

Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS)

Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue III

Conference Report

دریم نړیوال کنفرانس

Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue - III گفتگوهای افغانستان و آسیای میانه

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About AISS

The Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) was established in October 2012. It aims to create an intellectual space for addressing strategic issues pertaining to Afghanistan in the wider regional and international context. Promoting dialogue between and among different stakeholders will be an end as well as an integral means in attaining AISS objectives.

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A short introduction to the Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue Series

The Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS) held the third “Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue-III (ACAD-III)” in Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan on December 17-18, 2015. The conference, which was conveyed in Baran Emperor Hotel, attended by representatives from 15 nations, comprising Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics, regional, international and intergovernmental organizations, diplomats, governor of Balkh, civil-society representatives, media outlets and academics. The essential aim of this conference was to provide an opportunity for representatives from Afghanistan, and Central Asian Republics to strengthen cooperation and collaboration on areas of security, politics, economy, and establishment of think-tanks and institutions for scholars and statesmen of Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics.

Summary of the Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue -III

This is the third Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue. The first and second rounds of Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogues were held in Kabul. This year’s dialogue was devoted to “Connectivity, Opportunities and Obstacles” with a focus on opportunities and challenges in Afghanistan and Central Asia. The dialogue aimed at strengthening cooperation in the aspects of economy, security, cultural exchange and trade between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. The participating nations agreed to put forward joint efforts for fighting terrorism in the region. The Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue-III was widely covered by international, regional and national media outlets; and broadcast live from Metra International TV, Arezu TV, and Balkh National TV.

Objective of the Conference

The Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue serves as a forum between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics’ scholars, politicians, businessmen, academics and statesmen to engage in a dialogue aimed at developing practical and broad cooperation and collaboration. Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue (ACAD) is an international annual forum, which aims helping to promote mutual understanding and finding common grounds in the areas of political dialogue, security coordination, economic cooperation and cultural exchange.

One of the significant cooperation and collaboration between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics through Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue-III is fighting terrorism, and anti-corruption in the region. Participants also called for reopening and reconstruction of the Cliff Port between Afghanistan and Turkmenistan, and Kaldar Port between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The reopening of these ports will enhance trade and economic cooperation between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. Building bridges over Ammo River, asphaltting port along the Hairatan road and connection to railways are the most important transit initiatives for boosting trade and transit between Afghanistan and central Asia and enhancing cooperation and collaboration on areas of trade, transit of energy and economic prosperity in the region.

The national, regional and international participants raised their opinions and provided comments and recommendations on a range of seven themes, issues and areas, including:

- Mapping Mutual Perception of Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics
- Economic Opportunities
- Trade Relations and Trans-regional Projects
- Political Connectivity and Shared Security Threats
- Cultural Connectivity, and Geo-cultural Mapping
- Afghanistan Transition Decade: Challenges and Opportunities
- A glance into the future

The conference set out to address the need for a permanent forum where both national and regional stakeholders can engage in dialogue aimed at developing practical and broad security cooperation, as well as overall enhancing cooperation and collaboration between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue aims to identify the reasons for the gap between the potential and actual state of cooperation, and to recommend effective ways and policies for strengthening cooperation and connectivity between Afghanistan and the Central Asia. Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue I and II were also held in Afghanistan respectively in 2013 and 2014. During the meeting, the political and economic cooperation between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics, and prospects of development of economic cooperation between South and Central Asia were discussed. Experts from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan exchanged views on mutual concerns and interests. Addressing the conference, the acting governor of

Balkh, Atta Mohammad Noor said that combating extremism and terrorism needs regional cooperation and integration.

Part I

The Conference Panels

Afghanistan and the five Central Asian Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan enjoy cordial relations. The Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue is an important component of Afghanistan's – Central Asia policy. The dialogue aims to bring scholars, practitioners, policymakers and business leaders from Central Asia and Afghanistan on a common platform to discuss the issues of critical importance and of contemporary relevance. The Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies is the prime think-tank organizes the Dialogue in collaboration with Central Asian Republics.

Continuing the process of evolving a permanent platform for academic exchanges between Central Asia and Afghanistan, the Third Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue was successfully organized by the AISS in Mazar-i-Sharif on December 17-18 2015. Besides Afghanistan, participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan attended the Third Dialogue, and seven sessions on thematic issues were presented. The ACAD-III proved to be another successful chapter of the Afghanistan-Central Asia relationship.

