

Interactive Session Report

TURKMENISTAN Heart of the Great Silk Road



**Embassy of Turkmenistan, Islamabad &
Center for Global & Strategic Studies
Islamabad**

Interactive Session Report

“Turkmenistan - Heart of the Great Silk Road”



Jointly Organized by
Embassy of Turkmenistan, Islamabad &
Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad
at
Islamabad Club, Islamabad

Brief of the Event

The Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS) arranged an Interactive Session in collaboration with the Embassy of Turkmenistan on “Turkmenistan - Heart of the Great Silk Road”. The aim and focus of the session was to highlight and provide an opportunity to the participants to understand the importance of Turkmenistan as a pivotal part of the ancient Silk Route.

The session was chaired by Major General Hafiz Masroor Ahmed, (Retd) – Vice President Center for Global & Strategic Studies. The aim and focus of the session was to highlight the progress and development of Turkmenistan. “Turkmenistan – Heart of the Great Silk Road”, reflects the concept of modern development of the country, which is based on centuries-old historical experience, cultural traditions, rich spiritual heritage and human values. The Great Silk Road is considered to be one of the successful achievements of ancient civilizations. Turkmenistan pays special attention to the popularization of the phenomenon of the Great Silk Route as a factor, connecting the nations and cultures.



Turkmenistan - Heart of the Great Silk Road

“Building new roads and railways, seaports and bridges, our motherland revives the Great Silk Route in the third millennium” –Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov –President of Turkmenistan said in his New Year address to the nation.

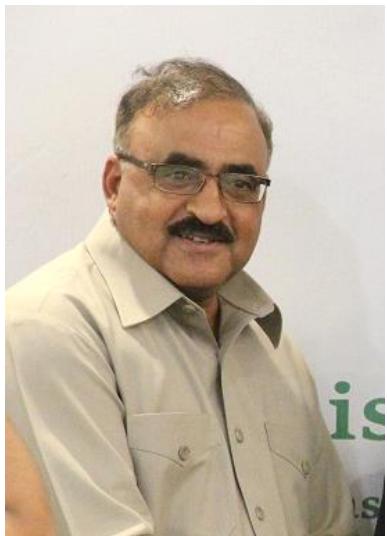
Turkmenistan has declared 2018 as the Silk Road year and is seeking to establish an extensive transport infrastructure. Turkmenistan was an important junction in the Silk Road -- an ancient trade route which connected Europe with Asia -- and the establishment of an extensive transport infrastructure was crucial in its development. Long-term national programs are being applied Turkmenistan, which aim to expand the current transportation network.

The revival of the Great Silk Road, as envisioned by Turkmenistan, is based on creation of conditions for the quick and affordable movement of cargo between the countries and regions of the world. “Turkmenistan is the heart of the Great Silk Road” – this is the motto of Turkmenistan in 2018. And this is not accidental. For many centuries the territory of Turkmenistan was a crossroads of the Eurasian routes, a meeting place of cultures, civilizations, traditions and customs.

Promoting this concept, President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov highlighted that the formation of modern ramified transport and communication system is one of the priorities of the state policy of Turkmenistan, which is aimed at progressive social and economic development of the country and establishment of wide regional and international cooperation in the interest of universal prosperity.

WELCOME REMARKS

Major General Hafiz Masroor Ahmed, (Retd) –Vice President, CGSS



Major General Hafiz Masroor Ahmed, (Retd) extended a warm welcome to the worthy guests for their participation in the Interactive Roundtable Session: “Turkmenistan- Heart of the Great Silk Road” and offered special gratitude to H.E. Atadjan Movlamov- Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan for making this collaborative effort for enhancing cooperation towards promoting peace, security and stability in Asia. He said:-

Ladies and Gentlemen, Turkmenistan and Pakistan enjoy cordial relations, which are characterized by bonds of historical, cultural and religious affinity and mutual respect. These are rooted deep in

the hearts of the people of both the countries. Both sides attach great importance to the friendship between their people and the need to further strengthen their cooperation in diverse fields. Pakistan also supports Turkmenistan’s initiative to establish trans-regional energy corridors, the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline. And as mentioned by the President of Turkmenistan “It is not just Turkmenistan’s project. It is our common project”.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there is no doubt that peace, stability and security of the region can only be attained through elaborating multilateral approaches towards promoting peace, security and stability in Asia. The roads of friendship and constructive partnership, which are built by Turkmenistan, support the consolidation of the contacts under such large international and regional structures as the United Nations, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Commonwealth of Independent States, Economic Cooperation Organization. New routes created under active participation of Turkmenistan improve the role of our region in the provision of sustainable development in Eurasian space.

Pakistan and Central Asia’s relations can be dated back many decades prior to the declaration of independence by the Central Asian Republics. The geo-political significance of Turkmenistan has always been important to Pakistan. In recent years, Pakistan has shown excessive willingness to

develop better and more prosperous relations with Central Asian Republics. Many projects such as TAPI, CASA 1000 and CPEC are being worked upon to promote economic integration of Central Asia vis-à-vis South Asia.

Pakistan has a lot to offer to the region in terms of access to the Arabian Sea, as well as other spillover effects from CPEC. CPEC could serve as a strategic opportunity for Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan to transport their goods and market them more competitively to regional and global markets. Pakistan also desires to access the rich resources of Central Asia via Afghanistan to meet its energy needs, as well as transport goods to Central Asia.

Both Turkmenistan and Pakistan are members of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). In 2016, Pakistan joined the Ashgabat Agreement which aims to export Turkmen gas throughout the region in addition to the Lapis Lazuli corridor designed to facilitate trade. The Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India Pipeline (TAPI), started in 2015, which shall be operational by 2019. The pipeline will transport natural gas from the Galkynysh Gas Field in Turkmenistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan and then to India. This pipeline will not only help Pakistan in compensating for its trade deficits, but will also serve to generate massive revenues to Turkmenistan. At the present stage Turkmen-Pak relations are characterized by mutual willingness to enhance mutually advantageous partnership. Bilateral visits of dignitaries and heads of the states laid a concrete and solid foundation of Turkmen-Pak relationship based on friendship, mutual understanding and cultural affinities and common traditions.

