage rescue, using special equipment, advanced armoured vehicles and helicopters.</li> </ul>
22.	31 May - 1 June 2013 <sup>78</sup>	Kazakhstan, Russia (?)	Kazakhstan Almaty region	<b>Disaster relief exercise</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing and conducting rescue operations in the emergency area, to exchange experiences and lessons learned in organizing and conducting rescue operations.</li> </ul>
23.	4-12 July 2013 <sup>79</sup>	Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Russia	Russia; Rostov region	<b>«KOBALT-2013» ("Cobalt 2013")</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counter-terrorism war game.</li> <li>• 500 troops.</li> </ul>
24.	27 Aug- 6 Sep; 15-20 Sep 2013 <sup>80</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	Kyrgyzstan	<b>«GROM-2013» ("Thunder 2013")</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counter narcotics drill</li> <li>• These special operations were carried out with the participation of aircraft of the Russian air base "Kant".</li> </ul>

<sup>77</sup> 'Ucheniya', [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=1508&SECTION\\_ID=95](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=1508&SECTION_ID=95) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>78</sup> Ucheniya', [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=2019&SECTION\\_ID=95](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=2019&SECTION_ID=95) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>79</sup> Ucheniya', [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=2442&SECTION\\_ID=95](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=2442&SECTION_ID=95) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>80</sup> 'Antinarkoticheskiye ucheniya "Grom-2013" poluchili vysokuyu otsenku', [http://www.vb.kg/doc/244319\\_antinarkoticheskie\\_ycheniia\\_grom\\_2013\\_polychili\\_vysokuyu\\_ocenky.html](http://www.vb.kg/doc/244319_antinarkoticheskie_ycheniia_grom_2013_polychili_vysokuyu_ocenky.html); 'Ucheniya', [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=2951&SECTION\\_ID=95](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=2951&SECTION_ID=95) (accessed 1 March 2016).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
25.	19-25 Sep 2013 <sup>81</sup>	Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan	<b>Belarus:</b> Mogilev region	<p>«<b>VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2013</b>» (“<b>Interaction 2013</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSTO Collective Rapid Response Forces KSOR.</li> <li>• 600 troops.</li> <li>• 60 pieces of arms and equipment, 15 aircraft and helicopters.</li> </ul>
26.	7-11 Oct 2013 <sup>82</sup>	Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.	<b>Russia;</b> Chebarkul, Chelyabinsk region	<p>«<b>NERUSHIMOYE BRATSTVO-2013</b>» (“<b>Unbreakable Brotherhood 2013</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peacekeeping operations in the fictitious state Ural Republic. MVD troops freed hostages, and riot police silenced a crowd and arrested the leaders of a mass disorder.</li> <li>• Armed forces, police forces, riot police of the Interior Ministry (MVD) and special forces.</li> <li>• 4,000 troops.</li> <li>• More than 500 pieces of equipment; an aviation group.</li> </ul>
27.	5-7 June 2014 <sup>83</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan.	<b>Kazakhstan</b> Astana	<p><b>Disaster relief exercise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simulate the elimination of the consequences of accidents at chemical facilities.</li> <li>• Rescue units of the Ministries of Emergency Situations of the member states (all but Armenia).</li> </ul>
28.	15-18 July 2014 <sup>84</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan.	<b>Russia;</b> Chelyabinsk region.	<p>«<b>RUBEZH-2014</b>» (“<b>Frontier 2014</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drills of the Collective Rapid Deployment Forces of the Central Asian Region of the CSTO.</li> <li>• According to the scenario, activities of international extremist organizations, trying to intimidate and recruit local people, organizing base camps, warehouses with ammunition, weapons and drugs.</li> </ul>

<sup>81</sup> ‘Ucheniya ODKB "Vzaimodeystviye-2014"’; ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=2697&SECTION\\_ID=93](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=2697&SECTION_ID=93) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>82</sup> ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=2825&SECTION\\_ID=188](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=2825&SECTION_ID=188) (accessed 25 February 2016).

