



Changes for the Collective Security Treaty Organization

OE Watch Commentary: The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) has undergone several significant changes since its creation. Notable changes include the creation of a collective operation reaction force (consisting of contributions of battalions from member states and Russian aircraft posted in Kyrgyzstan) and revising the organization's articles to better respond to a conflict involving a member state and allow for the deployment of a peacekeeping force through a UN mandate. The accompanying excerpted article looks at the results of the recent CSTO summit held 8 November in Astana, Kazakhstan and it notes a couple of changes as well as issues that have yet to be resolved.

The article from *Fergana*, a Russian-language news website based in Moscow with reporters in Central Asia, includes a statement from the leaders of CSTO members claiming that they “have agreed to equip the collective forces with modern types of weapons and military equipment.” CSTO members already have the benefit of purchasing weapons and equipment from the Russian defense at lower prices usually reserved for the Russian armed forces, but no other details about equipping the collective force appear in the article. The article goes on to note the establishment of the CSTO Crisis Response Center, which will work “to identify potential threats to security.” The center had been a couple of years in the making and represents some of the organization's efforts to improve intelligence sharing on threats. This comes alongside the announcement that before the summit, “members agree to create a unified list of terrorist organizations.”

While the article includes the changes within the CSTO, it also mentions that member states “did not agree on a plan for the creation of a unified air defense and missile defense system” and could not reach an agreement for the next secretary general. The resolution to create a unified air defense system could happen in the next year or so, but the issue of the secretary general has been more contentious. Armenian General Yuri Khachaturov was officially removed as the secretary general in early November as he faces charges in his home country for his involvement in a civil unrest incident in 2008. The appointment of the next secretary general is causing a dispute between CSTO members, particularly Armenia and Belarus. The CSTO members agreed to resolve the appointment of the next secretary general at another summit in early December and it could be a good indicator of the organization's future direction. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**

Source: “Лидеры стран ОДКБ договорились оснастить коллективные силы современным оружием (Leaders of the CTSO countries have agreed to equip the collective forces with modern weapons),” *Fergana*, 9 November 2018. <https://www.fergananews.com/news/33923>

The leaders of the countries of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) have agreed to equip the collective forces with modern types of weapons and military equipment...In the declaration, the full text of which has been posted on the website of the Kremlin, states that it will raise the effectiveness of joint measures for operations and training.

The President of Kazakhstan noted the section on military cooperation. According to him, member states completed the reform of the CSTO headquarters and are now finishing preparations for the full time operation of the CSTO Crisis Response Center, which is designated to identify potential threats to security...

At the same time, member states of the organization did not agree on a plan for the creation of a unified air defense and missile defense system...It was also not agreed on who will become the new secretary general of the organization...

...Earlier, on October 30, at the meeting of the (CSTO) parliamentary assembly in Moscow, the members agree to create a unified list of terrorist organizations...

“At the same time, member states of the organization did not agree on a plan for the creation of a unified air defense and missile defense system.”



CSTO Collective Security Council meeting in narrow format (November 2018).
Source: Russian Presidency, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/59068/photos/56421>, CC 4.0.