Therefore, we are convinced that the revival of the Great Silk Road cannot be imagined without Central Asia. Obviously, one of the most important directions in the realization of these goals is the successful integration of Central Asia into international relations, the creation of an appropriate transport, transit and communication system. I would like to acknowledge Turkmenistan on being an active participant of positive global processes, the countries of the region need to make their input to the formation of new architecture of international relations based on balanced sustainable development. The government of Turkmenistan is doing great job for the revival of new Silk Road. I hope this session will prove to be informative and productive for all of us present here today.

Thank You.

OPENING REMARKS

His Excellency Atadjan Movlamov- Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan



The Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan, His Excellency Atadjan Movlamov expressed gratitude to all the participants for their attendance in the Interactive Session “Turkmenistan – Heart of the Great Silk Road” jointly organized by the Embassy of Turkmenistan in collaboration with Center for Global and Strategic Studies, Islamabad. His speech comprised of the following important components:-

Dear Friends!

In Turkmenistan this year of 2018 is dedicated to the slogan “Turkmenistan – Heart of the Great Silk Road”, that reflects the concept of modern development of the country, which is based on centuries-old historical experience, cultural traditions, rich spiritual heritage and human values.

The Great Silk Road is considered to be one of the successful achievements of ancient civilizations. First in human history, it opened the wide way for communication of the people on huge space from Europe to China and for their cooperation in different fields.

We prepared videos and presentation about Turkmenistan in which you will see the past and present of Turkmenistan. In the presentation you will see the map that shows, many of the Silk Routes passed through the territory of Central Asia, particularly via Turkmenistan.

Nowadays, Turkmenistan pays special attention to the popularization of the phenomenon of the Great Silk Route as a factor, connecting the nations and cultures. This subject was comprehensively revealed in the book of the President of Turkmenistan titled “Turkmenistan – Heart of the Great Silk Road” based on the facts of national history, extracts from ancient legends and stories and modern events in the country.

President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov proposed the idea on organization of international rally from Amul to Hazar along the Silk Route as well as running marathon and other sport competitions. Foreign participants of the rally will be able not only to familiarize with the heritage of Turkmen nation but also to see new life that comes to these legendary places with fundamental social and economic changes, scientific and technical progress and industrial development of the regions of the country, which consolidates its role of important transportation hub of the Silk Route in modern age.

As a conclusion of my speech I would like to express the confidence that traditionally friendly and fraternal Turkmen – Pakistani relations would continue to be developed for the common sake. And I am sure that Pakistan will continue its active and important role in restoring the Great Silk Road in modern conditions, whereas Turkmenistan actively develops transport and logistic system, which is the foundation for the establishment of international political, economic and humanitarian dialog on the principles of good neighborhood, mutual understanding and equal partnership.

Thank you very much for your attention.

PRESENTATION- “Turkmenistan - Heart of the Great Silk Road”

Mr. Azat Satlykuliev –Second Secretary, Embassy of Turkmenistan in Islamabad

In October 2017, new book of the President of Turkmenistan “Turkmenistan – the Heart of the Great Silk Road” was launched. This book reflects the concept of modern development of Turkmenistan based on historical experience, traditions of peace-making and good neighborliness, respect of spiritual heritage, desire for regional and global integration and progress. Contents of the book include:

Archaeologists open centuries-old layers of history of the Great Silk Road:



The map of the route of the Great Silk Road through the territory of Turkmenistan.

The epoch of the Silk Road that lasted for more than 15 centuries left thousands of monuments along its route from Mediterranean to Far East. Many of them are located in Turkmenistan. It was the time when such cities like Merv, Kunyaurgench, Amul, Zemm (Kerki), Serakhs, Abiverd, Nisa and Dekhistan appeared and turned into real medieval agglomerations. The roads between these

cities as well the ways to Bukhara, Balkh, Herat, Nishapur and other big city centres were probably the most well-engaged and old however not the only one.



Today, the specialists of National Department for protection, study and restoration of historical and cultural monuments of Turkmenistan work with their colleagues, the UNESCO experts on the inclusion of the parts of the Silk Road on the territory of Turkmenistan to the World Heritage List under serial nomination.

Caravansaries and bazaars along the Great Silk Road:



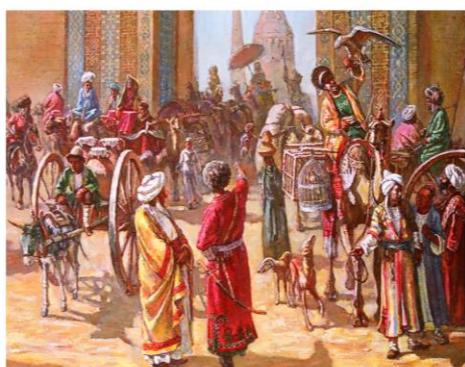
Important international trade routes from China to Middle East via Amul, Merv, Sarakhs, Abiverd, Nisa, from Near East countries to Russia via Dehistan and Kunyaurgench, to India via Zemm used to cross the territory of Turkmenistan in ancient and medieval times. In the Middle Ages, on all the routes of the Great Silk Road from the Mediterranean to China, special guesthouses were built to rest and protect merchant caravans at distances of 30-40 kilometers, protected by deep walls and powerful bastions, which is called “Caravanserai”. In Turkmenistan and neighboring countries, until the XI century, the functions of the caravanserai were often carried out by the traditional Kyoshk residential castle, surrounded by a well-protected courtyard. Intercity

caravanserais were massive fortifications with thick walls and strong gates. Large caravanserais were, moreover, trading outlets where goods could be sold or exchanged. In many caravanserais musicians played for the entertainment of the guests.



In the Middle Ages, on all the routes of the Great Silk Road from the Mediterranean to China, special guesthouses were built to rest and protect merchant caravans at distances of 30-40 kilometers, protected by deep walls and powerful bastions, which is called “Caravanserai”. In Turkmenistan and neighboring countries, until the XI century, the functions of the caravanserai were often carried out by the traditional Kyoshk residential castle, surrounded by a well-protected courtyard.