During the ACAD-III panel discussion on such concerns, participants provided their views and highlighted recommendations toward building a credible consensus among national, regional, and international stakeholders – one that would benefit both Afghanistan and the entire region.

Inauguration Session

Dr. Dawood Moradian, director of Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies (AISS), welcomed the participants of the third Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue. He mentioned that the region is facing many challenges, and Central Asian Republics can play a significant role in the areas of development, peace and stability. He named terrorism as the biggest challenge the region is facing. Terrorism as a concern has caused a disconnection between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. In the past, many believed that terrorism was a threat against Afghanistan, but now everyone understands that terrorism is a global threat and hundreds of people from all neighboring countries have joined them. He considered Balkh, the most suitable place for such dialogues and conferences and thanked the local government and the partner

organizations for their support. Expecting that all aspects of Afghanistan-Central Asia's relations would be discussed during the course of the dialogue, he hoped that useful recommendations would be made, and the dialogue would be a successful exercise. In his remarks, Mr. Moradian highlighted close relations between Afghanistan and the region. He said Afghanistan once served, as a key bridge between Central and South Asian countries and the country's that role should be revived again. After official speeches, a number of Central Asian envoys, political and social experts discussed important issues facing Afghanistan and the region during the round table deliberations.

Atta Mohammad Noor delivered the keynote address and noted that Afghanistan and Central Asia have very long historical linkages. He said that bilateral cooperation would be more fruitful if the current problem of connectivity between Afghanistan and Central Asia was resolved. The lack of direct connectivity has been a major obstacle in closer cooperation. Governor of Balkh praised AISS for their valuable dialogues and conferences boosting cooperation and collaboration between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. These conferences between scholars, academics, and statement can result in peace, security, development and welfare for Afghanistan and the region.

Panel 1: Mapping Mutual Perception of Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics

Mr. Lotfullah Najafizada, Head of News and Current Affairs at Tolo TV chaired the session

Speakers:

Professor Nazif Shahrani, University of Indiana,

His honorable Bitimov Omirtay, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Afghanistan

His honorable Abdul Razaqov, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Afghanistan

Dr. Qasim Shah Skandari, Director of the Center for the study of the Afghanistan Conflict-Region, Tajikistan

Dr. Nazif Shahrani discussed about a strategy and a solution for the problems and challenges facing the region. He emphasized that the region is abundant in resources, and this strategy must help us to use and protect it. He added that we are not only talking about natural resources in this region that needs protection, but also human resources. It is very important

and crucial that we use these resources for development. We need to invest on our human resources. In his analysis, this region has abundant resources, but still the people are in poverty, and it is because that we cannot use our resources. He added that democratic governance in the region is crucial for achieving the goals. Up until, people cannot take part in the decisions that affect their lives, all the resources will be wasted.

Abdul Razaqf ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Kabul said the fight against global terrorism is a joint responsibility of the Central Asia. All Central Asian Republics are responsible to fight and tackle the terrorism threats to the region. Today Afghanistan is a victim of terrorism and fundamentalism because of the states' interference in Afghanistan's affairs. Until the neighbors do not seek a peaceful way to find a solution to terrorism and fundamentalism, there will be war. Presence of terrorists and extremists in the region is one of the serious concerns of people attending this conference, and we want to find a solution to it.

If serious actions are not taken against the threats of terrorism in the region, it will create bloodshed on everyone' of our doorsteps. Insurgency, and terrorisms are shared threats to our security; our states must have collaboration and cooperation for fighting this crisis.

Mr. Abdul Razaqf added history of political relations between Afghanistan, and Kyrgyzstan goes back to 1995. Since then, Afghan and Kyrgyz authorities had many meetings, sessions and conferences. Today there are 221 Afghan students studying in Kyrgyzstan, and we are hopeful and looking forward to strengthen relationships between these two countries.

Mr. Qasim Shah Sekandari, director at the Center for the Study of Afghanistan Conflict – Region said, “Our definition of Afghanistan is a friendly and a brother country. We have a long history with Afghanistan – a thousand years, and common grounds. “

Sekandari added, today Afghanistan is a victim of terrorism, and extremism because of interference of a number of countries, and this has created hindrance and challenges for the region. Our common grounds can help to bring peace and stability in the region.

