

INFO SCO

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CHINGHIZ AITMATOV

You lived like a lighting, which flashed once and died. But lightings are made in the sky.
And the sky is eternal. And this is my consolation.



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RUSSIA'S PRESSING TASKS IN THE EAST AND SCO: SECURITY, DEVELOPMENT, ARCHITECTURE OF REGIONAL COOPERATION



Kirill Barsky, the Russian president's envoy for SCO affairs and Russia's national coordinator in the SCO



Today, Russia is facing truly huge tasks in the East. First of all, they are related to the absolute need of priority development and modernization of Russia's Far East and real inclusion of its economy, and the Russian economy in general, in integration processes ongoing in the Asian-Pacific region. This was clearly seen during the recent APEC summit in Vladivostok.

However, the goals of our politics in the East are not limited to this. Three major areas are emerging on which not only Russia, but also all members of the regional community should concentrate their efforts. These are ensuring regional security, resolving problems of economic development and shaping an architecture of regional cooperation that would conform to the interests of peace, security and economic prosper-

ity. Today, work on these problems is unthinkable without proactive multi-lateral interaction, and such interaction has been gaining momentum in Asia Pacific in recent years. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which has already made a name for itself, is meant to become a very useful party to the process. Not only in Central Asia, which is often mistakenly seen as the SCO region, but on a much broader

scale of Eurasia and the Pacific, and for certain aspects, on the global scale.

What problems are we supposed to resolve, what threats to counteract and, most importantly, how can it be achieved? Answers to these questions are of supreme importance, as the reality is changing rapidly.

The beginning of the 21st century was marked by a visible change in the sources and nature of threats to secu-

rity and development of all countries in the world. At the beginning of the 2010s, we witnessed these threats multiplying, mutating, proliferating and re-emerging in new forms. This trend is especially acute in the military-political and social-political areas and presents a serious challenge that the global community, regional organizations and individual countries will have to respond to. At the same time, many threats to security from the Cold war era, unsettled conflicts and territorial

disputes, new unconventional threats and challenges that came to the fore in the 1990s - terrorism, the danger of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, pandemics, natural calamities and industrial accidents - are still hanging above the humankind like the sword of Damocles. So we are now talking not new, but newest threats to security and stability. Let's name some of them:

- arbitrary interpretation of norms and principles of the international law,

their unilateral violations, covering of illegal actions with ungrounded references to resolutions of the UN Security Council, abuse of the mechanism of international sanctions, implementation of practices of unilateral introduction of sanctions, attempts to impose individual countries' internal legislation on other sovereign countries;

- attempts to destroy strategic stability, regional military and strategic balance of forces, including by militarization of the space, deployment of an-



DMITRY MEZENTSEV

ON JANUARY 1, 2013, THE POST OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION WILL FOR THE FIRST TIME BE TAKEN BY A RUSSIAN CITIZEN.

AT THE SCO SUMMIT IN BEIJING IN JUNE 2012, RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN NOMINATED DMITRY MEZENTSEV FOR THE POSITION, AND HIS CANDIDACY WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- Born on August 18, 1959, in Leningrad.
- Graduated from the Leningrad Institute of Railway Engineers qualified as an engineer.
- After the graduation, worked as a shop foreman at the Leningrad-Baltic depot of the Oktyabrskaya railway.
- Later worked in the Young Communist organization in Leningrad.
- Served as an officer in the Soviet Army, in the army press.
- Member of the Soviet Journalists' Union since 1988.
- In 1990, elected people's deputy of the Leningrad city council. Simultaneously appointed head of the press center of the council and the city executive committee.
- On August 21, 1991, became chairman of the press committee of the St Petersburg administration, representative of the Russian Information and Press

- Ministry in St Petersburg and the Leningrad region.
- In March 1996, appointed deputy chairman of the Russian State Committee for Press.
- In November 1999, became president of the Center of Strategic Studies (Moscow).
- In 2002, became member of the upper chamber of the Russian parliament. For seven years, represented the government of the Irkutsk region in the parliament. In 2002-2006, chaired the Federation Council's commission for information policy.
- In January 2004, elected deputy chairman of the Federation Council, was responsible for issues of international cooperation.
- For seven years, headed the Federation Council's delegation to the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum.
- In 2006, appointed envoy for the affairs of the SCO Business

- Council by the Russian government's resolution; elected chairman of the Business Council.
- PhD (psychology), professor, head of the political psychology department of the St Petersburg State University since 2008.
- In June 2009 - June 2012, governor and chairman of the government of the Irkutsk region.
- On June 8, 2012, was appointed Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization at the SCO summit in Beijing. Will remain in office from January 1, 2013, till December 31, 2015.
- Awarded the Order For Merit to the Fatherland 4th class, the Order of Honour, the Medal «For Construction of the Baikal-Amur Railway» (USSR), the medal of Friendship and cooperation between China and Russia (China, 2007). Commander of the Order of the Legion of Honour (France)

ti-missile defense systems, provoking of regional tensions, including through use of latent conflicts and unresolved territorial disputes;

- the trend towards increased weapons imports by Asian countries, escalation of the arms race in Asia;

- growing threats to countries' information security, information systems of state bodies of power and corporate structures, development of information weapons by states, learning of extremist elements of hacker technologies and skills;

- rampant drug trafficking, which is turning into the key source of financing for terrorism, extremist groups, separatist movements and arms trafficking;

- piracy as a new form of organized crime, coalescence of piracy with terrorism, extremism, weapons smuggling and human trafficking;

- instigation for a regime change in sovereign states, attempts of armed intervention from outside in the internal affairs of sovereign states under the pretext of supporting those protesting against the "authoritarian" or "corrupted" regimes;

- attempts to settle domestic conflicts or social and economic discontent through a violent regime change;

- use of modern information and telecommunication technology for a violent regime change;

- uncontrollable development of public movements, use of biased reports in foreign mass media and also non-government organizations financed from abroad to change the vector of protests;

- radicalization of public attitudes due to the escalating confrontation between the West and the Muslim world;

- growing intolerance in today's world, the growing frequency of cases when the feelings of believers are purposefully offended;

- provoking of conflicts between and within denominations, with terrorists

and extremists taking advantage of growing mutual mistrust between representatives of different religions.

Of course, these threats are global, but they also have a direct bearing on Eurasia and the Pacific region. Even if some or other phenomena are not typical for the present-day situation in the region, they may appear here in the near future due to globalization.

It is extremely difficult to confront all known and emerging problems, but this can be done. Moreover, this needs to be done, and the faster adequate responses are found for these challenges, the better. Available options seem to be divided between two levels, national and international.

It is hardly worth saying that, to survive in the present-day world, a country has to be established and self-sufficient, properly carrying out its basic functions. First of all, and especially now, when we are facing new and newest threats to security, the authorities must do everything necessary to ensure the sovereignty and territorial integrity of their country. Second, governments should seriously address economic issues and work to improve the prosperity of their citizens, guarantee sustainable economic development and settle pressing social and economic problems. Finally, priority should be given to education of the population, development of culture, strengthening of healthy spirituality in society, support of harmony between denominations and ethnic groups.

These measures should be complemented with cooperation on the international level. Governments that clearly understand the existing dangers and the destructiveness of eroding the legal framework of the world order and weakening of the national state should unite their efforts, act collectively, through the United Nations, flexible coalitions of like-minded states and multilateral regional unions.

