

International Conference
to Commemorate

≡≡≡ **30TH ANNIVERSARY** ≡≡≡

of India-Central Asia
Diplomatic Relations

**DYNAMICS OF
INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA
RELATIONS
SCALE & SCOPE**

15 December 2022

Venue: Sapru House

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About ICWA

The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) was established in 1943 by a group of eminent intellectuals led by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Dr. H.N. Kunzru. Its principal objective was to create an Indian perspective on international relations and act as a repository of knowledge and thinking on foreign policy issues. An Act of Parliament in 2001 declared the ICWA to be an 'institution of national importance'. The ICWA is headquartered in Sapru House, an iconic heritage building in the heart of New Delhi that was inaugurated by the first Prime Minister of India, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru in May 1955. The council today conducts policy research through an in-house faculty as well as through external experts. It regularly organizes an array of intellectual activities including conferences, seminars, roundtable discussions, bilateral dialogues, international conferences, lectures and outreach activities in India and abroad and brings out a range of publications. The Council has a well-stocked library, an active website, and publishes the journal 'India Quarterly'. ICWA has over 50 MoUs with international think tanks and research institutions to promote better understanding in international issues and develop areas of mutual cooperation. The Council also has partnerships with leading research institutions, think tanks and universities in India.

Concept Note

India's relations with Central Asian countries are nurtured through centuries-old civilisational and cultural ties. Since the emergence of the five independent Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in the early 1990s, India and Central Asia have developed unique relations and critical partnerships. India was among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with all five countries in the region, which is considered as its 'extended neighbourhood'. The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 to all five Central Asian countries has been considered a milestone in amplifying the engagement between India and the region. Giving a significant boost and a new scale to the relationship, India organised the first-ever India-Central Asia Summit in January 2022.

Over the period, Central Asia has emerged as a significant geopolitical and geo-economic region. It has rich hydrocarbon reserves, hydropower potential, uranium deposits and various natural and strategic mineral resources. India is the fifth largest economy in the world and has the potential to emerge as a vast market for Central Asian economies apart from building other complementarities.

There is growing convergence between India and the Central Asian countries over vital issues such as regional security, connectivity, energy security, economic cooperation and people-to-people contacts. Terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking, and cyberspace misuse have adversely affected both India and Central Asian countries. The takeover of Kabul by the Taliban has raised concerns about regional stability in Central Asia and South Asia. Consequently, one of the key priorities of both India and Central Asian countries is to enhance

common understanding of security cooperation. Secondly, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, with its global repercussions, has brought new challenges for both Central Asian countries and India. Central Asia is economically linked with Russia, and sanctions on the country affect the regional economies and inter-regional connectivity.

India and Central Asian countries are working to establish seamless land connectivity through shortest possible routes, including the Chabahar port of Iran, where India is making substantial investments. The progress on the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), joining of the Ashgabat Agreement, and partnership with Central Asian countries for the joint use of Chabahar port are some developments that increase prospects of more effective connectivity and economic collaboration. Regional organisations such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), of which India has assumed presidency, and Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) are also gaining more traction. To give each other 'full right to transit' within member states of SCO was also among the critical issues discussed at the 22nd meeting of the SCO Heads of State Council, which was held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on 15-16 September 2022.

The most important aspect of the countries' engagement is the people-to-people interactions, which make the relationship robust. The people of India and Central Asia have close civilisational, historical and cultural affinity. Vast potential in tourism, medical tourism and healthcare sector should also be explored further.

Against this background, the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) proposes to organise a one-day international conference on 'Dynamics of India-Central Asia Relations: Scale & Scope' to commemorate the 30th anniversary of India-Central Asia diplomatic relations, at

Sapru House, New Delhi, on 15 December 2022. Relevant sub-themes are mentioned below:

1. Historical and Civilisational Linkages
2. Security and Political Cooperation
3. Trade and Investment Relations
4. Energy Geopolitics
5. Regional Connectivity and Multilateral Engagements
6. Emerging Regional organisations
7. Socio-Cultural and People to people contact

Session I: India-Central Asia: Security and Strategic Interests

The session seeks to fulfil the following objectives:

- To analyse the changing security and strategic dynamics and current geopolitical challenges.
- To analyse India and Central Asia's perspectives on the regional and global order.
- To examine the changes and evaluate emerging issues at inter-regional levels.
- To study the impact of evolving geopolitical alignments in the region and the world.

