

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



November 22, 2015

## Afghanistan - Kazakhstan's Relation Bridged

Maintaining good and trustworthy relation with all countries feature a significant part of a foreign policy. Admitting the fact the world changed into global village –no country can live and survive in isolation without accommodating some of needs from other countries. Meeting the mutual need of one another turns to be an important facet of foreign relation. The incumbent government must prioritize, establishing and continuing a balance relationship with the countries both regional and extra-regional, given it encompassing gains more than harms. It must be remembered a strong cooperation for sustainable and unchangeable relation of countries are pivotal. Keeping reliable collaborative relation will serve the countries earn development, sustainable stability and harmony in the region and the world whilst keeping the sovereignty of a state intact.

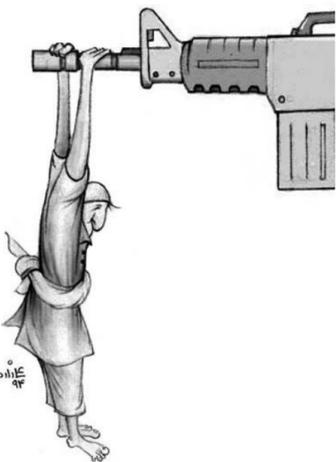
Afghanistan is the 165th largest export economy in the world. In 2013, Afghanistan exported \$721 million and imported \$7.97 billion. The main imports include peat, refined petroleum products, wheat flour, raw sugar and cement. In addition to the countries Afghanistan import and export, Kazakhstan is potential country that has shown willingness to export wheat and other goods at down tariffs. To strengthen mutual relationship, President Ashraf Ghani paid a two day visit to Kazakhstan to discuss issues relating to economic and political ties as well as regional cooperation with his Kazakh counterpart. Earlier when he landed in Kazakhstan and received a red-carpet welcome by Kazakh officials. Kazakhstan is one of the developed countries in central Asia rich with earthen resources and elementary food stuffs –Afghanistan by maintaining cordial relation can win handsome economic gains. In May and September 2014, Kazakhstan provided assistance worth more than \$3 million. The two countries certainly can meet their needs provided the relations clings on mutual interest and cooperation. During this trip, President Ghani has signed agreements on governance, norms and standards, and cultural exchange, fight on corruption, diplomacy as well as wheat purchase from Kazakhstan.

The mineral resource, oil and gas rich country Kazakhstan is characterized by production of 60% economy of the region. Following the fall of Russian republic the Kazakhstan was the last to seek its independence in 1991. Within the length of 24 years it has inclined to the largest and strongest performing economy in Central Asia – therefore it was the first former Soviet Republic to repay all of its debt to the International Monetary Fund. Apart from mineral resources, the country exports large number of other food and clothing items. The other major exports of Kazakhstan include wheat, textiles, and livestock.

Afghanistan's landlocked status makes it rely on neighbors to facilitate the transit of its trade with the broader global economy. Pakistan has been one of the potential trade partner, Afghanistan looked to for its greater share of imports. The two countries initially signed the Afghanistan Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) in 1965. The APTTA was redesigned in 2010 to allow the transit of Afghan exports through Pakistan to the Wagah border with India, and to the seaport cities of Karachi and Gawadar. Afghan proposals to allow the transit of imports from India through Pakistan have been met with resistance, due to strained relationship between Pakistan and India and Pakistan and Afghanistan in the latest. Seemingly, the differences tend to grow –in the wake of growing attack in Afghanistan, set to boycott using Pakistani goods including food items. Afghanistan at the moment is got to look to other countries for its domestic needs of goods.

Resultantly, the president Ghani's visit to Kazakhstan by Afghan officials and traders is considered as better alternative for import of food-stuff and reconstruction materials instead of Pakistan. Kazakhstan is one of the biggest wheat producers in the region and Afghanistan imports to meet its wheat need. In a joint press conference with President Ghani, Nursultan Nazarbayev said that Kazakhstan will send more than 600 thousand tons of wheat to Afghanistan. In addition to wheat Afghanistan is in dire need of steel for construction purposes. Kazakhstan is a big steel producer and Afghanistan can compensate its steel needs by importing from Kazakhstan. It is stated so for the country has delivered more than 21,000 tons of food products worth \$20 million to Afghanistan. During the visit the two premiers talked of means of transporting the wheat from Kazakhstan to Afghanistan.