Intercity caravanserais were massive fortifications with thick walls and strong gates. Large caravanserais were, moreover, trading outlets where goods could be sold or exchanged. In many caravanserais musicians played for the entertainment of the guests.



There is certainly a market in every modern city – whether it is big or small. Therefore, it was like this always and everywhere. Since the ancient times, the first cities in the world were formed around the places of trade. Many historical cities of Turkmenistan with citadels, mosques, caravanserais, mud houses and inner yards, craftsmen's workshops arose associated with a bazaar and around a bazaar.

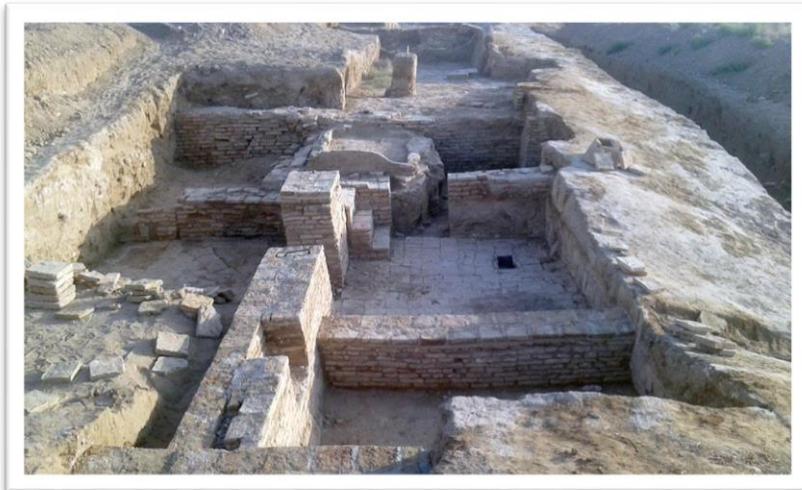


Intra-urban markets in Dehistan, Khorasan and Khorezm in Arabic geographical works are designated by the words "suk" and "aswak", in Persian sources - "bazaar". The Arabic word "suk" meant the market place: a bazaar and a shopping street with the rows of shops. The archaic Avestan term "chavrusuk" literally meant a "quadrilateral" market, the analogous to the later "chaharsu" or in the contract form "charsu".



Great Silk Road - the name of the route itself, even though this is modern name, directly indicates that silk was the most valuable item of that list.

Medieval centers of medical science:



Archaeological excavations at this medieval monuments, which is located 30 km west of Mary, are carried out under the work on study of historical and cultural heritage of the Great Silk Road.



Numerous fragments of glass items and entire glassware as well as several small metal instruments have been discovered in Dandanakan Fortress in Mary velayat (province). Typological analysis has proven that these items were medical instruments of medieval doctors.

Tourism:

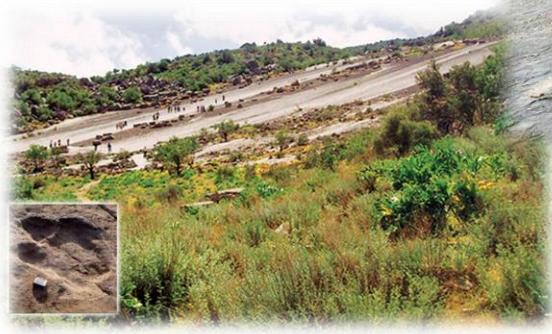
The most important area of social policy is also the development of tourism. The main task of the State Committee on Tourism of Turkmenistan is to promote international tourism as the most profitable areas of the tourism industry.



Three major sites of historical and architectural significance - Kunyaurgench, Merv and Nisa - included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. These places are very popular among the tourists.



Here can be observed a sparkling “Lunar landscape” and “Plateau of Dinosaurs” with paw prints of the pre-historic reptiles.



Tourist itineraries around the region include a trip to the reserved places of Koytendag (Kugitang) - magnificent mountains with luxurious primeval nature and abundance of rare species of animals and plants.



The National tourist zone “Avaza”, which is being realised in Turkmenistan on the shores of the Caspian Sea, is an unprecedented project in its scale, breadth and daring of concept. Magnificent hotels, health resorts and resorts for children have been created in Avaza such as “Vatanchi”, “Hazyna”, “Nebitchi”, “Kervent”, “Kuwat”, “Serdar”, “Arzuv” “Dayanch”, “Shapak”, “Bereket”, “Deniz”, “Merdana”, “Bagtyyar”, “Shamekan” amongst others.



The development at Avaza continues to amaze with the variety of projects from exclusive multi-storey buildings which shoot up skyward to cozy two-storied cottages, and from modern to classical.



Amul-Hazar 2018, International Rally



On September 11-15, 2018, in Turkmenistan will be hosting an international rally “Amul Hazar 2018”, which is dedicated to the slogan “Turkmenistan – the Heart of the Great Silk Road”. Initial map of route has been already made. It divided into five laps. These are Amul - Mary, Mary - Derveze, Derveze - Turkmen Lake, Turkmen Lake - Yangala and Yangala – Avaza.



Reviving the Great Silk Road in the third millennium



President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov said: "Building new roads and railways, seaports and bridges, our motherland revives the Great Silk Route in the third millennium". Turkmenistan initiatives in transport and communication sphere, particularly the perspectives of the optimization of the network in

North – South and East – West directions, which is to unite vast spaces from Pacific Ocean to Baltic and from the north of European continent to Indian Ocean.



At present time, in the territory of Turkmenistan with total area of 491,2 km² operated railways with total length of 5000 km, 3000 km of these were constructed after the Independence of Turkmenistan. Such grandiose project as Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan International railway construction is under way, and Atamyrat-Ymamnazar-Akina section of this project already accomplished at Turkmen side's

expense.

Turkmen railway constructors finalized the renovation of the railway line from frontier station Serhetabat in Mary Velayat (province) to Afghan city of Turgundy and extended it for 13 km. This is another way that Turkmenistan is providing effective support in the socio-economic revival of neighbouring Afghanistan. Turkmen railway constructors finalized the renovation of the railway line from frontier station Serhetabat in Mary Velayat (province) to Afghan city of Turgundy and

extended it for 13 km. This is another way that Turkmenistan is providing effective support in the socio-economic revival of neighbouring Afghanistan.