Bitimov Omirtay, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Afghanistan concluded that Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics have shared borders, and terrorism's threats are creating limitations to our collaboration and cooperation. Afghanistan and Kazakhstan have close economic and political relationships, and recently, Afghanistan and Kazakhstan signed six contracts, which would further help in bringing stability in the region.

Panel 2: Economic Opportunities

Tamim Asey, Advisor to the Afghanistan National Security Council and AISS scholar, chaired the session

Speakers:

Dr. Jahan Afrooz, Deputy of Center for Strategic Studies led by the President of Tajikistan

Mr. Hashim Rasooli, Head of International Relations, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Mr. Hakim Sahebzada, Faculty of Economy Director, Balkh University

In his remarks, Tamim Asey an advisor to the Afghanistan National Security Council and AISS scholar talked about Economic Sustainability in the region, and provided recommendations. Dr. Jahan Afrooz, deputy of Center for Strategic Studies led by the President of Tajikistan said, Afghanistan is very important to the members of Shanghai Organization. Afghanistan's economic role is important to the region, with more aids in Afghanistan; the country will develop.

Mr. Hashim Rasooli, head of International Relations at Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry talked about the importance of collective and regional economic initiatives in the region. He added that the economic trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan reaches to \$ 2.2 billion per annum and besides challenges both country face, facilities have been provided to traders. Comparing Central Asian Republics with India, he said, every day, 550 Afghan citizens are issued Indian Visas, mostly business visas, but Afghanistan's relation and trade are not to that extent now with Central Asian Republics. He also talked about Afghanistan and Tajikistan joined chamber of commerce established in 2008. Mr. Rasooli added security is the most challenging issue when it comes to economic trade between Afghanistan, and Central Asian Republic. Economic trades between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics are relatively little when we compare it with South Asian States, or even Turkey. He recommended that provision of facilities and removing restrictions will enhance volume of trade and economic cooperation between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics.

Hakim Sahibzada, a professor at Balkh University said, Afghanistan hopefully very soon will become a member of the World Trade Organization, and since only 9% of our GDP is formed by national income, this issue is a concern for the country. Mr. Sahibzada added that defects existed in Afghanistan's taxation system, and there is need for proper taxation system to fix it.

Poverty rate is at 86 % in Afghanistan, and GDP Gross Domestic Product is even less than \$ 700.

Panel 3: Trade Relations and Trans-Regional Projects

Nazeer Kabiri, Policy Advisor to Afghanistan Ministry of Finance and AISS scholar chaired the session

Speakers:

Admiral Shekhar Sinha, former Indian Navy Chief

Dr. Simbal Khan, Senior Manager, Indus Global Institute, & Pakistan Planning Commission

Dr. Erlan Karin, Head of Center for Strategic Studies led by the President of Kazakhstan

Mr. Hasan Bihishtipoor, Researcher at Institute of Iran Eurasian Studies

Admiral Shekhar Sinha, a former Indian Navy chief recommended, China could use Afghanistan as a trade route to Central Asian Republics. He stated that there are challenges, but efforts can be fruitful, and it would be effective. Infrastructure projects are needed in Afghanistan. Without proper and effective infrastructures, efforts for development of Afghanistan will not be sustainable. India is a close ally and friend of Afghanistan, and it has proven it in the past and today. Scholarships for Afghan students in India are one of those good efforts for building good relations between India and Afghanistan. He added, India has built a standard football ground for Afghans in Delhi, and Afghan footballers can think of it as their own ground and play there. India is committed to helping Afghanistan reach sustainability.

Mr. Hasan Bihishtipoor, a researcher at Institute of Iran Eurasian Studies said, Iran suggests a new silk road. This route can help Afghanistan to become a producer state rather than a consumer. This route is also important for fighting against drug trafficking. The new Silk Road can connect Asia from South to the North. Afghanistan can take the lead in this endeavor.

Dr. Erlan Karin, head of Center for Strategic Studies led by the President of Kazakhstan said, security in Afghanistan is very important for the entire region, and Kazakhstan is committed to regional cooperation and collaboration and will always welcome and support the development of Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics.

Dr. Simbal Khan, Senior Manager at Indus Global Institute and a member of Pakistan Planning Commission said, there is no doubt that conflicts are still ongoing in the region, and it has been a challenge against the development. Now is the time we can work together and achieve economic development and growth. Afghanistan and Pakistan have good working and trade relationship, and it is crucial for achieving regional economic growth and development. Dr. Simbal added, Afghanistan could serve a hub and a trade bridge between South Asia and Central Asia.