On the other hand Astana and Kabul also agreed and signed cooperation in the field civil defense, prevention and liquidation of emergency situations. Afghanistan is an underdeveloped country –if struck by natural calamities find it hard to come up with necessary requisites, keeping loses to minimum due to lack of appropriate machinery and trained human resource. It was duly the Kazakh premier, Nazarbayev further added that due to the fact that Afghanistan is going through very difficult times, we are providing humanitarian assistance asserting to continue to extend its assistance to Afghanistan. Culture promotion programs is primitive to long lived relation of any country. The ratification of an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of culture underlines the depth and warmth of indefinite bilateral relation, sowed. Nonetheless, President Ghani has cautioned Kazakhstan that the Taliban and Daesh are not threat to Afghanistan only but also for the region. Speaking at Nazarbayev University in Astana in Kazakhstan Ghani went on to say that the recent Taliban attack in Kunduz shows that the Afghan people are not in favor of the Taliban and that if the insurgent group wants the support of the people they need to come up with a democratic plan.



## Afghanistan's Mining Sector

By Dilawar Sherzai

The mining sector in Afghanistan, if boomed properly, can serve as a hope to boost Afghan economy to a large extent. Many years of instability and wars have influenced Afghan economy negatively, except for the last some years. The involvement of international community in Afghanistan has generated some hopes that Afghanistan may be able to stand on its own in the times to come. However, it would need to learn to live on its own. The complete withdrawal of international security forces from the country may raise various challenges for Afghanistan as far as the financial support and economic stability are concerned. Nonetheless, the country has to rely on its own resources and among them the mining sector can, undoubtedly, play a tremendous role.

According to certain calculations by US Afghanistan may possess mineral deposits worth USD 1 trillion, which is really very large and includes the minerals like gold, iron ore, uranium and precious stones including emeralds. Unearthing all these mineral resources and processing them so that they are ready for use or export would definitely require large factories and a large number of human resources, which would provide the unemployed youth of the country an opportunity to avail employment.

Country's rich mine sector would ensure bolstering each and every sector of the country during the next 20 years but a proper administration is needed to protect the sector. It is really very imperative to understand that the large mineral reservoirs that remain untouched in our country can solve a large number of our problems but we are not able to avail such opportunity and mostly the way we administer it or plan to administer it is responsible for it.

It is really necessary that the legislative and administrative mechanisms in the country must strive to formulate and pursue the laws and policies that are for the benefits of the country and that involve the consultations and advice from the technical and professional persons.

It is an undeniable fact that the natural resources of the country have yet to be unearthed and there have not been even very basic work done in this regard. So, everything has to be started right from the very inception and that would require a lot of hard work and dedication. Hopeful expectations in this regard have to be backed properly by determined and practical measures; otherwise intention may end up in smoke.

Currently, Afghanistan has been highly dependent on international support to run its economic system. In the post withdrawal period there are possibilities that the international aid entering the country may reduce considerably. Though the international community has made promises that the support for the country may continue till 2024, the international political and economic circumstances point towards some other facts –

they clearly depict that there will be a considerable decline in financial support to Afghanistan, if not complete negligence.

On the other hand the security situation in the country has been going through a deteriorating trend. The terrorism seems to be rising in some of the most important parts of the country and the security situation still remains a question mark. Threatened by insecurity major projects regarding the mining sector have been postponed. The ones that have been started are lagging behind their schedule. The international investors are losing their interest as they do not feel that their investment would bring fruit in such uncertain circumstances. Moreover, the regional ties regarding peace and security seem to be weakening and the reconciliation process seems out of shape. In fact reliable security still remains dubious.

In such circumstances, development of a strong mining sector seems a herculean task. The mining sector is not just about digging the minerals out of the earth. It includes a complete development of an infrastructure. It involves complicated processes, machinery and latest technology.

Most importantly, it requires a reliable and working transportation system that must be free of risk and must prove helpful in transporting heavy equipments and human resource to the mountainous areas where minerals are located. In addition, the same transportation system must transfer the minerals that are dug out to different plants for being refined and changed to usable conditions.

The mining sector also requires strong, cheap and reliable communication system that must remain undisturbed by the culprits. As a matter of fact, for the whole process, in order to reach to its final phase, a lot of investment and a decade or more of peaceful socio-political circumstances are required. While forming expectations about mining sector, it is necessary for the government officials to keep in considerations all these facts.

Definitely, generations of instability have incapacitated Afghanistan to work on these resources but at the same time it would require, at least a generation if not generations of stability to bring these resources in use. It is not impossible; neither the purpose of this article has been to promulgate pessimism about the circumstances. Its main objective has been to remind the people of Afghanistan and most importantly the Afghan authorities to analyze the socio-political and politico-economic conditions rationally and try to comprehend the challenges appropriately.

After the challenges are understood appropriately, measures can be carried out to find out proper solution of the challenges. It is really encouraging that there are expectations from the mining sector, but these expectations must not be converted to fantasies rather they should be changed to realities through prudence and positive attitude.

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## Poverty and Insecurity, Behind Immigration!

