



Indian Council of World Affairs
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Press Release

on

Second India-Central Asia Dialogue

Almaty, Kazakhstan, 17-18 June 2013

The two-day India-Central Asia Dialogue II, organized by the ICWA in collaboration with the R.B. Suleimenov Institute of Oriental Studies (IOS), Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 17-18 June 2013, reiterated India's deep and continued commitment to strengthen its ties with Central Asian countries. The India-Central Asia Dialogue supported by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, had the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID), Chandigarh, India, as a Special Sponsor for the Almaty Dialogue.

Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed, inaugurating the Dialogue, highlighted the need for greater cooperation between India and Central Asian countries on energy, regional security, economic issues, and nation-building. Mr. Ahamed also emphasized on connecting the region through e-Network to deliver tele-education and tele-health services. Ambassador



Chandrashekhar Dasgupta, Council Member, Indian Council of World Affairs, leading the 14-member Indian delegation of diplomats, academics and researchers, noted with satisfaction the contributions of Track II Dialogue in deepening the relationship between India and Central Asia. Referring to the evolving situation in Afghanistan, he called for greater cooperation between the countries of the region and India. During the Inaugural Session, Prof. Absattar Derbisali, Director, IOS, highlighted the importance of ties between India and Central Asia, and called for greater engagement, especially between India and Kazakhstan.

The two-day deliberations dealt with bilateral, regional and international issues. The participants were of the view that the economic engagement between India and Central Asia was much below its potential but expressed satisfaction over the growing trade between the countries in the region and India in recent years. The Kazakhstan side emphasized that India and its largest trading partner in Central



Asia – Kazakhstan – are poised to play greater mutual role in enhancing India’s ties with the region. The evolving security scenario in Afghanistan also featured prominently during the course of the conference.

On 18 June 2013, the second day of the Dialogue, the Embassy of India in Kazakhstan organized a separate session on the issues of connectivity between India and Central Asia. Representatives from business and transport sectors, including from Kazakhstan railways, shared their views with the academics on the ways to address the challenges and issues related to transfer of consignments from India



to Central Asian countries and vice versa. To overcome the issue of geographical connectivity, it was proposed that India should step up its presence in the services sector. The Embassy also organized a cultural programme to showcase India’s rich cultural heritage.

The India-Central Asia Dialogue, part of India’s ‘Connect Central Asia Policy – 2012’, is held by rotation in each Central Asian republic annually. It aims to bring scholars, policymakers, and business and industry people from all the Central Asian countries- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and from India on a common platform to discuss bilateral issues of critical importance. Its broader objective is to deepen and expand the age-old ties that link India with the Central Asian region. The previous Dialogue was held at Bishkek, the capital of the Kyrgyz Republic, in 2012.
