



# Indian Council of World Affairs

## Sapru House, Barakhamba Road

## New Delhi

### Report on **An Interaction with Editors/Senior Journalists from Eastern Europe and Central Asia**

Continuing its emphasis on people-to-people contact and reaching out to the mass media of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Indian Council of World Affairs organized an interaction with media persons from the Eurasian region at Sapru House, New Delhi, on 26 August 2013. The 13-member foreign delegation included chief editors, foreign desk editors, senior columnists and producers, representing different countries of the region, including Ukraine, Hungary, Slovak Republic, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

Greeting the foreign delegates, Ms. Shamma Jain, Joint Secretary, ICWA, in her inaugural remarks, highlighted the importance of the regions of East Europe and Central Asia in the changing international political and economic scenarios. She also underscored the crucial role these countries can play in India's wider engagement in a globalized world, and urged to explore the possibility of joint research in different areas for mutual benefits of the two sides.

The session was moderated by Jayanta Roy Chodhury, Senior Editor, The Telegraph, New Delhi, who briefed the delegates about India's engagement in the neighbourhood, especially its relationship with China, in which the foreign media persons showed keen interest. He underscored that East Europe and Central Asia are increasing their exchanges with India, and trade would be the 'real driver' of this relationship. India is actively engaged in capacity building and sharing its experiences with the countries,



*From left: Mr. Jayanta Roy Chodhury, The Telegraph; Ms. Shamma Jain, ICWA; Mr. Sujoy Dasgupta, FICCI*

and establishing e-network, especially in Central Asia. The delegates enquired about India's engagement with Afghanistan, Pakistan and African countries.

The delegates also discussed opportunities of greater bilateral economic engagements. Lack of connectivity, especially with Central Asia, and limited understanding of markets in Eastern Europe, were considered as major hindrances in increasing India's deeper economic ties with the regions. It was hoped that with the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) becoming fully operational, trade with these regions would increase. It was also expressed that a liberalised visa regime would multiply business and tourism potentials in East European and Central Asian countries.



*Deliberations in progress*

On being asked about what relatively smaller East European countries, such as Hungary, can offer to India in economic terms, the Indian side suggested that the countries of the region can be an important destination for Indian tourists and film industry. Further, it was suggested that entrepreneurs from Central Asia, Eastern Europe and India need to explore potentials in different sectors.

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*Report by Dr. Athar Zafar, Research Fellow, Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi.*