<sup>83</sup> ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=3567&SECTION\\_ID=95](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=3567&SECTION_ID=95) (accessed 24 February 2016).

<sup>84</sup> ‘Strany ODKB na ucheniyakh v Tsentral'noy Azii obezvredyat "ekstremistov’, *RIA Novosti* (17 July 2014) [http://ria.ru/defense\\_safety/20140717/1016328406.html](http://ria.ru/defense_safety/20140717/1016328406.html); ‘V Rossii zavershilis' ucheniya ODKB’, *rus.kg* (23 July 2014) [http://rus.kg/news\\_rus/rusmir\\_rus/25553-v-rossii-zavershilis-ucheniya-odkb.html](http://rus.kg/news_rus/rusmir_rus/25553-v-rossii-zavershilis-ucheniya-odkb.html) (accessed 29 February 2016).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
29.	29 July -1 Aug 2014 <sup>85</sup>	Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.	Kyrgyzstan; military training ground, "Ala-Too"	<p><b>«NERUSHIMOYE BRATSTVO-2014» (“Unbreakable Brotherhood 2014”)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CSTO Collective Peacekeeping Forces carried out peacekeeping tasks, aimed at actions of the peacekeeping contingent in the conditions of remote mountain areas, protection of important state facilities, riot control, escorting humanitarian aid, response to an attack on a convoy, and the release of hostages.</li> <li>• 700 troops.</li> </ul>
30.	18-22 August 2014 <sup>86</sup>	Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Armenia.	Kazakhstan Karaganda region	<p><b>«VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2014» (“Interaction 2014”)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSTO Collective Rapid Response Forces KSOR.</li> <li>• Training organization and management of information and psychological warfare and cybersecurity; training also on responding to threats from Afghanistan.</li> <li>• More than 3,000 troops.</li> <li>• 200 units of arms and equipment, some 30 aircraft and helicopters.</li> </ul>
31.	20-22 March 2015 <sup>87</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Armenia	Russia; Moscow	<p><b>CSTO Joint Staff counter-Islamic State (IS) exercises</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drills focused on providing military, financial and technical support to countries in which militant groups, such as IS, show rapid advancement.</li> <li>• To propose measures to ensure border security in member states in case of radical group advancement.</li> </ul>
32.	12-21 May 2015 <sup>88</sup>	Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	Tajikistan; Harbmaydon site, south Tajikistan.	<p><b>Snap inspection of combat readiness of CSTO’s rapid reaction forces</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KSOR.</li> <li>• Readiness of the system of collective response to emergency situations and training of the CSTO’s armed forces and law enforcement agencies.</li> <li>• More than 2,500 troops.</li> <li>• 200 weaponry units, about 20 combat aircraft and helicopters and 30 military transport aircraft.</li> </ul>

<sup>85</sup> ‘Ucheniya ODKB "Nerushimoye bratstvo-2014" zavershayutsya v Kirgizii’, *arms-expo.ru* (1 August 2014), [http://www.arms-expo.ru/news/cooperation/ucheniya\\_odkb\\_nerushimoe\\_bratstvo\\_2014\\_zavershayutsya\\_v\\_kirgizii/](http://www.arms-expo.ru/news/cooperation/ucheniya_odkb_nerushimoe_bratstvo_2014_zavershayutsya_v_kirgizii/); ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=3590&SECTION\\_ID=91](http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=3590&SECTION_ID=91) (accessed 1 March 2016).

<sup>86</sup> ‘Ucheniya ODKB "Vzaimodeystviye-2014"’.