In this context, the SCO should be seen as a catalyst for shaping a balanced polycentric international system on the global and regional scale. The SCO stands by the inviolability of the international law, principles of equality, mutual respect of interests, indivisibility of security, and uses its own example to demonstrate the variety of models of development and value systems; it favors abandonment of bloc policies. The growing authority of the organization in the world is to a large extent due to this backbone of its foreign political philosophy.

At a time when the SCO is being eyed from all over the world, its voice on the international arena could be louder. The organization's member states should make their stand heard more clearly, should make joint statements on relevant global political issues more often, quickly responding to important political events. The measures that are currently being taken to intensify consultations on foreign political issues and problems of regional security need to envisage involvement of both SCO observers and dialog partners in the dialog. There is a possibility for closer coordination of efforts with partner unions and for support of other players' initiatives that are in line with the SCO's approaches (BRICS, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the CIS, Eurasec, ASEAN, RIC and Middle Eastern, Latin American and African multilateral unions). A strong response to the existing security challenges could be made by expanding the SCO through admission of India and Pakistan.

The SCO is not just a political mouthpiece calling for democratization of international relations. It is an organization that meaningfully counteracts security threats, including the newest ones. It is enough to mention the joint efforts of the SCO member states to fight terrorism, stop drug trafficking

from Afghanistan, counteract trans-border organized crime, improve cooperation on information security, prevention of extremism, radicalism and xenophobia. Remarkably, a growing number of partners, including in Asia Pacific, are showing interest in the SCO's achievements in these areas. The SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure is actively establishing contacts with specialized agencies in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.

A special place in our interconnected and interdependent world belongs to economic "landmines" under the building of international and regional stability and security. Such basic reasons of local conflicts and internal political tensions as social and economic underdevelopment, poverty, inter-regional and inter-state development dispro-

projects by developing alternative patterns for regional economic cooperation;

- inefficient management and corruption in certain developing countries;
- mass movements demanding protection of interests of workers and social and economic reforms.

Counteracting these threats is an important part of efforts to ensure international security. Among anti-crisis measures taken on the regional level, one that deserves a special mention is the development of integration processes in Asia Pacific, where the center of the world's financial, economic and innovative development has moved for good, and in Eurasia. The strategic choice in favor of further trade liberalization and integration was confirmed at the APEC summit in Vladivostok.

regional and subregional unions. Russia's and Kazakhstan's membership in the SCO links the organization to the Customs Union, while Russia and China connect it to Asia Pacific. So the SCO has a chance to become a link between Eurasian and Pacific economic poles. First of all, it is necessary to establish a dialog between the SCO and the Eurasian Economic Commission. Close coordination of efforts on the part of the two structures with overlapping responsibilities could produce a powerful synergetic effect in form of accelerated development of trans-continental transport corridors, pipeline networks, telecommunication systems and ensuring of energy security on the huge territory that includes Europe, Central Asia and Asia Pacific.

China will be of crucial importance

► THE ORGANIZATION'S MEMBERS SHOULD VOICE THEIR STAND MORE CLEARLY, MAKE JOINT STATEMENTS ON RELEVANT ISSUES OF GLOBAL POLITICS MORE OFTEN, QUICKLY RESPONDING TO IMPORTANT POLITICAL EVENTS.

portions, etc., are still here. Today, we can see old problems become aggravated with new factors of instability. The latter include first of all:

- negative consequences of the global financial crisis;
- a decline in the economic growth pace of developed countries;
- the crisis of the euro zone;
- the ongoing turmoil on financial and commodities markets;
- imperfections of the current international currency and financial system;
- clash of interests between countries with emerging markets and leading developed markets;
- escalation of international competition for access to sources of commodities, transport communications, investment and sales markets;
- attempts to counteract integration

Russia's participation in regional integration can expand its geography and give additional advantages for the region's economy. Moreover, Russia combines economic processes in East Asia and the Pacific with an integration nucleus that is currently being shaped in the center of Eurasia. As President Vladimir Putin said at the leaders' meeting in Vladivostok, coordination of integration efforts in Eurasia and Asia Pacific will allow establishing cooperation between the Eurasian Economic Union that is being set up and APEC, with involvement of other regional unions.

I am positive that the SCO, which, though not an integration union, has a significant potential for economic cooperation, will find its own niche in this new pattern of the dialog between

for the future of the regional economy. The scale and pace of China's growth, in terms of security and development of its neighboring countries, are both a unique advantage and a hidden trap: the economy has its own inviolable laws. It should be remembered that in terms of trade, China and its partners, including SCO member states, are in different weight categories. Signing of bilateral and multilateral economic pacts with China will require preliminary meticulous calculations with a forecast of consequences of some or other steps. So it seems that Russia and Central Asia would be justified to choose a step-by-step approach, focusing on the current stage of predominantly investment projects with Chinese participation and assistance in creating favorable conditions for gradual liberalization of trade.

Where China's role can truly be of consequence - in cooperation with Russia and other countries - is in ensuring regional economic stability and sustainable development. This area should become one of the main common goals for Eurasian and Pacific countries, including in the context of economic cooperation within APEC, ASEAN, Eurasec, the Customs Union and the SCO. Their contribution to the common case could be broad interaction on issues of energy and food security, support to the weaker economies, reduction of poverty, creation of new jobs, and construction of infrastructure. It is hardly arguable that economic growth, development of trade and economic cooperation will objectively help to promote stability in Asia, both in Central, Northeast and Southeast Asia.

military mechanisms of cooperation. Like many countries in the region, the SCO member states spoke in favor of creating open, transparent and equal architecture of security and cooperation in Eurasia and the Pacific, which would be based on the norms of the international law, non-bloc principles and consideration of legitimate interests of all countries, creating a partnership network of multilateral unions in this huge habitat. Geographically and politically, the SCO is an inseparable part of this network and it could make a bigger contribution to its development by:

- initiating a dialog on transparency and measures of trust in Asia, including using its experience of improving military trust in the border areas, accumulated by the SCO member states

Summits;

- establishing complementary cooperation between the SCO and APEC.

It should be remembered that the system of international relations and the global economy are going through a period of transformation that can result in a clash of interests of different parties. This puts a special responsibility on all Eurasian and Pacific countries, making it insufficient to simply counteract separate threats to national, regional or international security. In present circumstances, attempts to destroy the strategic equilibrium, change the existing balance of arms and weapons, use force to resolve conflicts and territorial disputes, shatter the political situation in certain countries from the outside, set up new military bases in foreign countries, engaged in unjust-

► THE SCO IS NOT JUST A POLITICAL MOUTHPIECE CALLING FOR DEMOCRATIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. IT IS AN ORGANIZATION THAT MEANINGFULLY COUNTERACTS SECURITY THREATS.

The long maturing process of shaping regional architecture of multilateral cooperation has finally begun in Asia Pacific. For the first time in many decades, the outlines of a more or less integral regional system for rational regulation of international relations are emerging in this part of the world. However, this already complicated process is strongly affected by conscious efforts to strengthen the anachronistic and provoking parallel architecture of military union under the auspices of the United States.

In order for the new regional construct to meet the interests of stability and development in Asia Pacific, to avoid being overtaken by the militarist ideology and practices, the existing defense "insecurity architecture", it is necessary to work for improving non-

when preparing and implementing two agreements between Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and China dated 1996 and 1997;

- drastically boosting cooperation with ASEAN as a leading regional organization and a multilateral union that is the closest to the SCO spiritually, expanding areas of cooperation from security issues to economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation;

- establishing contacts with the ASEAN Regional Security Forum and organizing joint events with it;

- joining the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (after the Third Protocol to it comes into force, as it allows international organizations and not only individual states to join it).