Panel 4: Political Connectivity and Shared Security Threats

Parwiz Kawa, Editor in-chief of Hasht Subh Daily chaired the session

Speakers:

Dr. David Sydney, former deputy to Minister of Defence, U.S.

Sardar Rahimi, University Professor and Advisor to Afghanistan Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Iskandar Aqil Bayuf, Researcher at Institute of Strategic Studies of Kazakhstan

Dr. Delia Rahmanowa Chowarz, Senior Political Officer at Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Dr. David, a former deputy to the Minister of Defence of United States said there are security threats and those threats are not only against Afghanistan, but also against the entire region. We need joint operation to end and eradicate the threats. Political and collective actions can be a way to defeat international terrorism.

Sardar Rahimi a university professor and advisor to Afghanistan Chief Executive Officer talked about Afghanistan's relations with the Central Asian Republics. He emphasized on a need for a regional diplomacy that could bring peace and stability in the region, because without stability in the region, Afghanistan will not be in peace.

Iskandar Aqil Bayuf a researcher at Institute of Strategic Studies of Kazakhstan raised concerns of his country about the threats from insurgents and extremists in the region. He called upon the representatives of all participating states to take action against the extremism and insurgency and urged them to think of it a duty for the regional stability. Mr. Iskandar added more academic conferences, and dialogues are needed to find solutions to the current problems of the region.

Dr. Delia Rahmanowa Chowarz, a senior political officer at Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe emphasized on the geopolitical significance of the Central Asia and its strategic role in the region. He urged all the states, non-state actors, think-tanks, international, regional and intergovernmental organizations to take into account the role of women in the policies and practices.

Panel 5: Cultural Connectivity, and Geo-Cultural Mapping

Nasrin Gors, Writer, Researcher and Advisor to Afghanistan Chief Executive Director chaired the session

Speakers

Manizha Bakhtary, Former Ambassador of Afghanistan to Norway

Dr. Bohdan Krachinko, Director of Central Asia University, Kazakhstan

Dr. Kishik Sai Natruf, Manager at Search for Common ground, Kyrgyzstan

Mohammad Mohaqeq, Advisor to the Presidential Office

The speakers discussed the historical, cultural and scientific discoveries of the Central Asia. Balkh of Afghanistan served as a cradle of knowledge, civilization and discoveries for the region. Many world known scholars, scientists, writers and philosophers, including Mowlana Jalaludin Balkhi, Nasir Khesrow Balkhi, Rabia Balkhi, Hakim Daqiqi Balkhi, Ibni Sinai Balkhi were born and raised in this part of the world.

Music, art, history, literature, dance, sports and many different forms of arts and artistic origins are nurtured in this part of the world and have travelled to countries across the globe. The participants emphasized that this region is rich and has all the elements to become a great place. He added that joint efforts, collaborations, and cooperation between and among all the states and nations are needed to achieve this goal. The participants named Nowroz as one of the most important event for strengthening cultural exchange between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. They urged the national, regional and international organizations to use this opportunity for bringing together nations for peace, prosperity and instability in the region. At the end, the participants signified the developmental role of women in the decision-making process.

Panel 6: Afghanistan Transition Decade: Challenges and Opportunities

Shah Mahmoud Mikhail, Director of American Peace Institute in Afghanistan chaired the session

Speakers

Masood Aziz, Policy Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Interior, Afghanistan

Ali Sait Akin, Ambassador of Republic of Turkey to Afghanistan

Dr. Jahangir Kerimi, Professor at Tehran University

General Sharma, Deputy of United Services Institute of India

This session started with a brief overview of the transition decade in Afghanistan, challenges and opportunities.

Ali Sait Akin, Ambassador of Republic of Turkey to Afghanistan considered security as the biggest challenge of Afghanistan and added that Turkey will always want and support peace and security in Afghanistan. Security and stability in Afghanistan are stability in the region, and Turkey is part of the region. We understand that Afghanistan faces many challenges. He added widespread corruption, insecurity and lack of effective infrastructures existed in Afghanistan. Turkey is willing and interested to help Afghanistan overcome the challenges and problems. Mr. Akin who has been recently assigned as Republic of Turkey's ambassador to Afghanistan, has shown interest in development of Afghanistan. Since he has taken position as the ambassador, the Turkish visa issuance process has become easier for Afghan citizens.