Session II: India-Central Asia Connectivity: Regional Cooperation and Multilateral Engagements

The session seeks to fulfil the following objectives:

- To deliberate on the connectivity with the Central Asian countries, which is a key priority for India and Central Asia.
- To discuss various initiatives both sides look to strengthen the connectivity projects such as, INSTC, Ashgabat Agreement and Chabahar Port.
- To analyse sub-regional and multilateral connectivity.
- To understand the trajectory of regional cooperation

and multilateral engagements in Central Asia such as SCO, CICA and EEU etc.

Session III: India-Central Asia: Cultural and People to People Relations

The session seeks to fulfil the following objectives:

- To deliberate on cultural and people-to-people engagement between the two sides.
- To explore similar cultural preferences and understanding between India and Central Asia.
- To discuss aspects binding India and Central Asian countries in common cultural perceptions.
- To explore scope of further strengthening cultural and people to people contacts.

Session IV: India-Central Asia: Energy Geopolitics, Economy and Trade

The session seeks to fulfil the following objectives:

- To deliberate on Central Asian energy potential and India's position and policies in the region.
- To examine the dynamics between Central Asia and India in the energy sector.
- To discuss India's geopolitical engagement, policies and diversification of energy sources in the Central Asian region.
- To deliberate on how India and Central Asia will be able to realize their true potential as far as trade is concerned.
- To explore Central Asia's potential for economic growth and development with India.

PROGRAMME

1000-1050 hrs IST

INAUGURAL SESSION

Introductory Remarks

Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh

Director General

Indian Council of World Affairs

(5 Minutes)

Keynote Address

Amb. Sanjay Verma

Secretary (West)

Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi

(15 Minutes)

Mr. Nurlan Zhalgasbayev

Ambassador of the Republic of

Kazakhstan to India

(5 Minutes)

Mr. Azamat Seidibaliyev

Cd'A of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan
to India

(5 Minutes)

Mr. Lukmon Bobokalonzoda

Ambassador of the Republic of

Tajikistan to India

(5 Minutes)

Mr. Aziz Baratov

Cd'A of the Republic of Uzbekistan
to India

(5 Minutes)

Vote of Thanks

Dr. Punit Gaur

Research Fellow

Indian Council of World Affairs

(2 Minutes)

Group Photo

1050-1100 hrs IST

Tea Break

India-Central Asia Security and Strategic Interests

Chair

Amb. Gitesh Sarma

Former Secretary (West)

*Ministry of External Affairs & Former
Ambassador of India to Uzbekistan*

Speakers

Kazakhstan

Prof. Svetlana Kozhirova

*Head of the Center for Chinese and
Asian Studies, International Science
Complex “Astana”, Astana,
Kazakhstan*

Uzbekistan

Mr. Eldor Tulyakov

*Executive Director, Development
Strategy Centre, Tashkent,
Uzbekistan*

Tajikistan

Dr. Saihomid Sharipov

*Head of the Department for Analysis
and Forecasting of the Internal Policy
of the Centre for Strategic Research
under the President of the Republic of
Tajikistan, Dushanbe, Tajikistan*

India

Dr. Rajorshi Roy

*Associate Fellow
Manohar Parrikar Institute for
Defence Studies and Analyses,
New Delhi*

Discussion

1215-1325 hrs IST

SESSION – II

**India-Central Asia Connectivity:
Regional Cooperation and Multilateral Engagements**

Chair

Amb. Vinod Kumar

*Former Ambassador of India to
Uzbekistan*

Speakers

Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Nurbek Mamytov

*Researcher, National Institute for
Strategic Studies under the
President of the Kyrgyz Republic,
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan*

Uzbekistan

Mr. Batir Tursunov

*Deputy Director, International
Institute for Central Asian Studies,
Tashkent, Uzbekistan*

India

Dr. Meena Singh Roy

*Senior Fellow
Head, West & Central Asia Centre
Tillotoma Foundation*

Discussion

1325-1415 hrs IST

Lunch

**India-Central Asia:
Cultural and People to People Relations**

Chair

Amb. Ashok Sajjanhar

*Former Ambassador of India to
Kazakhstan*

Speakers

Kyrgyzstan

Prof. Evgeny Kablukov

*Acting Professor, Faculty of
International Relations and Oriental
Studies, Kyrgyz National University,
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan*

Tajikistan

Mr. Mamurdzhon Mirvaisov

*Head, Department of International
Relations, Academy of Sciences of
the Republic of Tajikistan,
Dushanbe, Tajikistan*

India

Prof. K. Warikoo

*JNU (Retd.), Secretary General
(Hony.), Himalayan Research and
Cultural Foundation, New Delhi*

India

Prof. Sanjay Pandey

*Professor, Centre for Russian and
Central Asian Studies, School of
International Studies, Jawaharlal
Nehru University,
New Delhi*