- joining the mechanism of East Asia

tified naval activities, etc, are no less dangerous. International players will have to show wisdom, reserve, tolerance, integrity, respect to partners, focus on cooperation and deep understanding of how varied and fragile today's world is - the foreign political qualities that organizations like the SCO have.

WHY UKRAINE WANTS TO BECOME SCO'S PARTNER

Gurgen Grigoryan, political commentator



“Ukraine is interested in entering Asian markets with high-tech products manufactured together with the Russian Federation,” Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich said during a meeting with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Sochi

Manufacturing of high-tech products is an important element of economic growth, the Ukrainian leader said. “We are interested in combining efforts in order for us to be able to work on the markets of third countries, first of all, the CIS,” he told Putin. “We would like to become an observer in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in order to get the op-

portunity to take part in integration processes ongoing within it. We would like you to be one of our partners in the SCO.” The Russian president, in his turn, said search for sales markets in Asia was really important for Ukraine at the moment.

The SCO is not a military bloc, even though its main goals are strengthening stability and security on the huge territory of its member states, fighting against terrorism, separatism, extremism and drug trafficking, developing economic and energy cooperation, and scientific and cultural interaction.

“The SCO is a political rather than military union,” Mikhail Pogrebinsky, head of the Center of Political Research and Conflict Studies in Kiev, told us. “Yet since the organization unites a huge number of people and is a serious authority, its membership is prestigious and useful for any country. You can stay in the know about what the great powers are discussing

and can even put in a word sometimes. The SCO membership doesn't offer any significant economic profit, but this is big politics. So becoming an SCO observer will greatly improve Ukraine's image. The organization is in no hurry to invite us, and I am certain that there is no way we are going to become a member, but we still should voice our ambitions and desire to attend its events from time to time. I believe that it is Putin who first of all wants to see us in the SCO. It is as if Russia were telling us, “We are willing to represent your interests in the SCO, but giving you the right to vote - don't even think of it!”

SCO member states have agreed not to cooperate with organizations whose goals contradict their common interests. In reality, this means that the SCO will counteract the intentions of NATO and the United States to increase their influence in the region it “controls.” A proof of this can be seen in the fact that the United

States (and Japan) has repeatedly asked to get the status of an observer and has been rejected. Instead, the SCO is actively expanding relations with the European Union; EU-China summits are held annually. So even Ukraine's intention to join NATO will sever any relations with the Shanghai Six for good.

Ukraine towards NATO, because it views it exclusively as a convenient military foothold and a necessary transport corridor. Obviously, the opinion of Ukrainian citizens and their well-being is of zero importance here. It is no secret that the Kremlin takes calmly any of Kiev's foreign political movements except for integra-

cussing at different levels the idea of restoring the Great Silk Way, which can even go through Ukraine. So we should not ignore the geopolitical interests of China, which is the world's second biggest economy. This is why we should do everything we can to become an SCO observer. In this aspect, we need to choose our tactic

► TO BE AN OBSERVER IN THE SCO MEANS AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART IN THE ORGANIZATION'S INTEGRATION PROCESSES, TO KNOW WHAT THE SHANGHAI SIX IS TALKING ABOUT.

"No one is inviting anyone to the SCO, because, even though this is officially an open union, Russia and China are unlikely to be eager to invite new members," comments Sergei Belashko, head of the Social Communications Agency in Kiev. "Leaders of the Shanghai Six are much more interested in cooperation with India and Iran, which - alongside Pakistan, Mongolia and Afghanistan - have the status of permanent observers. The statuses of Belarus, Turkey and Sri Lanka are even vaguer: they are sometimes invited to participate in some of the organization's events. The SCO is not an anti-American or global union; it is designed to deal with purely regional issues. Consequently, cooperation with it is not a priority for the US. The SCO is significantly different from, say, the CIS, it is not an umbrella structure that embraces everything and everyone, it has clear priorities that are limited to issues of security and economy. That is, this organization addresses purely practical issues - such as security of transport corridors or counteraction to drug trafficking and Islamic extremism."

Washington continues pulling

tion with NATO. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has repeatedly said that Ukraine's accession to the organization will disturb the geopolitical balance in Europe and Moscow will be forced to take measures. Apart from direct threats of aiming strategic missiles towards Ukraine, there was a hint of ending any Russian-Ukrainian contacts in the Asian region of Russia's influence. So the Kremlin needs to be certain of Kiev's reliability before it starts lobbying its interests in the SCO.

"The SCO is of interest for us first of all because we need to develop our exports," says Oleg Ustenko, executive director of the international Bleyzer Foundation. Out of each 1,000 hryvnas of the Ukrainian GDP, half is generated outside of the country. The CIS accounts for 40% of the country's foreign currency revenues, Europe for 25%, and almost all of the rest comes from Asian markets. The SCO is important for us not only because of Russia and China, but because other countries of the region are joining it. This creates opportunities for lobbying the interests of Ukrainian exporters. China keeps dis-

with Russia very carefully, since no one will take into account our interests just for the sake of it - self always comes first. A way to encourage Russia to become our lobbyist could be attracting our neighbors as observers in our talks with the European Union - so that they know what we are trying to achieve and we avoid potential misunderstanding. So I believe that the SCO is a promising area which Ukraine doesn't pay sufficient attention to yet."

Even if Russia decides it wants to see Ukraine as at least an observer in the SCO, it needs to be sure that Ukraine will work to protect Russia's interests within the organization, too. The way to achieve this is a task with many indeterminates for Ukrainian leaders and diplomats. Russia and China can afford to sometimes ignore their economic interests for the sake of passing or global political goals. For Ukraine, this is unacceptable.

SCO THROUGH THE EYES OF TURKISH EXPERTS



Beijing hosted the Lanting research forum, which was attended by representatives of embassies of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's member states to China, and also by researchers and journalists from different countries. Issues discussed at the event are expected to be on the agenda of the SCO. One of them is granting Turkey the status of a dialog partner. The attractiveness of the organization for neighboring countries is fairly high.

What will Ankara gain from participation in the SCO and what can it offer the Shanghai Six? Salih Kapusuz, Turkish Deputy Prime Minister and head of the Parliamentary Group of Friendship with Russia, said in an interview with the Golos Rossii radio station, “Better relations between Eurasian countries improve cooperation between political leaders and business circles; dialog and cooperation are expanded in all directions. We vest special importance in joint measures to improve contacts and cooperation between our countries. We are extremely interested in raising the level and scale of relations we have reached in recent years. I believe relations between Turkey and Russia will seriously contribute to the development of regional cooperation in Eurasia.

“There is a certain number of international organizations in the world. They emerged as a result of nations’

relations with the SCO member states; with some of them, they are at a fairly high partnership level.”

Today, Turkey is rapidly developing its ties with key Eurasian countries in almost all areas, the vice premier said. But won’t it affect its relations with the West? Professor Resat Arim, chief expert of the Turkish Foreign Policy Institute, answers, “The West needs to understand that Turkey is a country interested in development of political, economic and cultural ties with the entire world. Turkey is working to strengthen its ties even with Central Asian states. The West needs to understand that apart from the West, there is the North, the South and the East in the world. And Turkey needs breakthrough relations in all directions. This is the foundation of Turkey’s foreign policy today.”