Masood Aziz, policy deputy minister at the Ministry of Interior of Afghanistan talked about challenges and achievements in the last fourteen years. Afghanistan is not only at the threat of terrorism; terrorism is a threat against all the states in the region. The Paris attack showed us that terrorism is a real threat against the world peace and stability. Terrorism in Afghanistan can be a real threat to Central Asian Republics, if it is not stopped, it can also create instability in Central Asian Republics. Human trafficking is another concern for Afghanistan and the region. Afghanistan unwillingly has been pushed into this disaster, and this phenomenon is a threat like the terrorism. Mr. Aziz added we are hopeful that Afghanistan's ministries establish good relations with the Central Asian Republics, since these relationships can create harmony and stability in the region.

Dr. Jahangir Kerimi professor at Tehran University said, there are countries that want to create limitations to Afghanistan's development. Terrorism, radicalization and separatism are the three evils against Afghanistan. Afghanistan's membership in regional organizations and treaties is very effective in getting out of the evils. Shanghai is one of the most important organizations in the region. Afghanistan borders are not a wall between countries; it can turn into bridges between Central Asian Republics and South Asia. Afghanistan has a potential to become an economic hub for the region.

Central Asian Republics can benefit a lot from this linkage. Terrorism is not a phenomenon of Afghanistan, but it has been a challenge against economic, cultural and political development across the country.

General Sharma, deputy of United Services Institute of India said, Afghanistan is a strategic friend and partner of India. India always wants to support development projects in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has a strategic location in the region, and a good potential to become an economic and political power in the region. Human development and investment in Afghanistan are needed. Pakistan can play a crucial role in these areas too. Pakistan as a friend and a neighbor country must play an important reconstruction role in Afghanistan.

Panel 7: A glance into the future

Tahir Qaderi, Senior Manager at the Metra TV chaired the session

Speakers

Aidin Norhan, Permanent Representative of Islamic Cooperation Organization to Afghanistan

Armanduz Populs, Political Officer at the United Nations Center for Diplomacy of Deterrence

Enayat Modaris, Journalist and Civic Activist, Afghanistan

Armanduz Populs, a political officer at the United Nations Center for Diplomacy of Deterrence emphasized on integration of the region for peace and stability and urged from states that there is need to draw a plan for achieving that purpose. Populs added, international conferences such as RECCA are good examples for regional integration. During the last 14 years, we have seen many development projects and initiatives in Afghanistan and it is a hope for Afghan people. Afghanistan can serve as a regional hub for the Central Asian Republics.

Aidin Norhan, a permanent representative of Islamic Cooperation Organization to Afghanistan said, 19th and 20th centuries were ideological centuries for Afghanistan, but 21st century is a century of hope for Afghanistan. Afghanistan must not be a ground for battles of other countries and terrorism. Afghanistan is an independent and neutral state, and countries must respect that.

Enayat Modaris, an Afghan journalist and civic activist discussed the issues and challenges concerning Afghanistan's youth. It is time that killing and murder of Afghan youth be stopped. The participants emphasized investing on youth and strengthening relations between Afghan youth and the region to overcome such challenges and problems.

Conclusion

The third International Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue, which focused on challenges, obstacles and opportunities between Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics, was held in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan with the support of Balkh provincial governance, media outlets and civil society activist. The sessions discussed ways of cooperation and collaboration between Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics on areas of politics, economy, cultural exchange and development.

Afghan institute for Strategic Studies thanked and expressed their gratification to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Information and Culture, National Department of Security, Independent Directorate of Local Governance, Balkh Governance, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce, Directorate of Balkh University, Media outlets and civil society organizations for their attendance and participation in the sessions and coverage of the program on local, national and International Media

The third Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue played an important role on issues concerning Afghanistan and Central Asian. Afghan Institute for Strategic Studies is hopeful and welcomes your cooperation and collaboration in the future conferences.