Discussion

1530-1640 hrs IST **SESSION – IV**

India-Central Asia:

Energy Geopolitics, Economy and Trade

Chair

Amb. Yogendra kumar

*Former Ambassador of India to
Tajikistan*

Speakers

Kazakhstan

Mr. Kairat Batyrbayev

*Executive Director, Eurasian
International Studies Association,
Astana, Kazakhstan*

India

Mr. Rohit Sharma

*Former Director and Head- Europe
and CIS, Federation of Indian
Chambers of Commerce and Industry
(FICCI), New Delhi*

India

Dr. Mahesh Ranjan Debata

*Assistant Professor, Centre for Inner
Asian Studies, School of International
Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University,
New Delhi*

Discussion

1640-1700 hrs IST

Tea Break

Special Remarks

Amb. Charanjeet Singh
*Joint Secretary [ERS]
Ministry of External Affairs,
New Delhi
(15 Minutes)*

Concluding Remarks

Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh
*Director General
Indian Council of World Affairs
(5 Minutes)*

Vote of Thanks

Dr. Athar Zafar
*Senior Research Fellow,
Indian Council of World Affairs
(5 Minutes)*

**BIO-PROFILES
OF
CHAIRS AND PANELISTS**

INAUGURAL SESSION



Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh

Director General, ICWA

Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh holds a Master's degree in Economics from Himachal Pradesh University. She joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1985. Her first posting was in Embassy of India in Madrid, Spain, where she later went as Deputy Chief of Mission in 2006. She worked in the Ministry of External Affairs from 1989 to 1999, handling India's relations with Afghanistan and Pakistan. She was posted as Counsellor in the Embassy of India in Kabul from 2003 to 2005.

She has had multilateral experience, particularly in economic and environmental issues. She was Counsellor in the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations in New York from 2000 to 2003. She has served as Joint Secretary to the President of India from August 2007 to August 2012 and as Joint Secretary at the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) from 2012 to 2013. She has been High Commissioner of India to Singapore from 2013 to 2016 and Ambassador of India to Ireland from 2016 to 2018.

For two years from 2018, she was Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs and retired in September 2020. She took over as the DG of ICWA in July 2021.



Amb. Sanjay Verma

Secretary (West)
Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi

Amb. Sanjay Verma assumed the post of Secretary (West) on 2 March, 2022. He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1990, and his overseas assignments have included: Ambassador to Spain and Andorra; Ambassador to Ethiopia, Djibouti and the African Union; Consul General, Dubai; Counsellor (Economic and Commercial), Indian Embassy, Beijing; Spokesperson and Counsellor (Press, Information and Culture), Indian Embassy, Kathmandu; Second Secretary (Press and Political), Indian Embassy, Manila and Economic and Commercial Officer, Hong Kong.

Assignments at the Ministry of External Affairs have included: the China Desk; Aide (OSD) to the Spokesperson; Joint Secretary (DG), Energy Security and Chief of Protocol. From Mumbai, he studied at Wilson College, and then graduated in Economics from Mumbai University's Jai Hind College. He holds a Masters in International Studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi & a Fellowship in International Studies from the University Grants Commission of India.

SESSION I

INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA: SECURITY AND STRATEGIC INTERESTS



Amb. Gitesh Sarma

Former Secretary (West)
Ministry of External Affairs & Former
Ambassador of India to Uzbekistan

Ambassador Gitesh Sarma joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1986. He worked in the Ministry of External Affairs as Under Secretary (Europe East), Director (Central Asia), Additional Secretary (Multilateral Diplomacy). Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs from 2018-2019. Responsibilities included Central Asia, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, UN matters. His Ambassadorial assignments include Ambassador of India to Uzbekistan (2011-2014); High Commissioner to Fiji (2014-15) and High Commissioner to Australia (2019-21). Other foreign assignments were with Indian Missions in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Hong Kong, Pakistan and the United Kingdom.

He served as Consul General of India in Odessa (USSR/Ukraine) during the period of breakup of the USSR. In addition, he served as Officer on Special Duty (Information Technology) in the State of Andhra Pradesh (2002-2003); and as Joint Secretary (External Relations) in the Department of Atomic Energy. Presently he is assisting the Government of Andhra Pradesh in matters related to international cooperation. He is also a member of Manohar Parrikar-Institute for Defence & Strategic Analysis (MP-IDSA).