Promoting cooperation between key Eurasian countries, the SCO is becoming the main international player

port also point to the growing level of trust between the organization’s member states: “After SCO heads of state adopted the Tashkent Declaration in 2004, cooperation within the Shanghai Six has been developing in all areas. In order to improve mutual trust during the summit in Astana in 2005, the SCO countries asked the United States to decide on the timeframe for withdrawal of its troops from Central Asia.” However, certain disagreements between SCO member states still remain, BILGESAM analysts say. It is well known, for example, that China advocates the setup of a free trade zone within the SCO, something Russia doesn’t want to rush.

Turkish experts are positive that the level of relations between Turkey and SCO member states is to a large extent determined by the role of the former on the international stage. Political observers from the Afro-Eurasia Strategic Research Center

The fact that the SCO granted Turkey the status of a dialogue partner, consistent with the overall mission of the Republic of Turkey, which supports the development of a dialogue between different countries

mutual aspiration towards better cooperation. Turkey participates in some organizations directly and in some others, indirectly. Obtaining the status of a dialog partner in the SCO is in line with the Turkish Republic’s general mission, as it advocates dialog between different countries. We attach significant importance to joint efforts and breakthroughs of this kind. We are still in talks with the EU on full-fledged membership, but we also support development of our ties with other unions, we are trying to contribute to improvement of cooperation with other international structures and taking significant effort to expand our bilateral relations with different countries.

“We support the joint effort made by organizations like the SCO and we value our ties with such organizations. We also value our bilateral re-

lations in Eurasia, Professor Arim says. And this attracts neighboring countries.

Overall, Turkish analytical centers give a positive assessment to the SCO activities. Notably, experts of the Wise Men Center for Strategic Studies (BILGESAM) note the following achievement of the Shanghai Six in their collective report: 1) settlement of border disputes between China and other SCO member states; 2) signing of the Shanghai Convention on Fight against Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism; 3) the setup of the SCO Secretariat; 4) the setup of the regional anti-terrorist center and the Executive Committee of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS).

An important sign of the SCO’s success is, they believe, the fact that the organization has been given the status of an observer at the UN General Assembly. The authors of the re-

(AFASAM) note that Turkey has been consistently expanding its bilateral relations with Central Asian states since the early 1990s and has been taking effort to create regional platforms as well.

Special attention, AFASAM experts say, should be paid to the Economic Cooperation Organization, which comprises three Middle Eastern countries, five Central Asian countries, Azerbaijan and Pakistan. Besides, Turkey supports the NATO Partnership for Peace program, which was launched in 1994. Turkey also plays an important part in energy projects of Central Asian states and holds a strategic place for the building of the “new Silk Way,” the analysts conclude.

Professor Mehmet Akif Okur, analyst of the Ankara Institute for Strategic Studies, considers the SCO activities in terms of America’s ambitions

in Central Asia. “The main historical and strategic goal of the United States,” he argues, “is to prevent the emergence of a dominating Eurasian military and political force on the international stage and to keep the opportunity to influence Eurasia’s political and economic development.” He comes to the conclusion that as a strategic ally of the US and a NATO member, Turkey indirectly supports Washington’s goal. Ankara’s support is seen especially clearly in its attempts to involve Central Asian states in the NATO Partnership for Peace project.

At first sight, it would seem that the opinions of Professor Okur and Professor Arim are different, but, in fact, they complement each other. This can be proved with a comprehensive article written by Professor

cific and Eurasia still exists. Turkey, he argues, could play the part of the missing link in the chain of truly global interaction. To achieve this ambitious goal, he proposes developing trade and information relations with APEC and NAFTA as part of institutional cooperation. To begin, Turkey should obtain the status of an observer with such international structures as ASEM (the Asia-Europe Meeting), APEC and NAFTA.

Recalling that today’s agenda includes the building of a “new Silk Way” that would ensure transportation of energy from Central Asia and the South Caucasus to Europe and expand trade between China and European countries, Professor Comak insists that the SCO cannot be viewed as “an alternative international eco-

unions, Turkey should insist on getting the status of an observer with APEC and ASEAN.

“It is necessary that the Economic Cooperation Organization should become an international structure that interacts actively with the EU, ASEAN and APEC.” Remarkably, Comak does not consider Russia’s and China’s full membership in the ECO. But he emphasizes that the organization should create “special forms of cooperation” with Russia and China. So we can conclude that the TASAM expert believes that the ECO could play the part of the SCO’s regional rival. However, given the escalating rivalry between Turkey and Iran, the expansion of the SCO’s influence and decline of US influence in Central Asia, the ECO does not seem to be the right tool to in-

Today the SCO is a very important structure, influence and attractiveness is growing every year. For Turkey, the organization is important, first of all, from an economic point of view. And SCO countries, for their part, are interested in such a partner as Turkey

Hasret Comak, vice chancellor of the Kocaeli University and expert of the Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM), “SCO’s Future during Global Polarization and Turkey’s Security,” in which he writes that developing relations with Russia, China and Central Asian states, Turkey first of all pursues the following goals: 1) to become a powerful force in Central Asia; 2) to expand and preserve its influence in the region; 3) to become a participant of the region’s most influential organizations; 4) to play an active part in the affairs of influential regional organizations; 5) to develop the potential possibility of becoming a regional power.

Pointing to the growing number of initiatives to expand cooperation between the EU and NAFTA, and also between NAFTA and APEC, Professor Comak says that the “vacuum” in the cooperation chain between Asia Pa-

conomic platform.” By pursuing “rational multilateral diplomacy,” Turkey can obtain what it failed to achieve with bilateral diplomacy, he says.

The following of the professor’s arguments are of interest for understanding the goals and tasks of Turkey’s strategy in Central Asia: “The United States and Japan are using APEC to try and create an important economic potential in Asia Pacific, while the European Union, in order to expand cooperation with Asia’s economic agents, launched the process of regular summits within the Asia-Europe Meeting in Bangkok in 1996. Similarly, Turkey should use its advantages, including those achieved thanks to the Customs Union with the EU, and not only participate actively in the process of shaping of the global cooperation system, but also be in this system. Forming new channels of cooperation with regional economic

tensify regional integration. This was one of the reasons the role of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States became more important in Turkey’s Central Asian policy.

So the SCO is an important structure today, its influence and attractiveness growing every year. This organization is of huge importance for Turkey, first of all, from the economic point of view. It should be noted that the SCO member states are also interested in a partner like Turkey. Most Turkish experts believe that their country should work to become not just a SCO dialog partner, but an observer in the organization. This corresponds both to Turkey’s current foreign political ambitions and to its role on the international stage.

CHINESE AMBASSADOR: CHINA, RUSSIA READY TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION WITH OTHER APEC COUNTRIES



Vladivostok in Russia's Far East is hosting the 20th annual summit of APEC leaders. During the Week of the APEC Summit 2012, Chinese leader Hu Jintao, Russian President Vladimir Putin and other APEC heads of state hold in-depth discussions on promoting development and prosperity of the Asian-Pacific region.

In an interview with the Xinhua news agency, Chinese Ambassador to Russia Li Hui described APEC as a crucial mechanism of economic cooperation in Asia Pacific. Over more than twenty years of the organization's existence, it has played a significant part in promoting liberalization and simplifying trade and investment, deepening regional economic integration, strengthening technical and economic cooperation and joint development in the region.

