Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and gentlemen!

First of all allow me on behalf of the CICA Secretariat to sincerely thank the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS) for the kind invitation to participate in this very important forum – the Sixth International Roundtable on CICA and Asian Security. I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the organizers for their hospitality and excellent arrangement of this event.

This year marks 25th anniversary of the CICA process. 25 years ago, H.E. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan proposed convening of CICA in his first address to the 47 session of the United Nations General Assembly in October 5, 1992. The primary inspiration was to create an effective structure to promote peace, stability and security in Asia.

This was the time when world was undergoing major upheavals. Cold war had ended; many independent states had emerged in Eurasia; and a new political order was evolving. At that time Asia did not have any common platform to discuss security related issues. Previous attempts to create a trans-Asia security structure did not succeed because of mutual suspicions prevailing on account of cold war and various other factors.

We are all aware that in the contemporary world, security no longer emanates primarily from military superiority or quality of weapons systems. Instead, comprehensive security has come to be increasingly seen as an all inclusive term, encompassing inter-dependent and inter-related elements like political and military aspects; economic and environmental issues; and humanitarian and cultural cooperation.

This concept of comprehensive security is duly recognised in CICA and the Member States of CICA are implementing Confidence Building Measures in five broad dimensions: (i) military-political dimension; (ii) fight against new challenges and threats including terrorism, drug trafficking, trans-national crime and human trafficking; (iii) economic dimension; (iv) environmental dimension; and (v) human dimension.

In 25 years, CICA has come a long way from a mere concept to become an effective platform for dialogue, cooperation and implementation of confidence building measures in furtherance of its basic objective of creating a common and indivisible area of security in Asia, where all states co-exist peacefully, and their peoples live in conditions of peace, freedom and prosperity.

Ladies and gentlemen!

China assumed Chairmanship of CICA at Shanghai Summit in 2014. The highly successful Shanghai CICA Summit was a watershed in the history of CICA. This was one of the largest gatherings of Asian Heads of State and Government. President Xi Jinping proposed a new Asian Security Concept at the Summit encompassing the four basic principles of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security.

The concept espouses that countries should promote common security by respecting and ensuring each other’s security concerns at an equal footing and in an inclusive manner. Security should be comprehensive and should address both traditional and non-traditional challenges. Countries should cooperate in addressing both, the symptoms and root causes of common security challenges like terrorism, transnational crime, illicit drug production and trafficking, cyber security etcetera. Since there is undeniable linkage between development and security, countries should adopt a coordinated approach towards economic development to ensure sustainable security. Chinese Chairmanship of CICA is working together with Member States to make the new concept a reality and create better security architecture in Asia.

 Chinese Chairmanship has remained fully committed to the CICA process and strived to further enhance dialogue, trust and coordination for a New Asia of Peace, Stability and Cooperation. It made efforts to promote discussion on the important subject of security cooperation, explore policies for long-term peace and stability, and promote development and prosperity jointly with other member states for cooperative and sustainable security of individual countries and region as a whole. It was and will remain endeavour of Chinese Chairmanship to build on the past achievements and strive for new progress in security cooperation.

In over three years since assumption of Chairmanship by China, CICA has made notable strides. New institutions like CICA Youth Council, CICA Business Council, CICA Non-Governmental Forum and CICA Think-Tank Forum have been established.

Youth Council and Business Council are actively promoting cooperation among youth and businesses in the region.

Non-Governmental Forum and Think-Tank Forum provide and ideal platform for the academicians, former political leaders and alike to discuss issues of peace, security and stability in Asia.

Chinese Chairmanship is coordinating and co-coordinating confidence building measures in the areas of agriculture, finance and environment and is actively supporting other member states in implementation of confidence building measures in other areas.

China’s Belt and Road initiative is another important step in promoting regional cooperation in the true spirit of CICA. This initiative, representing the most comprehensive vision for China’s engagement with its neighbours and beyond, will go a long way to strengthen regional economic cooperation and exchanges; enhance mutual learning between different civilizations, and eventually promote world peace and development. In short, this initiative is a way for win-win regional cooperation and building trust and confidence in the CICA region.

Ladies and gentlemen!

Theme of *Strategic Visions and Possible Architectures for CICA and Asian Security* for this Roundtable is indeed very relevant. In last few decades, Asia has witnessed phenomenal growth in all fields including economy, science and technology. It has been generally acknowledged that 21st century will be the century of Asia.

At the same time, paradoxically, Asia continues to face numerous security challenges that threaten not only the economic gains but also peace and stability of the continent. There are ongoing conflicts and many other flashpoints with significant conflict potentials that could lead to much wider ramifications and threaten global peace and security.

Asia is also facing a number of new threats and challenges, such as international terrorism, trans-national organised crime, religious extremism, drug trafficking and environmental degradation.

There are also cultural, ethnic and religious differences to overcome; and significant gaps in the levels of economic progress among and within different countries that need to be bridged.

To conclude I would like on behalf of the CICA Secretariat to wish the Roundtable Conference a complete success! I hope all the participants of the event make a worthy contribution during the forthcoming discussion.

Thank you!