Prof. Svetlana Kozhirova

Head of the Center for Chinese and Asian Studies, International Science Complex “Astana”, Astana, Kazakhstan

Prof. Svetlana Kozhirova is the head of the Center for Chinese and Asian Studies at International Science Complex “Astana” from December 2018 - till present, Chairman of the National Scientific Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Chief Researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Her areas of research interest include Regional Security, History and Modernity of Eastern Countries, Central and South Asia. She is currently working at Academy of public administration under the President of Kazakhstan Institute of diplomacy as Professor since 2017. She has also served as Chief researcher at Center of military strategic researches of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Kazakhstan from 2012 to 2016. In 2012, she worked as a member of Board of directors of Military and Strategic Research Center of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Kazakhstan as well as member of Council on Foreign Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2013.

As the member of International Studies Association (USA), she took part in its various conferences. She was awarded by the certificate of the President of Kazakhstan to the 20th anniversary of independence of Kazakhstan; and the medal of the assembly of the people of Kazakhstan. In addition she was the winner of the grant "The Best Teacher 2010" and

received the Badge "For merits in the development of science" in 2016. Since 1999 she has been the Professor of International Relations Department, Head of Eurasian Studies Department Scientific Secretary and Assistant Professor of General History Department at Eurasian National University.



Mr. Eldor Tulyakov

Executive Director, Development Strategy Centre, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Mr. Eldor Tulyakov is the Executive Director of the Development Strategy Center Tashkent, Uzbekistan. In 2015-2019, he was a member of the Legislative Chamber of Oliy Majlis (Parliament) of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Committee on Budget and Economic Reforms of the Lower Chamber.

Mr. Tulyakov is currently a member of the Tashkent Council of People's Representatives and the Chairman of the Standing Committee on the Rule of Law and Combating Corruption. Mr. Tulyakov holds B.A. (Hons.) Degree from the University of Westminster (2008) and LL.M. Degree from the Institute for Law and Finance (2011, Frankfurt am Main, Germany). He is an author of more than 20 scientific publications and numerous newspaper articles. He writes on governance, public administration, civil society, legal reforms, and investments.



Dr. Saihomid Sharipov

Head of the Department for Analysis & Forecasting of the Internal Policy of the Centre for Strategic Research under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Dr. Sharipov Saihomid is the head of the department for analysis and forecasting of internal policy of the Centre for Strategic Research under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, at the same time he is a teacher at the Department of Foreign Regional Studies of the Tajik National University. In 2015 he graduated from Kulob State University named after A. Rudaki with a degree in international relations, translator-referent. From 2016 to 2019 he was a postgraduate student at the Tajik National University (TNU). S. S. Sharipov from 2017 to 2018 was an assistant at the Department of Diplomacy and Foreign Policy of the Republic of Tajikistan of TNU. Also, from 2018 to 2022, he was an assistant at the Department of Foreign Regional Studies of the Faculty of International Relations of TNU. In 2021, he defended his thesis on the topic: "Features of the development of relations between Tajikistan and Kazakhstan at the beginning of the XXI century (2001-2016)" in the specialty 07.00.15 - History of international relations and foreign policy (historical sciences). He is the author of more than 20 scientific publications. The sphere of the author's scientific interests is the issues of foreign policy, international relations and diplomacy.

He volunteered in the OXFAM GB in Kulob city (2013-2014) and was also awarded “Student of the year” in Khatlon region, Tajikistan in 2013. He also attended International Symposium on “Turning Brain Drain into Brain Circulation in Central Asia” held in Dushanbe(25 - 27 November 2019). In addition he attended High-Level Conference on "International and Regional Border Security and Management Cooperation to Counter Terrorism and Prevent the Movement of Terrorists" at the State Complex “Kohi Somon”, Dushanbe held on October 18-19, 2022.



Dr. Rajorshi Roy

Associate Fellow,
MP-IDSA, New Delhi, India

Dr. Rajorshi Roy is Associate Fellow at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. His areas of research and analysis cover the foreign, defence, security and domestic policies of Russia and the Central Asian countries. He has written extensively on these issues. He was a member of the Institute's web editorial team during 2019-20. He was also the Secretary for the Indian side of the Eminent Persons Group for Nepal-India Relations (2016-18), set-up by the governments of India and Nepal, to recommend ways to improve bilateral relations.

Dr. Roy has a Ph.D. from the Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). Prior to joining MP-IDSA, he worked with UNAIDS and the Central Information Commission (CIC). He is an alumni of St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi (DU).