Today, as the world's economy is getting increasingly globalized, interdependence of different economies is growing, and management of the global economy has seen several changes. At the same time, the economic situation in the world is complicated and volatile. This creates growing instability on the international financial market, which has become one of the sources of instability and uncertainty in the global economy's recovery. Simultaneously, energy security, climate changes, large-scale natural calamities and

other global challenges are coming to the fore. In this connection, the APEC summit will be of huge importance for expanding cooperation between the parties, overcoming existing difficulties and taking effort to build an Asia Pacific that would be peaceful, developed, prosperous and harmonious, Li Hui said.

For many years, Russia has been consistently strengthening its trade and economic ties with Asian Pacific countries, the ambassador said, and it has contributed actively to the region's development. The APEC summit in 2012 is chaired by Russia for the first time ever, and Russia has done meticulous work to prepare such a high-level event. "We are positive that successful hosting of the summit will bring new opportunities and give a new incentive for expanding Russia's cooperation with other APEC economies," he assured.

Chinese-Russian trade and economic cooperation is an important part of economic interaction in Asia Pacific. China and Russia are the

biggest neighbors and also leading emerging markets in Asia Pacific and in the world. Both view the other party's development as an important opportunity for itself and unfailingly declare development of mutual interaction a priority in cooperation.

Based on the development of Chinese-Russian comprehensive relations of strategic interaction and partnership, China has provided consistent support to the Russian party during preparations for the APEC summit, Li Hui said. Together with Russia and other APEC member states, China is willing to further cooperation in liberalization and simplifying of trade and investment, regional economic integration, innovative development, improvement of transport and logistics chains, mounting of food security and other areas, continuing tireless efforts to encourage joint development of Asia Pacific and to ensure a balanced, tolerant, stable, innovative and safe growth in the region and in the world in general.

ALTAY SCO FORUM – A UNIQUE GROUND FOR THE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN DIALOGUE

Stanislav Maksimov



Youth SCO forum became one of the central events in the chronicle of SCO life this year. The idea to gather young businessmen from different countries in Altay region was supported by Russian president Vladimir Putin at the meeting of the Council of state heads - SCO members. The arrangers of the Forum were SCO Business club, SCO Youth Council, Altay region authorities, Association of young businessmen of Russia and Russian youth association.

As its participants think, the results of this Forum exceeded all expectations. A small resort Belokuriha accepted more than 550 guests from Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Tajikistan, Mongolia and from other countries - SCO members. As the arrangers thought, the forum had to

most effective way. Speakers had an hour and a half each, and they were speaking about how their business had appeared and developed, which difficulties they had faced, which perspectives did they have, what were the best models to start business with, what were the principles

the ideas which resonated with the audience was the annual SCO youth forum in Altay region.

And at the end of each day there were presentations of the brightest projects. Among them were Altay biopharmaceutical cluster, handicrafts of Altay region and "Scientific

SCO countries have great perspectives and positive future, and it's the young generation which will build it

become a place for discussion and direct communication between young businessmen and "business sharks" of SCO countries. They discussed such topics as "good neighbouring, non-violence and dialogue", «trans-boundary touristic routes», «green economy», «near-border trade», «transport corridors».

The forum became a huge ground for young businessmen from different countries to discuss common problems and to start their communication. It was devoted to youth business activity and near-border cooperation, but range of topics wasn't limited to these fields. They talked about increase of universities role in the countries of SCO and about perspectives of the unique transnational high school- SCO University, about development of tourism, of electronic trade grounds, about the work of international summer school of the students from Big Altay, and about educational programs for business.

«Various sections were conducted during the Forum, says the leader of Russian national part of SCO youth council Denis Kravchenko. - We had grounds for negotiations, where we tried to create the best atmosphere for negotiations so that people could use their time here in the

of deal lifetime, etc. I'm sure that this educational part of the program helped many participants to find ideas about their own business».

A famous businessman Igor Kubanov, the owner of popular "Bystroy" brand, founder and president of transnational corporation "Arman", producer of digital conference circuit "Armtel" Serikbay Bisekeev and founder Business-Youth project Mikhail Dashkiev shared the secrets of their success with the young colleagues.

All participants of the forum shared their ideas, realization of which could broaden the bounds of cooperation within SCO youth Council. Among them were such as musical contest SCO-Vision - a kind of EuroVision analogue, - and joint culinary show in SCO-countries, as well as single Internet-space and single discount card for young people.

And at the presentation-workshop of business-incubators representatives of SCO countries in Biisk an offer about a united bank of patent ideas and developments was announced. An idea about creation of intergovernmental commission for forming of industry clusters and implementation of highly technological production was announced. One of

schools and educational programs of SCO countries". The scientific schools and educational programs were presented, students of Altay State University defended their projects.

«I'm sure that SCO countries have great perspectives and positive future, and it's the young generation which will build it, - Russian president Vladimir Putin said in his greeting speech to SCO youth forum. - I sincerely hope that this forum will become a significant input in mutual understanding growth, and increase of mutual respect and reliability between our countries and peoples, and it will help further strengthening of SCO role as of influential international organization».

Altay forum proved that all these hopes were real. The first meeting of young businessmen of SCO countries was excellent. And now the main thing is to develop this success in the coming years.

The organizers thank the companies that have shown themselves to be reliable partners in the SCO Youth Forum: "Noveks" commercial network, NTC "Galex", "Zernobank", JSC "Belokurikha resort" and the leading brands of Altai - "Evalar" and "Altai bouquet"

WHAT SCO CAN DO TO SOLVE “AFGHAN PUZZLE”

Konstantin Syroezhkin



It is possible that the redirection of US and NATO efforts to the north of Afghanistan is due to America's intention to expand the zone of the “controlled conflict”, moving it to the Fergana Valley, writes Konstantin Syroezhkin, chief researcher with the Kazakhstan Institute of Strategic Research, in the analytical magazine «Mezhdunarodnye Issledovaniya», published by the Institute for Comparative Social Research Cessi-Kazakhstan, on the basis of several international conferences on Afghanistan, the organizers of which included the Alexander Knyazev Fund and the Politkontakt political technology center.

It is possible that the redirection of US and NATO efforts to the north of Afghanistan is due to America's intention to expand the zone of the “controlled conflict”, moving it to the Fergana Valley, writes Konstantin Syroezhkin, chief researcher with the Kazakhstan Institute of Strategic Research, in the analytical magazine *Mezhdunarodnye Issledovaniya*, published by the Institute for Comparative Social Research Cessi-Kazakhstan, on the basis of several international conferences on Afghanistan, the organizers of which included the Alexander Knyazev Fund and the Politkontakt political technology center. Below is the expert's article.

Afghanistan has remained a key security threat for Central Asia for many years. These threats come both from social, economic and political problems of the country's development and from the geopolitical game in which Afghani-

stan and militants on its territory are given a specific role by its players.

Threats and challenges related to the Afghan vector can be conditionally divided into three groups. Real threats and challenges, i.e. the ones systems of regional and national security are facing at present. Anticipated threats and challenges, i.e. those that can arise if the Western coalition's strategy fails, it changes its tactics against the militants or quickly withdraws from Afghanistan. The third group is related to the issue of the SCO's participation in settlement in Afghanistan, which has been actively debated lately.

The first group includes the following threats and challenges.