In 2014 the Kazakhstan – Turkmenistan – Iran (also known as North-South) railway was launched. The length of the railway reaches 900 km, of which 130 in Kazakhstan, 700 km in Turkmenistan and 70 km in Iran.



On May 2, 2018, new International Seaport was solemnly inaugurated in Turkmenbashi city, construction of which started in 2013.

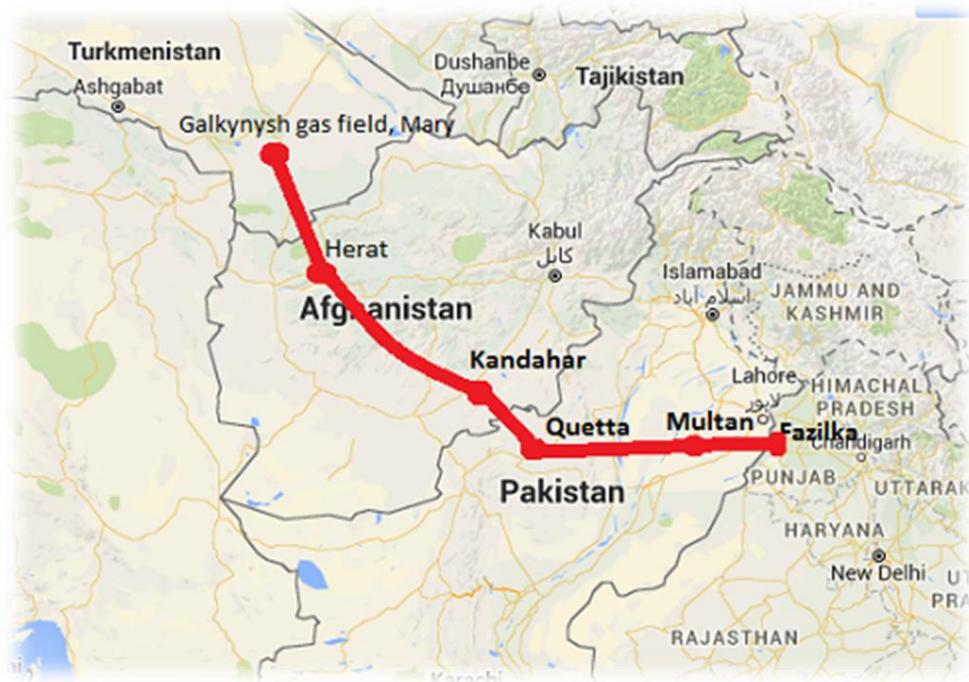
Total cost of new port is 1.5 billion USD and occupies 152 hectares and includes ferry, passenger and cargo terminals. The total length of berths that can instantly serve 17 vessels is 1800 meters. The port can receive 300 thousand passengers, 75 thousand cargo trucks and handle 400 thousand containers a year. The new port's overall throughput capacity is 17 million tons excluding oil products.



Pipeline transportation can be related to this field as well. The construction of Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas line, which is to be laid across the places of this ancient Silk Road. This project will support not only the solution of economic but also topical social



objectives for participating countries. A start to the construction of a new pipeline Turkmenistan-Afghanistan- Pakistan-India was given in December 2015.



Second largest gas field in the world “Galkynysh” will provide the purified natural gas to this gas pipeline. With total length of 1814 km, pipeline will go through Turkmenistan - 214 km, Afghanistan – 774km, Pakistan – 826 km till the Indian city Fazilka. Annually supply capacity is 33 billion cubic meters.

Currently, Ashgabat – Turkmenbashy highway is being constructed. Future road is designated exclusively for high-speed traffic. Around 60 large and small multi-level flyovers and more than 70 underpasses, the bridges across mud streams and Karakum River will be built on the road.



Restoring this ancient route today, Turkmenistan undertook the role of the integrator in the region and the continent, actively developing trade links, which is the basis for the establishment of economic

dialog on the principles of good neighborhood, understanding and equal partnership.

Innovations in the commercial sphere, the activities of shops, markets, shopping centers, public catering and enterprises providing household services are all you can meet in Turkmenistan at present time. At present time, Turkmenistan has established modern health care infrastructure including sanatorium, resort and sports sphere, tourism and recreation industry on top of medical institutions.



SPEAKER 1

Professor Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Qureshi- Founder and President of Society of Asian Civilizations Pakistan



Professor Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Qureshi conveyed his gratitude for being able to speak to the learned audience at the session. He addressed the audience on the topic of “Historical Monuments and Importance of Merv on the Great Silk Road”.

He stated that the Great Silk Road was the old trade route which initiated from the Chinese ancient city of Xian. It came to Central Asia where it split into 03 branches: One branch went to South Asia, the other to Europe and the 3rd branch went to Middle East. He explained that Central Asia was the hub of trade and commerce activities in the world and well known for its trade potentials at that time but the Muslims were not attracted by the potentials of trade or treasures of wealth in *Ma Wara an-Nahr* – the name given to Central Asia by Arabs. They were driven by their supreme spiritual desire to seek the pleasure of Almighty *Allah* and spread the true message of Islam in the region.

He explained that the Central Asian region had become an integral part of the world of Muslim civilization ever since the 7th Century when, not long after the Holy Prophet [Peace be Upon Him], the practicing Muslim merchants found their way into the region in search of goods and markets.

They put up an impressive record of their behavior, traditions and culture which attracted the people of Central Asia.

He said that the audience would be pleasantly surprised to know that the people of Central Asia adopted Islamic Law, *Shariah*, Traditions and Culture before they were converted to the religion of Islam. In the old days, it was the time of the Trade *Caravans* which used to stay at a point for months and sometimes for years. He explained that at that time, it was not like today that you give an ad on TV and the product is introduced. At that time, the *Caravans* used to stay for quite long at one place. The news of the *Caravans* spread to adjoining areas and far off places and people used to visit to exchange goods. During such a long stay, they had to interact with the local people. During this inter-action, Arab Traders, practicing Islam, came into contact with the local people who were thoroughly impressed by their standards of justice, fair play, honesty, respect for the elders and love for the youngers. Hence, they adopted these standards which, in fact, were the standards of the religion of Islam. Hence, in this way, they adopted Islamic Law, *Shariah*, Traditions and Culture before they were converted to the religion of Islam. It was the middle of the 7th Century.