SESSION – II:

**INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA
CONNECTIVITY:
REGIONAL COOPERATION
AND
MULTILATERAL ENGAGEMENTS**



Amb. Vinod Kumar

Former Ambassador of India to
Uzbekistan

Vinod Kumar joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1983, after briefly working in the State Bank of India. He has served as Ambassador of India to Uzbekistan and Permanent Representative of India to SCO RATS, and as Ambassador to Fiji and four other Pacific Island countries. In his other diplomatic assignments, he has served in the Soviet Union, Russia Thailand, Bhutan, and Australia. He has worked in the Central Asia Division and headed the Public Diplomacy and Multilateral Economic Relations Divisions in the Ministry of External Affairs, and served as Additional Secretary (International Organisations) dealing with UN, counter terrorism, and cyber security. He has contributed articles and chapters on Central Asia in various publications.



Mr. Nurbek Mamytov

Researcher, National Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Nurbek Mamytov is a Researcher at National Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. He holds a diploma with honors from Faculty of Law, Military University, located in Moscow. Later he did his Postgraduate study from National Academy of science (2013-2016). He served in Ministry of Defence as a lawyer (2008-2009). He was appointed as Assistant Chairman in Military court (2009-2010). He also worked as a lawyer for a Political party 'Zamandash' (2015) as well for another Political party 'Mekenim Kyrgyzstan'(2020). In 2021 he served as CEO of LLC (Asia Logistics Company). Currently he is a researcher at National Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic. He was a recipient of Medal 'Best Cadet 'in 2003. In addition, he was awarded Diploma for achievement as well as Diploma for active participation in Moscow Military University. He also received award for 'Best cadet' from Chief of Moscow Military University in 2008.



Mr. Batir Tursunov Erkinovich

Deputy Director of the Central Institute for the Study of Security Issues, Uzbekistan

Mr. Batir Tursunov Erkinovich is Deputy Director of the Central Institute for the Study of Security Issues, as well as Water and Environmental Research since November 2022. In 1997 he graduated from the Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies, and in 2001 he completed his postgraduate studies at the Institute of Philosophy and Law of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan. He worked as a junior specialist, acting scientist at the Institute of Philosophy and Law named after I. Muminov of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan (1997-1999).

He has worked as the leading Researcher, Project Manager of the Institute for Qualitative and Interregional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan from 2001 to 2005. Earlier he served as Second Secretary; First Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2005-2013). He has also served as the Leading consultant of the Office of the Security Council under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2013-2014).

During the period of 2014-2017, he served as Acting Director of Institute of Statistical and Interregional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. He was the Deputy Director of the Institute of Scientific and Interregional Research under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

(2017-2019). He was Minister-Counselor of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the SCO Secretariat (2019-2022). In addition recently he has been Chief Consultant of the Executive Office of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan from March to November 2022. He did his PhD in Philosophy and has authored over 25 scientific papers published in Uzbekistan and abroad.



Dr. Meena Singh Roy

Senior Fellow & Head,
West & Central Asia Centre,
Tillotoma Foundation

Dr. Meena Singh Roy is a Gold medalist of Delhi University in History during her graduation. She has done Post Graduation, M. Phil & Ph.D from University of Delhi. She was the scholarship holder of UGC and ICSSR. Prior to joining IDSA, she was a senior research scholar and was teaching in the Department of African Studies, Delhi University. She was associated with Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies and London School of Economics for her research work. She has been a visiting Research Fellow with German Institute of Global & Area Studies Institute of Asian Studies (GIGA), Hamburg & Visiting Fellow at BESA, Tel Aviv, Israel.

She is the former coordinator Eurasia and West Asia Centre at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA). Presently she is a Senior Fellow and head Eurasia and West Asia Centre at Tillotoma Foundation, as a Distinguished Fellow, Middle East Institute (MEI), Distinguished Fellow, Indian Futures and part of the experts group on West Asia in Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF). Her area of specialisation is Eurasia and West Asia. In India she has been lecturing in National Defence College, College of Defence Management, College of Air Warfare, and Army War College. Internationally, she has delivered lectures in foreign Ministries and Ministry of Defence. She has visited more than fifty countries for her research related work, conferences,

track-2 meetings and multilateral meetings/dialogues. She has also been election observer for the presidential elections in Uzbekistan. Her major publications have been on India-Central Asia relations, regional organizations, issues of terrorism, connectivity, and soft power.

She is a member of Central Eurasian Studies Society, United States; Advisory Board of Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies and Centre for Inner Asian Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi; Board of Studies in Defence and Strategic Studies, Punjab University, Chandigarh and Studies in Defence and Strategic Studies Department, Punjabi University, Patiala; International Editorial Board of the Central Asian Affairs, Brill NV, Leiden, Netherlands; & of Advisory board of International Studies, Sage.

SESSION – III:

**INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA:
CULTURAL AND PEOPLE
TO PEOPLE RELATIONS**



Amb. Ashok Sajjanhar

Former Ambassador of India to
Kazakhstan

Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar is Executive Council Member, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses; President, Institute of Global Studies; Distinguished Fellow, Ananta Aspen Centre, and Former Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Sweden & Latvia. He acquitted his responsibilities in the Indian Foreign Service for 34 years.