First of all, Afghanistan remains the main base of terrorists, including those related to terrorist and extremist organizations whose goal is to destabilize

the situation in Central Asia, topple the existing political regimes and create the Muslim Caliphate within its borders.

Political instability in Afghanistan and the fact that a significant part of its territory is not controlled by the central government is the basis that allows using the country for training militant groups, perhaps few, but presenting a real threat to political regimes of Central Asian states. These groups include the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Akramija, Tablighi Jamaat, the Islamic Party of East Turkestan, Jamaat of Central Asian Mojaheds, etc., i.e. groups that originated in Central Asia. Since the region's countries and Russia have no opportunity to fight these groups within Afghanistan, they can only hope that these groups' activities outside of the country will be stopped by Afghanistan's national security forces and ISAF

troops still stationed there.

The only thing we can do is to strengthen our borders with Afghanistan and reinforce the CSTO Collective Rapid Reaction Force as the only structure meant to ensure collective security in the region.

Second, Afghanistan remains the main base for production of raw opium and also the main supplier of heroin and other drugs to global markets via Central Asian states.

The main problem for us is the use of the region's countries for transit of Afghan drugs, emergence of criminal groups related to this transit and rapid growth of the number of drug addicts in the region's countries. It would be naïve to expect the problem to resolve itself.

First of all, according to some estimates, opium poppy yields up to 40% of Afghanistan's GDP, and its planting involves over 3.5mn people (almost 15% of the country's population).

Moreover, the International Committee for Drug Control estimates that aggregate opium reserves in Afghanistan and neighboring countries totaled some 12,000 metric tons at the end of 2009. This amount is enough to meet the world's illegal demand for opiates for two and a half years.

Second, Afghanistan's borders with Tajikistan and Pakistan are virtually transparent and do not present an obstacle for drug smuggling.

Third, in the 1990s and early 2000s, an international network of financing, production, transportation and marketing of drugs was created. Drugs from Afghanistan are delivered to Europe via several channels. It will be impossible to destroy this network overnight.

Still, the main obstacle that hinders effective counteraction to this threat is that drug trafficking most probably involves both the coalition forces and a significant part of elites in the United States, Europe, Iran, Pakistan, Russia and Central Asian states. Were it not so, political will would be enough to cut off the routes supplying precursors to Afghanistan that are not produced there.

The third is the potential demise of Hamid Karzai's government and return of the Taliban movement to power,

which will inevitably result in a new wave of civil war in Afghanistan and threaten destabilization in Central Asia.

We cannot engage in a dialog with the Taliban, both due to our limited foreign political opportunities and due to the fact that the US and NATO will not allow Central Asian states and Russia to do so. The only thing we can do is to reinforce the security belt along our borders with Afghanistan collectively within the Collective Security Treaty Organization and, perhaps, the SCO.

As has already been said, the main problem is not the unlikely aggression of the Taliban against Central Asia, but the quite real surge of activities of ethnic terrorist organizations in the north of Afghanistan that have close ties with the terrorist underground in Central Asia (especially Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan) and in Russia.

Four, further escalation of the situation in Pakistan, the breakup of the ruling coalition and prospects of terrorists laying their hands on nuclear weapons.

Judging by the developments in Pakistan, this can happen in the near term. The ruling coalition has almost broken up already, and the only force that keeps Pakistan from the ultimate demise is the army.

At present, however, the position of the army and special services is being encroached upon in order to tarnish their positive image and decrease their role in society. This is done at a time when the government is weak, society is getting increasingly radicalized and the number of terrorist attacks is rising.

Finally, the inevitable and soon withdrawal of the United States and ISAF troops from Afghanistan (even if they decide to leave permanent military bases behind). This means that the only force that really contains the onset of Islamism on Central Asia is leaving the region and leaves secular political regimes one on one with the growing influence of radical Islamism.

The withdrawal of the US and the Western coalition from Afghanistan will make it necessary for the region's states and Russia to deal with all problems related to Afghanistan on their own. The main of these problems is the

potential rise of a new wave of Islamic radicalism in the entire region and resumption of Islamists' activities in Central Asia.

The second group of threats and challenges is less obvious.

The first and most dangerous one of them is military and geostrategic: under the pretext of fighting terrorism, the United States and NATO have built a striking ground in Afghanistan in the past ten years, which, if necessary, allows quickly deploying a very powerful force on the southern border of the CIS.

Judging by the way the war in Afghanistan has been waged, the main goal of the United States and NATO is to create a foothold in Afghanistan and Pakistan for further penetration in the entire Central Asian region to establish its influence there and block out Russia and China. This is actually the goal of the Greater Central Asia strategy, which aims at pulling Central Asian states away from the CIS, CSTO and SCO.

Some experts warn that the main goal of the United States in the region is to shape a controllable "arch of instability" in Eurasia, which it needs to maintain its superpower status.

Second, the planned move of active warfare of the Western coalition to the north of Afghanistan and the inevitable rise in activity of the Taliban movement and other ethnic combat groups near the CIS borders that will definitely ensue.

There are two potential challenges here. First, Russia and Central Asia will be inevitably drawn in the civil war in Afghanistan; quite possibly, they will be left on their own, without support (or with very limited support) from the Western coalition.

Second, the inevitable surge in activity of terrorist groups that present a real threat to the region's political regimes.

It cannot be ruled out that the move of the US and NATO activities to the north of Afghanistan is due to America's intention to expand the area of the "controlled conflict", moving it to the Fergana Valley.

Third, turning of Afghanistan and Pakistan in a single zone of instabil-

ity with the prospect of escalation of the Indian-Pakistani conflict and highly probable use of nuclear weapons. In this case, a new big war will be waged near Central Asia, with all obvious negative consequences.

Use of nuclear weapons in this war will result in an environmental and humanitarian catastrophe in Central and South Asia.

Finally, in case of the ultimate defeat of the Western coalition and its quick withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Taliban movement will turn from a terrorist organization into a national liberation movement serving for entire Central and South Asia as a model of efficient resistance to foreign forces and toppling of existing political regimes.

This is a feasible development. The Taliban already enjoys significant authority, so far only in Afghanistan and, partially, Pakistan. Its victory in a situation when the Western coalition is building up its field strength will add to its authority, and its inevitably com-

ing inside Afghanistan. The second task is actually doable, even though there are certain limitations. First of all, it is impossible to create an anti-drug safety belt along Afghanistan's borders without involving Pakistan and Iran. But there can be no talk about comprehensive cooperation with them in this sphere until they get the status of a full SCO member.

Second, there is a difference in assessments of the level of drug threat by SCO member states. For some (Russia, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan), the problem of drug transit from Afghanistan is very relevant; others give priority to other problems. For China, at least, drug trafficking from Afghanistan doesn't pose a serious threat at the moment.

Third, I have already written about the involvement of elites in Afghanistan's neighboring countries in drug transit and their interest in it.

Third, creation of a favorable foreign political environment, blocking exports

problems in any role. This would be irrational for several reasons.

First, the Afghans view any foreign military force as occupants whose presence violates the country's sovereignty and results in serious losses among civilians.

Second, Russia has already had the sad experience of bringing troops to Afghanistan, which showed clearly how intolerant the local population is of the presence of foreign military and how impossible it is to build a modern society in Afghanistan through the use of force.

Third, the process of shaping the security component of the SCO is not over yet, and its possibilities are fairly limited. Consequently, one shouldn't play with illusions that the SCO can replace NATO in Afghanistan.