He explained that Turkmenistan, as important state of Central Asia was located on the Great Silk Road and its ancient capital city of Merv was an important city on the route which was not only the road for trade but a road to exchange ideas and cultures of different regions. It was considered as a gateway to Central Asia and was especially important in terms of trade and politics during the 9th and 10th centuries. From Merv, the travelers proceeded to Amul in Turkmenistan and further to Bukhara and then to Samarkand – the largest centres of teaching and learning at that time.

He highlighted that the territory of Turkmenistan is still rich in monuments which in antiquity were the most considerable stopovers the Great Silk Road. They are the magnificent and unique architectural masterpieces of the past. The ancient settlement of Merv is located on the vast territory near the river of Murghab, in the suburb of the modern city of Bairam-Ali. According to historians, there was a population of one million in this city. It is located approximately 30 km from the city of Mary which is a new city where some 50 thousand Balochs live today. He stated that Merv had been the capital of prospering Margiana state and the major center on the international caravan line of the Silk Road long before the approach of our era.



He explained that Merv used to be a huge megacity with no equals in Central Asia: even the famous Uzbek cities of Samarkand and Bukhara looked like provincial towns. According to Zoroastrian literature, it was Merv that possessed the third horn of plenty of the ancient world, following such cities as Herat and Balkh. Merv was the place where the immortal creations were made great poets, scientists and philosophers, Omar Khayam and Ismail Somani among them who is Founding Father of Tajikistan.

Professor Dr. Qureshi added that the Government has declared the year of 2018 as “Turkmenistan – the Heart of the Great Silk Road”. He referred to the New Year speech to the nation by President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov who said that by building new roads and railways, seaports and bridges, Turkmenistan revives the Great Silk Route in the third millennium. The neutral independent state of Turkmenistan makes big contribution towards development and consolidation of political, trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian relations in international arena. The Head of the State highlighted that his concepts and ideas are to create better future for all humans. The priorities of the Turkmenistan government are such grandiose projects as the

construction of International Airport in the capital, first part of international railway that connects Turkmenistan with Afghanistan and Tajikistan, automobile, air, maritime and river transport are aimed at provision of sustainable development of the region. Hence, Turkmenistan turns into important intersection of the railroads, large transport and transit centre of Eurasia.

Professor Dr. Qureshi mentioned the book titled: “Turkmenistan – the Heart of the Great Silk Road”, in which President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov refers to the fundamental roles in the establishment and active operation of the Silk Route - every branch of which belongs to Turkmens and deserves to be included to the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The roads of friendship and constructive partnership, which are built by the country, support the consolidation of the contacts under such large international and regional structures as the United Nations, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Commonwealth of Independent States, Economic Cooperation Organization. New routes created under active participation of Turkmenistan improve the role of our region in the provision of sustainable development in Eurasian space.

The function of the Silk Road in modern conditions is performed by international transport and logistic system, which is good foundation for establishment of political and economic dialogue and became considerable factor of integration processes on the principles of good neighbourliness and mutual and versatile benefit.

He added that the construction of TAPI - Turkmenistan – Afghanistan – Pakistan – India gas line is being laid across the places of this ancient Caravan route that will support the solution of economic as well as topical social objectives for the participating countries. He said that President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov notes that integrated transport system involving all sectors of communications with precise technical and legal policy, coordinated mechanisms of cooperation is able to influence geopolitical situation defining close relations of its economic components with national strategies of the development of the countries. Steadfast implementation of the state programmes, fundamental reformation of all branches of national economy and transit to market relations made positive effect on unprecedented economic growth of the country in the background of economic unsteadiness in the world.

He highlighted the importance of Turkmenistan's initiatives in transport and communication sphere, particularly the perspectives of the optimization of the network in North – South and East

– West directions, is to unite vast spaces from Pacific Ocean to Baltic and from the north of European continent to Indian Ocean. He said that special attention is being paid to the phenomenon of the Silk Route as the factor of the convergence of nations and cultures. From the time primordial, Turkmen nation was famous with its traditions of hospitality, having absorbed the innovations in tourism industry. Historical and cultural identity and richest national heritage including Turkmen carpets are famous around the world. Ancient monuments and unique natural ecosystems allow the country to improve its international rating in this field, winning better positions in tourism market. In 2017, Ashgabat Games were held which gathered together 64 teams from Asia and other countries.

He further added that if once upon a time, Caravan paths crossed endless sands, spread around the oases of prosperous cities, today, it is the high-class autobahns and modern railways that run in the area. All this gives tourists, the unique opportunity to imagine the past and benefit from the Great Silk Route, if connected with the initiative of the Chinese government of China-Pakistan-Economic Corridor (CPEC) can bring about revolution in the field of trade, commerce and wellbeing of the people of not only Pakistan, Central Asia or the South Asian sub-continent but the world at large.

Highlighting the History of Merv Professor Dr. Qureshi explained that the ancient settlements in Murghab Oasis appeared in the prehistoric epoch. Its city period began with the building of fortresses. In the 4th century BC the city and the entire Margiana area were conquered by Alexander the Great. The city was than named Alexandria in Margiana. After the disintegration of that huge empire Margiana lands became a part of Seleucid Empire. The governor Antiochus Soter ordered to build a city which later was named in his honor - Antiochia in Margiana. Under the rule of Antiochus the entire Murghab oasis was surrounded by the 230-km wall. That wall protected the rich lands of Merv from the desert sand and at the same time stopped the aggressive nomads-Scythians. He said that the city prospered until the first half of the 3rd century when Margiana was conquered by Sassanid Persians. The well-known dynasty ruled until 651. Then Merv was won by Arabs. But the time of the highest development of medieval Merv and its final layout was in the 11th -12th centuries when Merv became the capital of the Great Seljuk state.