<sup>87</sup> ‘CSTO Joint Staff Conduct Exercises Countering ISIL’, *Sputnik* (23 March 2015) <http://sptnkne.ws/aGnj> (accessed 23 February 2016).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
33.	23-28 August 2015 <sup>89</sup>	Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	Russia; Pskov	<p>«<b>VZAIMODEYSTVIYE-2015</b>» (“<b>Interaction 2015</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSTO Collective Rapid Response Forces KSOR.</li> <li>• Plan a collective intervention to “localize” an armed conflict, preserve the sovereignty, protect the constitutional order and restore the territorial integrity of a notional CSTO member state.</li> <li>• 2,000 troops.</li> <li>• 200 pieces of arms and equipment, 40 aircraft and helicopters.</li> </ul>
34.	27 Aug 03 Sep 2015 <sup>90</sup>	Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	Tajikistan	<p>«<b>GROM-2015</b>» (“<b>Thunder 2015</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counter-narcotics exercise.</li> <li>• Improve practical skills at carrying out search and ambush operations, blocking channels of drug trafficking, seizing illegal drugs, arms, ammunition and explosives.</li> </ul>
35.	14-20 Sep 2015 <sup>91</sup>	Russia, Kazakhstan	Russia; from Orenburg and the Altai to the Caspian and Astrakhan	<p>«<b>TSENTR-2015</b>» (“<b>Center-2015</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The manoeuvres studied localization of conventional international conflicts in the Central Asian strategic direction.</li> <li>• The "Centre-2015" vastly exceeded the scale of the last two drills (2008 and 2011). The number of troops in the exercise "Center-2015" increased by 9 times; the amount of military equipment - 7 times: from 1,000 in 2011 to 7,000 in 2015; the number of aircraft – 150, three times more; the number of ships in "Center-2015" had doubled.</li> <li>• 95,000 troops.</li> <li>• 7,000 pieces of arms and equipment; 170 aircraft units, 20 ships.</li> </ul>

<sup>88</sup> ‘CSTO holds military exercises of its rapid reaction forces on Sunday in Tajikistan’, *Sputnik* (17 May 2015) <http://sptnkne.ws/mnD> (accessed 23 February 2016); ‘Ucheniya’, <http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/>; <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/international/asia-pacific/2015/05/17/russia-flexes-central-asia-military-might-amid-afghan-fears/27494697/>

<sup>89</sup> R. McDermott, ‘Russia Hosts CSTO Exercises in Western Military District’, *EDM*, Volume 12, Issue 156 (1 September 2015); ‘Ucheniya’, <http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/>.

<sup>90</sup> ‘V Tadzshikistane nachalsya vtoroy etap antinarkoticheskogo ucheniya ODKB «GROM-2015»’, *CA-News* (29 August 2015) <http://ca-news.org/news:1160162>; ‘Ucheniya’, [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=5001&SECTION\\_ID=95](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=5001&SECTION_ID=95) (accessed 24 February 2016).

	Dates	Participants	Location	Title / Contents
36.	30 Sep -4 Oct 2015 <sup>92</sup>	Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan	Armenia: Armavir oblast	<p>«<b>NERUSHIMOYE BRATSTVO-2015</b>» (“<b>Unbreakable Brotherhood 2015</b>”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercises of the CSTO Collective Peacekeeping Forces in the Caucasus region.</li> <li>• 600 troops (armed forces and Internal Troops)</li> <li>• 50 vehicles, 5 helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicles.</li> </ul>

<sup>91</sup> ‘Strategicheskoye komandno-shtabnoye ucheniye «Tsentri-2015»’, mil.ru () <http://structure.mil.ru/mission/practice/all/more.htm?id=12055124@egNews>; ‘Itogi ucheniya «Tsentri-2015»’, *vpk-news.ru* (20 September 2015) <http://vpk-news.ru/news/27135>; <http://politrussia.com/vooruzhennyye-sily/tsentri-sily-510/> (accessed 1 March 2016).

<sup>92</sup> ‘Ucheniya Mirotvorcheskikh sil ODKB «Nerushimoye bratstvo-2015» zavershilis' v Armenii.’, [www.odkb-csto.org](http://www.odkb-csto.org) (4 October 2015) [http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=5527&SECTION\\_ID=91](http://www.odkb-csto.org/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=5527&SECTION_ID=91); [http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=5504&SECTION\\_ID=218](http://www.odkb-csto.org/training/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=5504&SECTION_ID=218) (accessed 23 February 2016).