Finally, the SCO's involvement in Afghanistan's affairs should first be discussed with Hamid Karzai's government and the leaders of the US and NATO, working out a scenario for this involve-

The only thing we can do is to strengthen our borders with Afghanistan and reinforce the CSTO Collective Rapid Reaction Force as the only structure meant to ensure collective security in the region

ing to power after the ISAF leaves will provide every reason to view it as a national liberation movement.

As to threats and challenges related to the SCO's participation in settling the situation in Afghanistan, the very idea of the SCO's involvement in Afghanistan's affairs is interesting and, in certain circumstances, quite plausible. But it is necessary to understand clearly what the SCO can do in Afghanistan and what it should better not, in order to preserve its positive image.

What SCO can do

First of all, it can finance social and infrastructure projects in Afghanistan. This, however, would require setting up a structure for doing this, since at present there is none.

Second, it can assist fighting drug trafficking in Afghanistan, including by creating control mechanisms along the country's borders. It should be said that the SCO doesn't have a possibility to take any steps against drug traffick-

of drug substances and imports of precursors in Afghanistan as much as possible, drastically cutting outside financial support to the Afghan opposition and creating conditions to limit export of radical Islamist ideas.

This will not require endorsement from the Afghan government or, more importantly, from the ISAF command; the political will of the SCO member states should suffice. At the same time, the SCO's strategy in the settlement in its economic part should seek to focus investment efforts based on a specific plan of the Afghan economy's recovery, not on the sum of investment to be provided, which is the case today.

The main goal for the SCO should be creating a peaceful buffer area, free of drug production, along the borders of the organization's members.

What the SCO cannot and should not do.

First of all, it should not get involved in resolving Afghanistan's military

ment.

Second, attempting to organize negotiations within Afghanistan under the auspices of the SCO. This idea is hardly plausible. Despite a certain change in attitudes towards Russia on the part of Afghanistan's incumbent political leadership, the Taliban for different reasons do not accept Russia and China and will not agree to a dialog with them. Only two countries - Iran and Pakistan - can act as mediators in a dialog with the Taliban, but they are not SCO members yet.

But this is not the most important reason. In present circumstances, organization of talks with Taliban leaders and, all the more so, with the so-called moderate Taliban, makes no sense. It would be unforgivably naïve to hope for a positive outcome of talks in a situation when the Taliban is stronger than the government and the international coalition.

AFGHANISTAN JOINS SCO, EXPECTED TO JOIN NATO

Pyotr Goncharov

Afghanistan is the centerpiece of a project that was devised by American expert Frederic Star and is being implemented by the United States



At the recent SCO summit in Beijing, Afghanistan was granted the status of an observer. Judging by publications on Afghan websites, the event didn't go unnoticed for the country's political establishment. But what exactly does the new status give Kabul and what does it give the Shanghai Cooperation Organization?

Obtaining of the status is definitely a landmark. But not so much for the Afghan political elites (not to say anything about the Afghan streets), as for the United States. Here is why.

Afghanistan is the centerpiece of a project that was devised by American expert Frederic Star and is, apparently, being implemented by the United States.

The goal of the project is to gather all Central Asian republics, all of Afghanistan's neighbors (and India) around it, involving them in restoration of the Afghan economy. In American terms, this is called the Greater Central Asia Project. So Afghanistan in the SCO provides the US with a convenient mechanism for implementing

this GCAP.

Actually, all of the above mentioned parties to the project, which Washington carefully monitors, have already got hooked on the Afghan economy. For Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, this is CASA 1000, electricity deliveries to Afghanistan; for Turkmenistan and Pakistan - the TAPI project, a gas pipeline for pumping Turkmen gas to Pakistan and India via Afghanistan; for Uzbekistan and Iran, the construction of a railway from Hairatan to Mazar-e-Sharif and on to Herat.



AFGHANISTAN WILL NOT STAY AN OBSERVER FOR LONG. WE CAN EASILY SURMISE THAT IT WILL BECOME A FULL-FLEDGED SCO MEMBER IN A YEAR. HAVING AFGHANISTAN IN THIS CAPACITY IS IN EVERYONE'S INTERESTS.

India has also received a fancy project of developing the huge Hajigak iron ore deposit. Russian geologists that worked in Afghanistan in the Soviet era say the iron content in its ores is very high. India plans to build a railway to Hajigak to transport ore to the Gulf of Persia and on to its plants for processing.

Finally, the United States did not forget about its main opponent in the region, i.e. China. It has been the luckiest, having “won” a tender for the development of the world’s second biggest copper deposit, Ainak (the biggest one is situated in Chile). It is unknown whether someone helped China, but its plan for implementation of the Ainak project is the same that Soviet geologists had. For the project to be profitable, they said, a copper smelter should be built near the mine (30 km from Kabul). It should be powered by electricity from thermal power plants built in the north and using local (Sheberghan) gas. China is going to do the same thing. It has already obtained the right to get access to both gas and oil in the north of Afghanistan - fields that were, again, discovered by Soviet geologists.

Afghanistan will not stay an observer for long. We can easily surmise that it will become a full-fledged SCO member in a year. Having Afghanistan in this capacity is in everyone’s interests. It is in the interests of the United States, if it is going to implement the GCAP; it is in the interests of Central Asian republics to be able to ask Kabul, if necessary, what the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan is doing there; it is in the interests of China and Russia, since they are more interested in US military bases in Afghanistan after 2014. There are none yet, but they will emerge for sure, in compliance with the agreement on strategic cooperation, recently signed by Presidents Hamid Karzai and Barack Obama.

A remarkable point: after the meeting of leaders of SCO member states, Chinese President Hu Jintao and Afghan President Hamid Karzai made statements about the two countries’ relations reaching a new strategic level. The foundation for this higher level will be the agreement on strategic cooperation between Afghanistan and China. This will be the eighth such agreement for Afghanistan - it has already signed them with India, Britain,

Italy, Australia, France, the United States and Germany.

Everyone needs Afghanistan to be in the SCO. But what will it get from the organization? Until recently (before Karzai’s glorious visit to Moscow in January 2011), Kabul did its best to dodge the question about the possibility of its accession to the SCO, citing its status of a non-aligned state. What has changed? First of all, it has become obvious that the problem of Afghanistan cannot be resolved without resolving its Pakistani element. So for Kabul, the SCO is also a mechanism for putting pressure on Islamabad. Especially given the new agreement on strategic cooperation with Beijing. If Islamabad is going to listen to anyone, that will be Beijing.

There is another consideration. Turkey joining the SCO as a dialog partner is seen by experts as a “watershed”, meaning that Turkey, being a NATO member, is acceding the organization that is supposed to oppose it. Why not consider the possibility of Afghanistan joining NATO? The political elite in the country doesn’t rule it out.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO CENTRAL ASIA AFTER ALLIES WILL LEAVE AFGHANISTAN?