Annexes

Annex 1: Agenda

Afghanistan-Central Asia Dialogue – III Agenda

Thursday December 17

Opening Session

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 08:30-09:30 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recitation of Holy Koran 2. National Anthem 3. Hymns of Khaja Abdullah Ansari 4. Sufi Music 5. Welcoming remarks by AISS Director, Dr Davood Moradian 6. Welcoming Remarks by Balkh Governor, Ustad Atta |
|-------------|--|

Panel I: Mapping Mutual Perception of Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------|---|
| | Moderator | Mr. Lutfullah Najafizada, Head of TOLO News |
| 09:30-11:00 | Speakers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor Nazif Shahrani, Indiana University , USA 2. H.E. Ambassador BITIMOV, Ambassador of Kazakhstan in Afghanistan 3. H.E. Ambassador Abdulrazaqov, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan in Afghanistan 4. Dr. Qasemshah Iskandary, President , Afghanistan- Regional Conflict Studies Center, Tajikistan |

Open Discussion/Q-A Session

11:00-11:30 Tea Break

Panel II: Economic Opportunities

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------|--|
| | Moderator | Mr. Tamim Asey, Economic Adviser, National Security Council/ AISS research fellow |
| 11:30-13:00 | Speakers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Jahan Fruz, deputy director, Center for Strategic Studies Under the President of Tajikistan 2. Mr. Hashem Rasuli, International relations director, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce & Industries 3. Dr Vladimir Boyko, Director, Asiatic expert-analytical center, Russia |

Open Discussion/Q-A Session

13:00-14:00	Lunch	
	Panel III: Physical Connectivity; Trans-regional projects	
	Moderator	Mr. Nazir Kabiry, Policy Adviser to Afghanistan's Ministry of Finance/AISS research fellow
14:00-15:30	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vice-Admiral Shekhar Sinah, former Chief of the Integrated Defense Staff, India 2. Dr. Simbal Khan, CEO Indus Global Initiative/Planning Commission, Pakistan 3. Dr. Erlan Karin, Director, Kazakh Institute for Strategic Studies Under the President of Kazakhstan 4. Mr. Hasan Beheshti-pur, Scholar, Institute of Iran & Eurasia Studies(IRAS), Iran
		Open Discussion/Q-A Session
15:30-16:00	Tea Break	
	Panel IV: Political Connectivity; Shared Security Threats	
	Moderator	Dr.Mujib Rahimi, Spokesperson to Afghanistan CEO
16:00-17:30	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. David Sedney, former deputy Assistant Defense Secretary, USA 2. Dr. Sardar Rahimi, University Lecturer/Adviser to CEO, Afghanistan 3. Mr. Iskander Akylbayev, researcher, Kazakh Institute for Strategic Studies 4. Dr. Delia Rahmonova-Schwarz, Senior Political Officer, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)
		Open Discussion/Q-A Session
19:00-21:00	Official Reception by the Governor of Balkh	

Friday December 18

08:30-09:00	Traditional Sufi Music	
	Panel V: Cultural Connectivity; Geo-cultural mapping	
	Moderator	Ms. Nasrin Gurus, Writer, Afghanistan
9:00 – 10:30	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ambassador Manizha Bakhtari, former Afghan Ambassador to Norway/AISS research fellow 2. Dr. Bohdan Krawchenko, Director of Central Asia University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan 3. Dr. Keneshbek Sainazarov, Country Director, Search for Common Ground, Kyrgyzstan 4. Mr Mohammed Moheq, Adviser, Presidential Office/AISS research fellow
		Open Discussion/Q-A Session

10:30-11:00	Tea Brea	
11:00-13:00	Panel VI: Afghanistan's Transformation Decade: Challenges and Opportunities	
	Moderator	Mr. Shah Mahmud Miakhil, Country Director, United States Institute of Peace
	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. H.E. Ambassador Ali Sait Akin, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey in Afghanistan` 2. Mr. Masood Ahmad Azizi, Deputy Interior Minister, Afghanistan 3. Dr. Jahan-gher Karami, Profesor, Tehran University, Iran 4. Gen. Sharma, Deputy Director, United Service Institution of India
	Open Discussion/Q-A Session	
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:30	Panel VII: The Way Forward	
	Moderator	Mr Tahir Qadiri, Chief Executive Officer, Mitra Media TV, Afghanistan
	Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ambassador AYDIN NURHAN, Permanent Representative of Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to Afghanistan 2. Armands Pupols , Political Officer, UN Center for Preventive Diplomacy 3. Mr. Enayat Mudaris, Journalist/Civil Society Activist, Afghanistan
	Open Discussion/Q-A Session	

