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TITLE	THE ROLE OF THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION IN COUNTERING TERRORISM IN THE POST-SOVIET SPACE
SUMMARY	<p>The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has become one of the largest and dynamic international groupings. Focus areas of cooperation include combating extremism and terrorism, and over the years the organization has acquired considerable experience in this field. This paper assesses the capacity of the SCO to respond to new security challenges faced by its members, particularly, in Central Asia. The first section specifies character and scope of the threat of terrorism and extremism to the countries of the region. The conclusion is drawn that in recent years situation in Central Asia has deteriorated significantly, which can be seen in a general radicalization of local population as well as in a large-scale participation of citizens of the Central Asian countries in hostilities in the Middle East within the ranks of terrorist organizations. The return of these experienced foreign fighters to their home countries represents a new threat that the Central Asian countries can mitigate only by working together. In that context the author examines activities of the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure (RCTS) of the SCO. The paper provides a detailed description of the main organs of the RCTS, its key aims and functions, including providing assistance in planning and conducting counter-terrorism exercises, searching for persons, suspected of religious extremism and terrorist activities, and facilitating contacts with other international organizations combating terrorism, extremism and separatism. The conclusion is drawn that cooperation in the framework of the SCO not only serves long-term national security interests of the Russian Federation, but may lay foundations for a broad anti-terrorist coalition.</p>
KEYWORDS	Shanghai Cooperation Organization, SCO, Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure of the SCO, RCTS, terrorism, extremism, separatism, Central Asia, post-Soviet space, national security.