By Asmatyari

The bloody conflict underway in Syria alone has engulfed great number of non-combatant and unarmed masses and coerced multiplied numbers of civilians flee. As the war continues attracting many more partners the miseries continue likewise. According to credible statistics more than 330,000 people die and over 13 million people injure in the ongoing war in Syria. To escape the violence, more than four million Syrian refugees have fled the country to neighboring Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Caucasus, the Persian Gulf, North Africa from where they take perilous rout to Europe. According to latest reports more than 800,000 migrants have reached Europe by sea so far this year, mostly from the Middle East. The striking feature of unending bloody conflict is –the persecutors and the killed are Muslims however, the manufacturing labels on anti-aircraft and military arsenal indicates the direct and indirect support of other partner countries. Factually, the quest for power gain left the Yemen, Iraq and Syria politically unstable and case-hardened to live in the local population is either left to bear the brunt of violence or flee persecution by seeking refuge in some of neighboring countries.

Afghanistan is another country worst hit by insurgency and endless bloody conflict –this has identically forced large number of fugitive-ness.

Insecurity is not the only reason that forces Afghans them flee the country. The Afghan populace also suffers economic discrepancy, social disparity, domestic violence, unemployment and other elementary issues worst affecting masses that are left with an option to search for livelihood in countries abroad. The escalating rebellion and terrorism supplemented with ill-administration, corruption and bad governance have alleviated the probability of betterment at present. The dreary picture, post US withdrawal and following presidential election portrays is not substantive to build up enough confidence persuading Afghans participate in building measure of Afghanistan in substitute for quitting the country. Consequently, large number of Afghans has in pursuit of peace, ecstasy and price-less material gain leave for foreign countries.

However, the Paris attacks and the recovery of a Syrian passport near one of the assailant's bodies have revived the European debate on whether to take a harder line on migrants. With the continent facing its biggest migration crisis since World War II, EU states have disputed for months on how to stem the flow and share out the new arrivals. The discovery of a Syrian passport near the body of one attacker has raised fears that some of the assailants might have entered Europe as part of the huge influx of people fleeing Syria's civil war and Afghanistan's growing insecurity. It is where some of European countries have set to tighten the surveillance over refugees and few have planned to deporting Afghan refugees. Earlier, hundreds of Afghan asylum seekers protested against Germany's changeable refugee law, calling for better measures to shelter and take them in. Reportedly, large numbers of Afghans are opting for

perilous journey to reach Europe –unfortunately the Afghan government has failed to discourage this irreversibly growing number fleeing the country. According to Minister of Foreign Affairs Salahuddin Rabbani, so far this year 146,000 Afghans have sought refuge in Europe –out of these, 43 percent have been given asylum in various countries and that 53 percent are still being processed. He said that a total of 80,000 applied for asylum in Germany alone that has reiterated to deport most if not all of them. It's not surprising to learn the public official knows the insecurity and unemployment being the driving factor behind Afghans fleeing the country despite of this knowledge no concrete measure is taken to lessen the fleeing number. While talking to the parliament the Minister of Refugees and Repatriation, Sayed Hussain Alimi Balkhi truly underlined the declining security matters catalyzes the fleeing of Afghans.

The ten-year international effort has failed to create job opportunities and millions of Afghans, today, are suffering the negative impacts of unemployment. The consistency of unemployment in the country is doing much to widen the gap between people and the government. Among the several problems given birth by joblessness, three seem to be very concerning. First, it is firmly believed that desperate youths join the insurgents groups who promise them attractive rewards. This can be conceived a major reason for soaring number of insurgents and insecurity graph in Afghanistan. Second, people giving up hope after continuous failure to get a job and are getting addicted to drugs. The number of drug addicts in the country has crossed the figure of 1.5 million. This figure includes teenagers and women.

Third, Afghans, at the risk of their lives, travel to other countries of the world. In this way the work force of Afghanistan is utilized by other countries of the world while the Afghanistan itself is in dire need of reconstruction and development works.

It high time government has to find out and work out the underlying reason behind miseries that force them leave abroad and how that should be discouraged.

The persisting state of insecurity, unemployment is playing eminent role forcing Afghans move foreign countries in the search for better livelihood. The Afghan government must pay greater attention improving the living condition of ordinary Afghan. This can be done by putting the leadership quality in practice. Conversely, Afghanistan has done a little, making congenial grounds to provide every necessity of lives to returning refugees. In the past two terms, the democratic government, succeeded to earn the fame of bad governance, corruption and irregularities.

It could rarely streamline the socio-political and financial matters of the state. The incumbent government has to take serious measures, reversing the ill deeds of ex-government whilst striving hard to get this piece of land rid of calamities of terrorism, extremism, corruption, illiteracy and poverty, making it amenable to live in, from multi-viewpoint.

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