He added that in 1221 Merv fell under the attacks of the armies of Genghis Khan. From that time on the city's life never revived in its former riches and magnificence. The ruins of ancient Merv comprise several ancient settlements: Erk-Kala, Gyaur-Kala, Sultan-Kala, Abdullakhan-Kala and Bairamalikhan-Kala, Iskander-Kala, Shakhriar-Kala, Smaller Sultan-Kala, and Shaim-Kala. Visiting them will bring immense pleasure to archeologists and the travelers who are fond of ancient cultures and vanished civilizations. The ancient settlement of Merv is a part of the State Historical and Cultural Reserve "Ancient Merv" and is under the state protection as UNESCO Heritage Site.

SPEAKER 2

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan – Head of Geo-Politics/Economics, Defence Journal & Regional Expert: Turkmenistan & Commonwealth of Independent States



The speaker appreciated the Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS) for inviting him to talk on “Energy Policy of Turkmenistan”. His speech comprised of the following remarks:-

Visionary leader, H.E. President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov has a firm belief in shared values and socio-economic prosperity. H.E. President of Turkmenistan has already initiated many projects to achieve greater socio-economic integration in the region. Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan and India Gas Pipeline confirms valuable contribution of energy policy of Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan, possessing one of the largest energy potential in the world, strives to establish of stable structure of the global energy security, which is built on the principles of justice, balance of interests of both supplying countries and transit countries and consumers. Energy cooperation, based on beneficial and long-term partnership, formed on the basis of common principles and rules, is a condition of steadfast development of the world community.

Energy is life which has been endangered because of power politics and scarcity of energy resources in the region as well as around the globe. Energy fuels development and Turkmenistan

implements an energy policy of easy and smooth supply of energy resources to consumers, as well as export of electricity to foreign consumers. It has the world's fourth largest estimated reserves of natural gas. Turkmenistan strives to give its unlimited energy resource potential to the disposal of the mankind, realizing the energy policy based on the principles of combined modernization of fuel and energy complex and diversification of energy supplies to the world markets.

Energy policy of Turkmenistan is based on diversified operationalization and channelization of energy resources, efficiency and saving of energy, optimal use of energy resources, energy security, investments, energy diplomacy, innovations and the last but not the least development of renewable or green energy resources. Moreover, increasing internal/national production capacity to meet external demands, diversifying energy export routes, increasing export capacity, securing energy transportation and networks to external markets are also salient features of its energy policy.



For the further development of national energy resources and production channels, the government of Turkmenistan will make investments of 240 billion manats in oil and gas sector. The Government of Turkmenistan announced total existing generation capacity equals 5,432,4 megawatt (MW). In 2016, Turkmenistan produced more than 24 billion kWh. Turkmenistan has ambitious plans to bring power generation capacity to about 26 billion kWh by 2020 and to 35 billion kWh by 2030 by upgrading existing power stations and building new ones. The country has announced plans to build 14 new gas turbine power stations with a total capacity of 4,000 megawatts by 2020.

Turkmenistan exports approximately 65bcm (Billion cubic metres) gas to China. It exports 10bcm gas to Russia. It supplies more than 50bcm gas to Iran too. Dream Gas Pipeline in shape of TAPI would export up to 33bcm and Turkmenistan-Europe gas pipeline exports 30bcm through the

Trans-Caspian Gas pipeline. Turkmenistan has also transformed its energy resources to end buyers. It is now selling its gas to the Western and Eastern markets. It is supplying gas resources to China, Russia, and Iran. Thus, Ashgabat is pushing forward with two main projects trying to diversify its energy supply routes in order to decrease its dependency on China. One of the projects is the Trans-Caspian pipeline to deliver Turkmen gas to Europe. Another is TAPI pipeline, which will deliver Turkmen gas to Pakistan and India via Afghanistan. Furthermore, Turkmenistan pursues politics of “balanced policy”: to reduce its dependence from “Gazprom”/Russia.



H.E. President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov says that TAPI is designed to become a new effective step towards the formation of the modern platform of global energy security, a powerful driver of economic and social stability in the Asian region. It will help to promote peace and bring socio-economic prosperity and trade amongst the regional countries.

Its energy diplomacy has had been distinguished by active position and interest in search for new and efficient solutions, finds broad response among the representatives of the world business and expert community. Chairmanship of Turkmenistan in the Energy Charter Treaty was a value addition which supported a befitting proposition to all the member states. Being one the main founders of Energy Charter Treaty, it tried to establish a global dialogue in energy security, efficiency, diversification, investments, climate change, innovations and the last but not the least a legal framework in the energy sector for achieving the goals of sustainable development.

Recently, Turkmenistan has considerably increased production rates of fuel and energy resources; transport routes of energy are being diversified. At the same time, the role of Turkmenistan in supply of energy to the world market grows and determines the level of its geopolitical influence. Diversification of transport infrastructure, which is able to supply energy resources via ramified

network of multiple-choice pipeline system, is a strategy priority for Turkmenistan. Realization of this strategy direction stipulates integrated development of energy cooperation not only between the countries suppliers, transit and consumer countries but interested parties and international organizations including the UN and the Energy Charter as well.

With the tireless care and support of the esteemed President of Turkmenistan, adoption of the “Concept of development of electrical energy branch of Turkmenistan for 2013-2020” has become a qualitatively new milestone in the history of the industry development. In accordance with the concept, 6 new power plants have been built in different regions of the country. It allowed improve the quality of energy supply to domestic consumers. At the same time, it is possibility to increase the volume of exported electricity. In turn, this contributes to the diversification of export routes of electricity.

Today, Turkmen electric energy is exported to Afghanistan and Iran. Specialists of the industry plan to implement a project of building a high-voltage transmission line with a voltage of 500 kilovolts in the direction of Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan in parallel with the TAPI gas pipeline. The implementation of this project will allow the export of Turkmen electricity to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Currently, the country works to increase electricity exports to Afghanistan and Iran. The possibilities to transport electricity to Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan and the Caucasus countries are being considered as well.

Turkmenistan renewable energy market provides a comprehensive analysis of the market for wind, solar, hydro and other renewable energy sources. Turkmenistan will set up a solar energy institute. The establishment was granted in a decree by Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov calling on building a solar energy institute under the Academy of Sciences. The establishment of the new institute will pave the way for deep investigations into the potential of renewable energy sources in the country, improving scientific and technological researches and introducing relevant scientific studies and innovations.