Ambassador Sajjanhar has worked in senior diplomatic positions in Indian Embassies/Missions in Washington DC, Brussels, Moscow, Geneva, Tehran, Dhaka and Bangkok, and also at Headquarters in India. He negotiated for India in the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations and in India-EU, India-ASEAN and India-Thailand Free Trade Agreements. He contributed significantly to strengthening strategic and economic ties and promoting cultural cooperation between India and USA, EU, Russia and other countries. He worked as head of the National Foundation for Communal Harmony to promote amity and understanding between different religions, faiths and beliefs. He has been decorated by Governments of Kazakhstan & Latvia with their National Awards & by Universal Peace Federation, New York (a body in special, consultative status with the United Nations) with Title of "Ambassador of Peace." He writes, travels and speaks extensively on issues relating to international relations, foreign policy & themes of contemporary relevance & significance. He appears widely on TV panel discussions.



Prof. Evgeny Kablukov

Acting Professor, Faculty of International Relations and Oriental Studies, Kyrgyz National University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Born in 1951, Prof. Evgeny Kablukov is currently serving as Acting Professor at the Faculty of International Relations and Oriental Studies, Kyrgyz National University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. From June 1970 to May 1972 E. Kablukov served in Soviet Army. In September 1973 E. Kablukov became a student of the Oriental Faculty, St.Petersburgh State University. He studied History of India & Indian Languages (Hindi, Urdu, Sanskrit). Evgeny Kablukov graduated from the St. Petersburg State University, Oriental Faculty in 1980. After graduation from the University in 1980 he worked in the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic. From August 1987 to March 1991 he was a lecturer in the Kyrgyz National University, Faculty of History. In April 1991 he joined Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic. He also worked in International Department of the Administration of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic from November 1991 to March 1997. In 1999-2001 he worked as Head of Oriental History Chair & Vice-Rector in the Bishkek Humanities University.

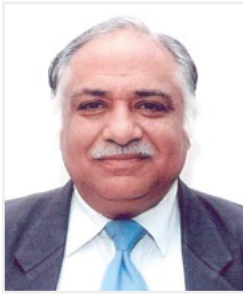
E. Kablukov resumed his work in the Kyrgyz Foreign Ministry in March 2001 & retired in 2016. He served in the Kyrgyz Diplomatic Missions in Austria (twice), Ukraine & India. He is also visiting Professor in the Bishkek State University and Kyrgyz National Judicial University. Mr. Evgeny Kablukov has Diplomatic Rank of Envoy Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary of the Kyrgyz Republic.



Mr. Mamurdzhon Mirvaisov

Head, Department of International Relations, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Mr. Mamurdzhon Mirvaisov has been serving as Head of Department of International Relations of Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan since October 2018. He qualified as an Engineer/Economist from Tajik National University, Department of Geology (2015-2018) & as English Teacher/Methodist from Khujand State University, Department of Foreign Languages under English Language Unit (1990-1995). He is also working as Senior Researcher since April 2017 at the Institute of Asian & European Studies, Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan on the theme “The policy of European countries against the radicalization of migrants” & on the issues of European & American countries. In addition, he is appointed as the Project manager at Lona Charity Foundation since May 2015. As an Interpreter/Translator at Seismotech Branch Office in Tajikistan from 2015-2016 he was assigned the task of translating technical documentation from English into Russian and Tajik & vice-versa and Coordinating the work of teams of translators and official staff. As the Executive Director of Shahzod International Company, Dushanbe, Tajikistan from 2011 to 2014, he represented the Company in business negotiations with local and foreign partners. From 1999 to 2011 he served as the Officer of a military unit as part of his Military Service. As the Head of Youth Department at Mastchoh district Local Executive Authorities, Soughd, Tajikistan (1997-1999), he arranged various campaigns on youth education & maintained relations with donor agencies & international development organizations.



