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**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Prime Minister's Office**

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PM's statement prior to his departure to Qingdao in China

Following is the text of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's departure statement prior to his visit to Qingdao in China.

"I will be visiting Qingdao in China for the annual meeting of the Council of Heads of States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

I am excited to lead the Indian delegation for our first-ever meeting of the Council as a full member. The SCO has a rich agenda for cooperation, ranging from fighting terrorism, separatism and extremism to promoting cooperation in connectivity, commerce, customs, law, health and agriculture; protecting the environment and mitigating disaster risk; and fostering people-to-people relations. In the last one year since India became a full member of the SCO, our interaction with the Organization and its member States has grown considerably in these areas. I believe that the Qingdao Summit will further enrich the SCO agenda, while heralding a new beginning for India's engagement with the SCO.

India enjoys deep friendship and multi-dimensional ties with the Member States of the SCO. On the sidelines of the SCO Summit, I will have the opportunity of meeting and sharing views with several other leaders, including the Heads of States of many SCO Member States."

AKT/AP/SH