

Russia-China: SCO Military Alliance Challenges US-NATO Unipolar World

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SCO REGIONAL CLOUT BOUND TO INCREASE

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, or SCO, ought to boost its political clout in settling regional conflict in the immediate future. A statement to this effect was made earlier in the week by a group of the Russia-based noted analysts during a Moscow-Beijing video news conference. Aside from maintaining stability and security in Central Asia, the SCO's vast potential will certainly make it possible for the organization to handle other pressing international problems.

In the wake of Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia on August 8, the SCO, which currently groups Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, is sure to play an important role in dealing with fresh geopolitical realities now underway on post-Soviet soils. According to Sergei Kuzyanin, head of the Institute for Eastern Studies, a recent SCO summit in Dushanbe was of great historic significance in terms of SCO support for Russia in the South Ossetian conflict and the organization's looming enlargement. What's more, the SCO is bound to play more important role in the Caucasus in the future, Sergei Luzyanin underscored.

The SCO should first of all focus on initiating an array of new proposals on ensuring regional security, Sergei Luzyanin says, adding that a final document is expected to include several peacekeeping missions-leaning initiatives fulfilled jointly with other regional organizations such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization. In addition, the Russian pundit contends, the SCO must continue to position itself as a complex regional structure to provide economic development and security by, notably, fighting terrorism and drug trafficking.

The head of the Russian Academy of Sciences' center for SCO and regional problems, Anatoly Bolyatko, said that the recent conflict in the Caucasus underscored the need for a multipolar world order. If NATO and even the UN are unable to settle this conflict, the SCO could well become a viable platform for resolving such problems, even though it is not a military-political alliance:

"The SCO should eventually start playing a new role both in and outside the Caucasus. What we see now is a real crisis of the idea of a unipolar world now that the US and its NATO allies pretend they are unable to get to the core of what's been happening in the Caucasus. I believe that organizations like the SCO and BRIC, that brings Russia together with Brazil, India and China, should

play an important role here. Many people already realize the need for the SCO and other international organizations to start focusing more on ensuring global stability and security...”

Anatoly Bolyatko also said that closer interaction between the SCO and such observer nations as Iran, India and Pakistan could make it a major new instrument of collective security both in the former Soviet Union and neighboring regions.

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