Prof. K. Warikoo

Prof. Centre of Inner Asian Studies, JNU (Retd.), Secretary General (Hony.), Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation, New Delhi

Born in Srinagar (Kashmir) in 1951 and educated at S. P. College and Kashmir University, Professor Kulbhushan Warikoo did his Ph D at Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Prof. Warikoo taught for over 30 years at JNU and founded its Central Asian Studies Programme, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He was Senior Fellow, Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi for 2 years (April 2019-March 2021). Known for his distinguished service to Himalayan, Central Asian, Xinjiang, Eurasian and Silk Route Studies, Prof. Warikoo is the author/editor of 22 books. These include *Xinjiang: China's Northwest Frontier*; *Eurasia and India: Regional Perspectives*; *Himalayan Frontiers of India*; *Religion and Security in South and Central Asia*; (all published by Routledge Taylor & Francis, UK,USA), *The Other Kashmir: Society, Culture and Politics in the Karakoram Himalayas*; *Cultural Heritage of Jammu and Kashmir*; *Cultural Heritage of Kashmiri Pandits*; *Afghanistan: Challenges and Opportunities*; *Bamiyan: Challenge to World Heritage* ; *Central Asia and Kashmir: A Study in the context of Anglo-Russian Rivalry* and *Central Asia: Emerging New Order*. Prof. Warikoo has travelled extensively in Xinjiang; Central Asian Republics of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan; Khakassia, Altai, Buryatia and Tuva Republics of Russian Federation; Afghanistan and

Mongolia. He is the Founder Editor of *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, a quarterly journal being published regularly and uninterruptedly since 1997, devoted to the study of various issues pertaining to the Himalayan and Trans-Himalayan region in South and Central Asia. He has supervised 34 Ph.D and 52 M. Phil research scholars, thus inspiring, guiding and training the young generation in the field of Himalayan and Central Asian studies.



Prof. Sanjay Pandey

Professor, Centre for Russian & Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Prof. Sanjay Kumar Pandey is a Professor at the Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi. He served as the Chairperson of the Centre, and the Director of the Russia and Central Asian Area Studies Programme.

He teaches courses on Politics and Society, as well as Foreign Policy of Russia and the Central Asian States. He was L. M. Singhvi Visiting Fellow at the Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge; Charles Wallace Trust Visiting Fellow, University of Cambridge; and Visiting Fellow at Cambridge Central Asia Forum, Cambridge. He was International Observer for the Parliamentary (Oliy Majlis) Election in Uzbekistan in December 2014 and for Presidential Election in Uzbekistan in December 2007, 2016 and 2021. Prof. Pandey has published his research work in various reputed journals and institutions.

SESSION – IV:

**INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA:
ENERGY GEOPOLITICS,
ECONOMY AND TRADE**



Amb. Yogendra kumar

Former Ambassador of India to
Tajikistan

Ambassador Yogendra Kumar retired from the Indian Foreign Service in 2012 in the rank of Secretary to the government of India. At the time of his retirement, he was Indian Ambassador to the Philippines, with concurrent accreditation to the Pacific island countries of Palau, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. He has, earlier, been High Commissioner to Namibia and Ambassador to Tajikistan (2000-03) during which period he also handled Afghanistan affairs. He has served on the faculty of the National Defence College and, in the Ministry of External Affairs; he has handled multilateral organisations/dialogues such as G8-G5 Dialogue, ASEAN, EAS, IBSA, IORA etc. Since retirement, he has been writing and speaking on foreign policy and security affairs. His book, ‘Diplomatic Dimension of Maritime Challenges for India in the 21st Century’, has been published in 2015 by the Pentagon Press.

He has edited and contributed to the book, ‘Whither Indian Ocean Maritime Order?’, containing presentations/articles by eminent security and foreign service experts at a seminar organised by him in November, 2016, on Prime Minister’s landmark speech on Indian Ocean policy. Published by Knowledge World in 2017, this book was presented by the Indian delegation to the participating delegations, headed by their respective heads of state/government, at the First Indian Ocean Rim Association Leaders’ Summit in Jakarta in March,

2017. In 2020, Routledge have published his book, 'Geopolitics in the Era of Globalisation: Mapping an Alternative Global Future', in US, Europe and South Asia editions; he examines in it the dynamics of geopolitical changes post-cold war and the current global challenges therefrom.



Mr. Kairat Batyrbayev

**Executive Director, Eurasian
International Studies
Association, Astana, Kazakhstan**

Kairat Batyrbayev is the Executive Director of the Eurasian International Studies Association. He also is a PhD student in political sciences in L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University. His area of interest includes the geopolitical issues regarding Central Asia, China, SCO countries and has numerous experiences working in these areas. Member of several research groups within the framework of grant and program-targeted funding for scientific projects by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Kazakhstan. He was also an expert in the committee on migration in the Kazakhstan Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population.



Mr. Rohit Sharma

Former Director & Head- Europe & CIS, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), New Delhi

Rohit Sharma has over 26 years of diverse corporate experience and has worked for some of the leading companies in India. He has extensive experience in the area of marketing, channel sales, media management, corporate communication and consultancy. He has a Masters in Business Administration with specialisation in marketing. He has also done a course in IPR. He joined FICCI in 2007 and worked as Director & head of Europe & CIS divisions in International Affairs Division of FICCI till June 2022.

