

Comments on China-UAE relations & the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, 11 Aug 2025

Click [here](#) to access the original article, published 11 Aug 2025; a version of this also appeared on [MENAFN](#).

SCO offers opportunities to boost UAE-China trade: UAE economist

DUBAI, Aug. 11 (Xinhua) – The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) provides “strong building blocks” to deepen the trade and economic relations between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and China, the head of a business consultancy said.

“The majority of the trade between the UAE and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is now with Asia and China. China is the biggest trade partner, and increasingly the biggest economic partner,” Nasser Saidi, founder and president of Nasser Saidi & Associates, told Xinhua in a recent virtual interview.

The comments came ahead of the SCO summit in Tianjin on Aug. 31-Sept. 1, with over 20 countries and 10 international organizations attending. The UAE became an SCO dialogue partner in May 2023.

Saidi called for a GCC-China free trade agreement (FTA), saying it would be “transformational,” with the UAE poised to

lead. He urged more SCO-related events in the UAE and highlighted energy – both fossil fuels and renewables – as the foundation for cooperation. He also pointed to potential partnerships in artificial intelligence, fintech, and smart governance.

He said the UAE and China could pursue a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement as a step toward an FTA, and pointed to the need for alternative institutions like the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to serve as additional avenues alongside the Bretton Woods bodies, which he said “have not been very effective.”

“The SCO has been crucial in supporting political stability and economic prosperity in the Global South,” Saidi noted, adding that a visible SCO presence in the UAE or GCC could boost cooperation in energy, technology, and climate innovation.

Since its inception in China’s Shanghai in 2001, the SCO has developed from a regional organization with six members into a trans-regional organization with 10 full members, two observer countries, and 14 dialogue partners, covering over 60 percent of the Eurasian landmass and nearly half of the world’s population.