Annex 2: List of Participants

List of Participants

Name	Designation	Organization
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan		
Abda, Mohammad	Member	House of Representatives-Balkh
Abobakr gross, Nasrin	Writer	
Ahmadyar, Sayed Zaman	Director	The Research Policies of the Ministry of Interior
Alimi, Mahtab	Writer	
Amini, Rohullah	Director/Senior Research Fellow	American Institute of Afghanistan Studies
Aryaee, Abduljabar	Chief of Staff	Ministry of Education
Asey, Tamim	Advisor/Fellow Researcher	National Security Council/AISS
Ashena,Asif	Political Analyst	
Azam, Farouq	Chairman	Movement of Peaceful Transformation of Afghanistan
Azizi,Masood Ahmad	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Interior Affairs
Bahman, Golnoor	Secretary	The Union of Writers
Bakhtari, Manizha	Former Ambassador	Embassy of Afghanistan in Norway

Baluch Zada, Ajmal	Activist	Civil Society
Balkhi, Mirwais	Professor	University
Barakzai, Zakaria	Director General	Afghanistan Democracy Watch
Elham, Feraidon	Deputy Director	Office of the President
Elmi, Ahmad Khaled	Head of office	Foreign Affairs of Balkh Province
Ferouz, Mohammad Zaman	Military Expert	
Ghaderi, Taher	President	Mitra TV
Gharibyar, Baz Mohammad	President	Peace Council of Balkh province
Ghazanfar, Mohammad Ebrahim	Businessman	
Ghiyasi, Tooryalai	Director of Cultural Unit	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Hadid, Mohammad Afzal	Head	Provincial council-Mazar-i-Sharif
Hadid, Shahla	Head	Balkh Women Affairs
Hares, Parwin	Deputy	Balkh Education Department
Kabiri, Nazir	Senior Policy Advisor to the Finance Minister	Ministry of Finance
Kawa, Parwiz	Editor in Chief	8 am news paper
Khairi, Humayon	Deputy Director	Office of 1 st Vice President
Khaliq, Mohammad Saleh	Head	Information and Culture in Balkh
Lodin Etemadi, Homaira	Deputy Chief of Staff to President Karzai	
Mehraeen, Abdul Fayaz	Head	Office of Governor of Balkh
Miakhel, Shah Mahmood	Country Director	United States Institute of Peace
Moheq, Mohammad	Writer/Adviser	AISS/Office of the President
Mudarres, Enayat	Senior Journalist	One TV
Naderi, Partaw	Writer and Poet	
Nadim, Asadullah	Adviser	Office of 1 st Vice President
Najafizada, Lotfollah	Director	TOLO News
Nazari, Mohammad	Lecturer	Balkh University
Neshat, Zalmai	Advisor to the Chief Executive Officer	Afghanistan Unity Government
Nezam, Davood	Businessman	
Niazi, Rafiullah	Director	Academy of Sciences of Afghanistan
Niazi, Saifora	Member	House of Representatives-Balkh
Noor, General Atta Mohammad	Governor	Mazar-i-Sharif
Noyan, Abbas	Secretary- General	Right and Justice Party
Paesa, Khalil	Head	Western Region Civil Society Network
Paykan, Najib	President	Arezo TV
Rabi, Bereshna	Member	House of Representatives-Balkh
Rafiee, Azizullah	Executive Director	Afghanistan Civil Society Forum
Rahimi, Mujib-Ul Rahman	Spokes Person to Afghanistan's Chief Executive Officer	Afghanistan Unity Government
Rahimi, Sardar Mohammad	Advisor to the Vice CEO of Afghanistan	Afghanistan Unity Government
Rahmati, Barakatullah	Deputy Spokesman (acting)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Rasekh, Mohammad Saleh	Lecturer	Balkh University
Rasoli, Yasin	Lecturer	Kateb University
Rasouli, Hashem	Public Relation Director	Afghanistan Chamber of