Over the years, it has been a continued endeavour to develop business and regional linkages between Indian & European/CIS businesses. Indian states being the next frontiers for inviting foreign business and investments, Rohit has worked closely with the Central and State Governments for promoting cross-functional and technical connects between European companies and Indian businesses at the regional level.

For taking along key business leaders for developing comprehensive business architecture, as FICCI, Rohit worked to evolve institutionalized platforms like India-Europe29 Business Forum in partnership with MEA, GoI and India-Spain CEOs Forum in coordination with DPIIT, GoI. CEOs Roundtables and engagements with key European/CIS countries has been a regular effort for promoting deeper economic ties between the two sides.



Dr. Mahesh Ranjan Debata

Assistant Professor, Centre for Inner Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Dr. Mahesh Ranjan Debata teaches at Centre for Inner Asian Studies (CIAS), School of International Studies (SIS), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, India. Dr. Mahesh is the Concurrent Faculty, Special Centre for E-Learning (SCEL), JNU (12 March 2019-11 March 2021). Dr. Debata was the Director, UGC Area Studies Programme, CIAS, SIS, JNU (10 April 2017-9 April 2019). Dr. Debata's main research interests include studies on China, Xinjiang, Inner Asia and Central Asia. Dr. Mahesh has authored three books *China's Minorities: Ethno-Religious Separatism in Xinjiang*, *Central Asia: Society, Security and Economy* (ed.) & *Central Asia Today: Issues and Concerns* (ed.), in addition to over 40 scholarly papers in national & international journals and edited volumes. He has presented valuable papers & chaired sessions at 85 national and international conferences/seminars.

Dr. Debata is a Member, Board of Advisers, Centre for South & Southeast Asian Societies, Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol, West Bengal. Dr. Debata is an Associate Editor, Editorial Board, *International Journal of Business Anthropology* & member of the prestigious Central Eurasian Studies Society, USA. Dr. Debata was conferred with Distinguished Speaker award by Advanced Forum of Applied Anthropology, Jishou University, China in May 2013. Dr. Mahesh was a Guest Professor at the School of Continuing Education, Tianjin

University of Finance and Economics, Tianjin, China (May 2015-May 2017) and Visiting Professor at the School of International Education, Yinchuan University of Energy, Yinchuan, Ningxia, China (June 2017-June 2020)

CONCLUDING SESSION



Amb. Charanjeet Singh

Joint Secretary [ERS]
Ministry of External Affairs,
New Delhi

Amb. Charanjeet Singh holds a M.Sc. Degree in Physics. He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1996. His first overseas assignment was in Moscow (1998-1999) as Third Secretary where he learnt Russian Language at the Moscow State University. He then served as Second/First Secretary in the Indian Mission in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) during 2000-2004 followed by a three-year stint as Consul General in Vladivostok (Russia). He served in New Delhi (2007-2016), as Deputy Secretary/Director & Joint Secretary in the Multilateral Economic Relations (MER) Division, where he looked after India's engagement with multilateral fora including G-20, BRICS, IBSA, IORA, BIMSTEC, ASEAN, ASEM, WIPO, WTO, OECD, etc. In January 2016, he went to Milan (Italy) as Consul General and served there till September, 2018. He moved to London as the Deputy High Commissioner of India and served there till November 2021. He has been serving as Joint Secretary in headquarters since April 2022 and assumed charge as Joint Secretary (Eurasia) from October 2022. Mr. Singh speaks English, Hindi, Punjabi and Russian.

**COORDINATOR/MASTER OF
CEREMONY**



Dr. Punit Gaur

Research Fellow,
Indian Council of World Affairs

Dr. Punit Gaur is a Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs. He has been associated with Eurasian National University, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan as Foreign Expert since 2016. He is also associated with many Universities as Visiting professor such as Bukhara State University, Uzbekistan, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty and Karaganda State University, Kazakhstan. Prior to this, Dr. Gaur was associated with the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID), Chandigarh as Associate Fellow and was engaged in a project “Central Asia between many Silk Roads: Indian Policy at the Crossroads” as Project Director, sponsored by ICSSR, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

Earlier, he worked as Assistant Professor (Central Asia) with the same institute CRRID in the programme/project titled “Cooperative Development, Peace and Security in South and Central Asia” sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. He has more than nine years of experience in the teaching and research field. He has published research papers in books and journals. He has presented papers in many national and international seminars in India, Kazakhstan and other countries. He is also actively engaged in research activities with many associations and organizations of international repute.



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Sapru House

New Delhi