Turkmenistan is an energy leader in Central Asia and South Caucasus Regions. It is also in the heart of Silk Route which is trying its levels best to revive the ancient route of human connectivity through greater regional connectivity, socio-economic integration, development of sustainable

transport system, development of seaport and the last but not the least, opening of new airports. Its energy policy is a value addition for regional energy security and supplements in the revival of silk route too. Turkmenistan is the guarantor of easy and smooth supply of energy to Central Asia and South East Asia.



QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Question: 1

With change of regime in Uzbekistan, it is seen that the current Uzbekistan President is very much proactive towards regional integration and he has taken very good steps for regional trade in economic terms. He has declared this year as year of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, he is giving importance towards settling border issues with the Kyrgyz Republic as well as Tajikistan and more importantly he has made a very good and productive visit to Turkmenistan last year and negotiated and signed very good agreements. So, what are the strategies that Turkmenistan is willingly looking towards on reciprocal basis and on the basis of whole region integration? So far as the energy security of Turkmenistan concerned, there are two important projects which Turkmenistan is looking forward to: one is electricity supply to Pakistan through Uzbekistan Tajikistan and Afghanistan and second is trans Caspian pipeline project, so what are the prospects for their success in near future?



Answer

H.E Atadjan Movlamov –Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan

Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are friendly and brotherly countries, with good relations and nowadays with the new President of Uzbekistan there has been more focus on our bilateral relations. We have signed agreements on strategic partnerships, which means developing relations in all spheres: economic, political, cultural, social. With Uzbekistan people are close, visits and organized business events are more frequent, cultural events are more frequent to increase trade turnover to Turkmenistan. There are also other Central Asian countries not only Uzbekistan who we have good relations and understanding with Turkmenistan. We have meetings at every level with leaders of the countries of the region and so we have development, understanding and support of each other.

Comment

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan – Head of Geo-Politics/Economics, Defence Journal & Regional Expert: Turkmenistan & Commonwealth of Independent States

I would like to share my knowledge about energy security, as you know after the demise of the Former President of Uzbekistan H.E Islam Karimov, the new President is here and there is a paradigm shift from the isolated policy to a world liberalization economy. Many interactions within the region and at global scene is to see more and more foreign investments in areas of energy infrastructure , education, joint ventures and other related economic activity. In his vision he has tried and was successful in resolve the long awaited conflicts in terms of border disputes with Tajikistan, and other long unresolved agendas. He is successful in achieving substantial amount of inflow of foreign investments and potential buyers are more than eager to invest in Turkmenistan.

Let us talk about the vision of the President of Turkmenistan, he is visionary in terms of regional connectivity, energy security, energy supply and shared value of social economic integration. That is why he is more open in Central Asian Republics than other republics in terms of dialogue. Dialogue is the start of development and development is the start of sustainable development goals. Energy corporation and energy connectivity is a very complex phenomenon. There are a lot of red lines, in terms of logistics, power politics, economic investments, financing and human capacity. There are also red lines in Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India Pipeline (TAPI) and all participating countries are rigorously trying to resolve the red lines so that we be connected through energy. Red line means instability in Afghanistan and the route. Route of TAPI from Afghanistan to Pakistan is in red line. Kandahar and Herat are Taliban dominated area but communication with Taliban is there and they are ready to cooperate with all participating countries for sake for energy connectivity.

Trans-Caspian pipeline is for energy connectivity of Turkmenistan and the other participating countries especially Azerbaijan. Prospects are very bright but there is a sphere of competition in the region. There are good prospects that these pipeline projects or projects of energy may be completed with due course of time.

Comment

H.E Atadjan Movlamov –Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan

TUTAP is a project for power transmission from Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan, so we are in process of negotiation of this project. TAPI for Turkmenistan Afghanistan, Pakistan and India is power transmission from Turkmenistan to Pakistan. There is great demand of energy in Pakistan it has a large population, a lot of energy resources are needed, Pakistan has its own resources but it is not enough according to calculations of experts. More energy and resources are needed in Pakistan and the number of population is also increasing so there is need of more gas, electricity, LPG, LNG as it brings development to the country and to the people.

Comment

H.E Barlybay Sadykov –Ambassador of Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan

For countries of Central Asia it is very important to have access to international sea routes and Turkmenistan is one of those who promote interests of land locked countries of Central Asia back in years 2014 and 2015. Turkmenistan raised two resolutions at United Nations, resolution of 2015 was adopted as part of conclusion of an international conference on transit-transport, roads which will help Turkmenistan under the new President.

Another point I want to highlight is issue of regional integration. As you know, after the new President of Uzbekistan and his policies, countries of Central Asia are now at new stage of regional integration. Two examples, back in march Presidents of Central Asian Republics gathered in Astana, where they issued joint statements on strong cooperation of Central Asia, just two days ago they gathered again in Astana. So, process of strong cooperation of Central Asian Republics in trade economy and transport will be increased further and the region will be one of the major players in the international arena with regard to not only supply of energy resources to the world market but also to issues of security as well. Everyone understands clearly that South Asia will not benefit and reach oil and gas resources of Central Asia if we do not have good connectivity. It is

the interest of South Asian countries that we deal with issue of security for prosperity of our nations.

Question: 2

Mr. Abdullah Hameed Gul –Chairman Tehreek e Jawanan Pakistan and Director General Measac Research Centre

CGSS has conducted a very important session. The two countries are close to each other and Turkmenistan has always been on our top priority and like other countries we are getting closer, which is a good sign. My question to Ambassador Atadjan, How do you see the role of Russia? And second, Daesh is becoming a great menace for this region, so what steps must be taken to tackle evil intentions of Daesh? Question to Dr. Mehmood, you mentioned negotiations were done with the Taliban and now gas pipeline is on its way, but were these negotiations conducted by the Afghan government or directly by the Taliban?