Rezaee, Mohammad Aref	Lecturer	Commerce and Industries Balkh University
Royesh, Aziz	President	Marefat High School
Saeedi, wase	Director	Women Activities and Social Services Association Union of CSOs
Safwat, Sayed Abdul Hamid	Chairman	
Salangi, Abdulshokoor	Political Expert	
Salek, Yama	Head	Radio Mardum
Same, Sayed Mohammad	Chairman	Independent Commission for Human Rights in North Ministry of Interior Affairs The Afghanistan Times
Sarfraz, Abdul Matin	Media and Public Relations Advisor	
Sarir, Abdul Saboor	Editor in Chief	
Shakib, Shakiba	Civil society activist	
Shams, Mir Najibullah	Writer	
Shoja, Shujahuddin	Deputy	Balkh Provincial Council
Yama, Mohammad Nader	Deputy Director	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
Younesi, Gul Mohammad Zalmai	Political Specialist	
Zakaria, Zakaria	Member	Afghan Parliament
Islamic Republic of Iran		
Karami, Jahangir	Member	Institute of Iran Eurasian Studies (Iras)
Behishtipoor, Hassan	Member	Institute of Iran Eurasian Studies (Iras)
Tisha Yar, Mandana	Member	Institute of Iran Eurasian Studies (Iras)
Amir Ahmadian, Bahram	Professor	Tehran University
Islamic Republic of Pakistan		
Khan, Simbal	Senior Fellow	Planning Commission, Islamabad, Pakistan
Republic of Egypt		
El Sharif, Walid	Consular	Embassy of Arab Republic of Egypt
Republic of India		
Nirmala, Joshi	Director	India Central Asia Foundation, New Delhi, India
Major General BK, Sharma	Deputy Director Research and Head	USI Center for Strategic Studies and Simulation
Vishal, Chandra	Associate Fellow	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
Stobdan, Phunchok	Senior Fellow	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
Sinha, Admiral Shekhar	Chief	Indian Navy
Republic of Kazakhstan		
Bitimov, Omirtai	Ambassador	Embassy of Kazakhstan
Karin, Erlan	President	Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies
Yergaliyev, Zhunus	Counsellor	Embassy of Kazakhstan
Akylbayev, Iskander	Research fellow	Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies
Republic of Kyrgyzstan		
Ishenbaevich, Abdurazakov	Ambassador	Embassy of Kyrgyzstan
Avazbek Krawchenko, Bohdan	Director	University of Central Asia in

Habibi, Mohammad Ajan	Political Advisor	Bishkek
Mirsaiitov, Ikbazhan	Researcher	Embassy of Kyrgyzstan
Sainazarov, Keneshbek	Country Director	Search for Common Ground
Republic of Tajikistan		
Iskandarov, Kosimsha		Centre of region and Afghanistan studies,
Saimuddin, Merzoeff	Researcher	Centre of region and Afghanistan studies,
Rahman jahaa Afruz, Daring	Economic Expert	Centre for Strategic Studies under the President of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, Tajikistan
Republic of Turkey		
Akin, Ali Sait	Ambassador	Embassy of Turkey
Bakir, Cahit	Commander	Turkish Military Forces in Afghanistan
Sirin, Oguz	Terrorism Expert	Turkish Embassy, Kabul
Koru, Selim	Researcher	Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey
Republic of Uzbekistan		
Abdurazzaqov, Miradi	Head	Consulate of Uzbekistan-Mazar-e-Sharif
Giyasov, Nasir	Firs Secretary	Consulate of Uzbekistan-Mazar-e-Sharif
Russian Federation		
Nessar, Mohammad Omar	Scholar	Institute of Oriental studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences
Topychkanov, Peter	Scholar	Primakov Institute of World Economy and International Relations
Boyko, Vladimir	Director	Asiatic Expert-Analytical Center
United States of America		
Sedney, David	Former Deputy Assistant Secretary	Defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia
Shahrani, Nafiz M.	Professor	Indiana University, USA
Organization of Islamic Cooperation		
Nurhan, Aydin	Permanent Representative of OIC Afghanistan	OIC
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe		
Rahmonova-Schwarz, Delia	Senior Afghanistan Engagement Support Adviser	OSCE
The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia		
Pupols, Armands	Political Affairs Officer	UNRCCA

Annex 3: Links of the National and International Media covered the conference

International Media:

- DW
- Payam Aftab
- Fars News
- Farsi. Ru
- Hooz.pk
- Jahonnamo
- Mehr News
- Ghatreh News
- Radiokoocheh

National:

- 8 am
- Aryana News
- Pajhwok News
- Rafdio Azadi
- TOLO News
- Kilid Group
- Arman Mili
- Outlook Afghanistan
- Bayan Shmal
- Rahe Abrisham
- Raha News
- Shafaqna
- Ava Press
- Afghan News
- Afghanistan Today

Annex 4: ACAD-III logo and photos

ACAD-III Logo



Sample of the Conference Photos















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