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**CHINA'S XI JINPING TO CHAIR C+C5 SUMMIT WITH CENTRAL ASIAN HEADS OF STATE FROM MAY 18**

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08.05.2023

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SCMP (8 May 2023)

Connor Mycroft

President Xi Jinping will chair the two-day inaugural China-Central Asia summit starting May 18, the Chinese foreign ministry announced on Monday.

Xi's counterparts from the five Central Asian states — Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan — would attend the summit in the northwestern Chinese city of Xian, the ministry said.

The highly anticipated C+C5 summit is seen as a Beijing-led mission to boost strategic cooperation with Central Asia on a raft of issues, including its Belt and Road Initiative and efforts to end the war in Ukraine.

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