Answer

H.E Atadjan Movlalomov –Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan

Regarding your first point, there is border security concern not on Afghanistan but in all countries. Turkmenistan has an international conference under United Nations to counter terrorism. The main point is in accordance with international law we must support each other and support those who fight against terrorism. We have to do what we can do within the framework of international law, with respect to each other that is the main point, and regarding Taliban I do not think there is direct communication between Turkmenistan and Taliban but Afghan Taliban say they support things which are beneficial for their population. And to my mind they consider this project as beneficial to their population that is why they are supportive, it is not because of Turkmenistan or Afghanistan but they understand it because they consider that it is beneficial for people of Afghanistan.

Comment

What the Turkmenistan Ambassador has said earlier, delegation of Northern Alliance and Taliban they wanted to negotiate on TAPI and that means both sections were of the opinion that the TAPI project is for the interest of the Afghan people.

Comment

Mr. Khalid Rahim –Member Advisory Board, CGSS

TAPI began when the Taliban were in power in Afghanistan. During negotiations and discussions, the Turkmenistan President and Taliban both agreed to it, the issue came in when the American company decided to rip off the Taliban then the whole thing went haywire. Taliban have never been against TAPI even after their defeat. And they said look it will help us and help the Afghans so they have never been against it, issue is as long as America sits in Afghanistan there will be the problem.

Comment

Even when Taliban were in power and all other fighting with them even at that time all parties were in favor of TAPI because they were of the opinion that it will be beneficial for the people.

Question: 3

Mr. Ashfaq Ahmed Gondal –Former Federal Secretary and Currently Senior Advisory Board Member of CGSS

Maybe it is true that they are in favor of the projects but the thing is who will guarantee the security of this pipeline? Has anyone reached an agreement with them? Have they made any agreements with anyone in Pakistan, Afghanistan or Turkmenistan? It is a huge project, there has to be some sort of guarantee, tomorrow they will ask to



switch it off then what will we do? This is not only going through Pakistan but India as well. How

can we trust a group of people who are not prepared to give any guarantee or understanding that this project will remain safe?

Comment

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan – Head of Geo-Politics/Economics, Defence Journal & Regional Expert: Turkmenistan & Commonwealth of Independent States

This was good sharing of knowledge and expertise. My friends, the ISIS and the Taliban and terrorism are bitter realities. To achieve sustainable development especially in our region depends of collective efforts, strong commitment and having human capacity to topple the design of Daesh, ISIS, Taliban and who so ever is against true spirit of humanity. My friends, talking on changes of stopping the inflow of TAPI starting from Afghanistan into Pakistan to India, there is a very functional model which is going on in the shape of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor Project (CPEC). CPEC is guaranteed by the armed forces of Pakistan. And armed forced of Pakistan has formed a substantial number of personnel for the security of the CPEC project in the country. My humble request for the participating countries is that they should, they must have that kind of arrangement with armed forces of the participating countries especially in the red lines which lie in Afghanistan, so that inflow of TAPI gas pipeline will not be stopped.

Comment

Mr. Ashfaq Ahmed Gondal –Former Federal Secretary and Currently Senior Advisory Board Member of CGSS

Yes, we talk about CPEC, yes, the armed forces are there ensuring all kinds of security to the project, it is in Pakistan. Main issue of CPEC is it has to pass through Afghanistan to Central Asian Republics. So, let us start solid negotiations on Afghanistan and other countries, I would say India as well. To convince them that this project is in the interest of the region so lets sit together and solve this issue.

Comment

Major General Hafiz Masroor Ahmed, (Retd) –Vice President, CGSS

Taliban, Daesh forces are there, you cannot get a guarantee from everyone. It has to be from the Afghan government, for CPEC the security provided by the Pakistan army is by the government of Pakistan. Army is the employees. The country through which it has to pass has to provide security and responsibly taken by its government, the government of Afghanistan can give guarantee only if it becomes stable. Hence, we all say that stability and security of Afghanistan is so crucial for all of us starting from Russia, china, Central Asian Republics, Pakistan, even Iran, India also. Otherwise, this energy will stay in Central Asia; we will not be able to benefit from it; they will not be able to sell it. Pakistan will not be able to buy it; India will not benefit from it. Afghanistan has to become stable and peaceful this should be the collective effort of all of us.

Comment

There was no such thing as Daesh and IS then how come I think this is with presence of so many international forces and 1200 billion dollars spent on them what is the result? Now all neighboring countries should force Americans to quit Afghanistan as soon as possible because even before the occupation Taliban were in favor of TAPI project and they were already doing trade with all Central Asian Republics including Russia and Pakistan. What we see is that we are the stakeholders not America. We need to tell America to pack up their things and go back.

CLOSING REMARKS

H.E Atadjan Movlamov –Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan

His Excellency Atadjan Movlamov – Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan in his concluding remarks, said:

The main thing is not to wait till the situation is peaceful. We must work for peace this way peace will prevail. And the idea of the Turkmenistan President is peace by development to provide



electricity and gas to the people which means people will start working, becoming more active and then they will think about improving their living conditions while getting more money by peaceful means, not through crime. One of the ways to bring peace in Afghanistan is by economic development, by integration of regional projects which will put us all in the situation where we have to improve relations with each other no one country can develop itself without its neighbors. So, we must develop bilateral, multilateral relations, and support the people of Afghanistan who have suffered for a long time.

I want to say that the Turkmen government has great interest in TAPI project. This project cost about 10-12 billion dollars and the Turkmenistan government has 85% shareholding in TAPI Company, therefore it will arrange a major part of the financing.

Turkmen government shares the responsibility for this project and this company which constructs this project, 85% this is huge amount which Turkmen government is responsible and this shows interest of the Turkmen government in the development of relations with neighbor countries and improving economic situation in neighboring countries because we are dependent on each other.

Thank You.

The CGSS Team

Written by: Ms. Khadeja M. Khan

Graphics by: Ms. Madiha Ghaffar

Supervised by: Ms. Syeda Dhanak Fatima Hashmi



Embassy of Turkmenistan, Islamabad



Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad

3rd Floor, 1-E, Ali Plaza, Jinnah Avenue, Islamabad, Pakistan

Tel: +92-51-8319682

E-mail: info@cgss.com.pk Website: www.cgss.com.pk