Alexander Shustov



As time comes for American forces to leave Afghanistan in the end of 2014, Central Asia perspectives are more and more dim and scaring. It is known that USA plans to take some of military equipment used there into the former Soviet republics of Central Asia. American military leaders are already discussing the question with Tajikistan, Kirgizia and Uzbekistan

Also the joint military maneuvers “Regional collaboration - 2012” of the USA and all mentioned countries and Kazakhstan, which took place on June, 18 in Kirgizia, clearly show American plans to get into these territories. The maneuvers were held on the site of the Joint military forces training center according to the plan of bilateral military contacts between army of Kirgizia and US Central Command. The main goal was to work out joint actions in case of natural disasters and «in case of de-

struction forces activity». As information by Defense Ministry of Kirgizia says, USA trains their partners to prepare and conduct virtual training courses and to work with electronic cards. American army will leave Afghanistan step by step. Last year ten thousand soldiers left the country. Another 23 thousand were to leave by autumn. USA Defense Minister Leon Panetta announced that America wanted to finish its war mission in Afghanistan by middle or end of 2013 to concentrate on training Afghan

military forces and providing consulting assistance. After the main part of the army will leave the country, several large military bases will stay in Begram, Sindand, Nangarhar province, in Kandahar and Mazar-e-Sarif, which will let Americans help local army. USA plans to spend about 4 billion dollars annually after 2014 for Afghan army support. Locals don't believe these promises. Recently Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai demanded from the USA to fix the financial aid amount in a

contract, fearing that these words will be just a doubletalk. American military forces show significant interest in keeping their airbase in Kirgizia, trying to mask it as a “civil transit center”. Earlier USA announced their plans to place mobile units of special forces in all countries of the region, for protection of the northern way, and to build training centers, checkpoints and other military objects. Such plans mean that this military infrastructure is designed for total control of the area. Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs already expressed fears that USA military base

June, 4 they discussed the topic with Islam Karimov as nearly the most important one. The both presidents understand that terroristic activity will go behind the borders after military pullout. Moscow is also worried about possibility of turning Central Asia into another Afghanistan. In April secretary general of CSTO Nicolay Borduja was talking about the matter with anxiety. He named such threats as wakeup of radical religious and nationalist structures activity, which successfully use existing religious, social and ethnical contradictions in the region. In De-

ground will start... then we will react». Absence of strategy is the most disturbing fact. Russia and Central Asia don't have any natural or man-made borders. Russian border guards left the border of Tajikistan and Afghanistan in 2005, and all attempts to make them come back failed so far. Only Uzbekistan can defend its borders on its own, among the three countries on the border with Afghanistan. Kirgizia and Tajikistan are extremely weak as military countries. And it's very difficult to guard the longest border in the world - between Russia and Kazakhstan, which is more than



ABILITY OF AMERICANS TO DETER TALIBANS AFTER MILITARY DISENGAGEMENT IS A BIG QUESTION

in Kirgizia may be used in war against Iran and thus the countries of Central Asia will be involved in this war. Ability of Americans to deter Taliban after military disengagement is a big question. Even the first steps of troop pullout in Afghanistan provoked anxiety in the Central Asia capitals. When Vladimir Putin came to Tashkent on

December CSTO signed a plan of defense measures to confront challenges and threats coming from Afghanistan. The plan is aimed at drug traffic stoppage and means creation of financial and anti-drug belts, people training and collaboration with afghan anti-drug structures. But in case if situation in the country goes beyond control there will be nobody to collaborate with. «Russia doesn't have any strategy, - Director of the second Asian department of Foreign Affairs Ministry Zamir Kabulov said on May, 24 on the press-conference in RIA-Novosti. - If everything turns really bad - the civil war on the ethnic

7 thousand kilometers. There is a Collective Security Treaty Organization, of course, among its members are four from five countries of Central Asia. Its structure includes Collective forces for immediate reaction, mostly from Russian and Kazakhstan troopers. In case of necessity of immediate Russia return to Central Asia Russian forces will have to defend southern borders of Kazakhstan, Kirgizia and Tajikistan, and CSTO will have to undertake some functions which USA and NATO used to fulfill.

65 YEARS OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE CHANGED IT A LOT

Dmitriy Kosyrev



Indian people have special inclination and talent of surprising other countries. Time difference between Moscow and Delhi is 1,5 hours. How is it possible? They say that is the best difference from the point of view of astronomy and biorhythms. The country has two national days. How could that happen? The first is on August, 15 – Independence Day and this year it was a milestone, - the 65th Independence Day, which is celebrated since 1947. And the second one is on January, 26, when many foreign guests come and a parade takes place in New Delhi on Governors' Road. This one is called Republic Day and is celebrated since 1950, when Constitution passed and the independence became full, without any dominions.

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These holidays differ in their meaning. In January it's more official and international and is considered to be the main one. The August holiday is a kind of more domestic, for themselves, it's a holiday of white and green and saffron flag (which was first raised on August, 15 in 1947), and this holiday makes people remember that there is a special Indian conception. What is India, in fact? Twenty eight states and seven territories and more than one billion 200 million people. People in different states speak almost different languages, have different music and dances, different traditions, though they have a lot of in common. They have five religions as main ones!

We can compare in to Europe, which has so many difficulties with unification. Here it's even more complicated due to different religions. And still Indians don't have any doubt that they live in one country - in India and they call it "regulated chaos" and admit that this country can't exist. But it exists and it will exist.

Though it will change. Events of the last one or two years in India reminds what was going on in the rest of the world - global changes which had to do with fundamental principles of European, American, even Middle Eastern life. And the Indians see how serious the changes are.

They make a deep analysis of the country: what country actually appeared in 1947, what political and ideological basis it was built on? Talking about official ideology, we know a set of messages about overcoming national, religious, caste and other differences. But this is not the point to discuss. More exciting is to understand how the management of state affairs was originally organized and what became afterwards.

So in fact we speak about the Indian Nation Congress party. This is the party of Nehru and Gandhi which for 50 years struggled for something which seemed

impossible. For independence from the only supercountry of that time, from the empire, which seemed invulnerable between the two world wars and which painted half of the world map with its pink colour.

And the party received the independence and - of course - power, and British empire was crashed down, which led to many other changes in the world. Till recent time Indian politics was the politics of INC, and other parties were secondary to it.

We can easily call INC the monarchy - it was governed by Nehru family - Motilala and his son Javaharlal, then his daughter Indira (widow of advocate Feruz Gandhi, who didn't have any relationship to Mohandas "mahatma" Gandhi, spiritual leader of INC). Then the third generation of the family was at power, and now the fourth age is very likely to rule the party. But if it will govern the country, is a big question. For today all polls and evaluations say "no". Moreover, nobody

changes is something like mass psychosis. For example, last year an elderly activist Ann Khazare went on hunger-strike to force government pass the law against corruption. Political system successfully dealt with the challenge though the man's suggestions were complete absurd. Recently he tried to start another hunger-strike but failed after couple of days. The point was that the first time made him national hero for millions of people, and now nobody paid attention. So, the nation looks for changes in traditional way of life and it starts breaking apart. War on corruption always means that some forces try to win support of least competent and politically passive people. Such people are always emotional and non-predictable.

And, finally, another sign of coming changes is lowering of government popularity in general, and of INC in particular. So we see the society breaking apart, without any rationality but many emotions instead. For example, unexpected result of elections in

be the symbol of Indian independence, now looks as cosmopolitan "foreign" party and it makes it less popular for orthodox people.

Neighboring countries and Central Asia partners of India are worried about goals and points of its foreign policy. And problem is not only in its formal entrance to SCO, but in much deeper issues.

Particularly, in the fact that India abandoned its traditional foreign policy which it used to have for the last 65 years, and now it balances between several ways of political behavior.

Under Javaharlal Nehru and his descendants Indian policy was based on evidential country's self-identification as a Third-World, developing, country. Nehru was one of the founders of Non-aligned Movement, which now formally includes several dozens of countries and almost all former colonies of great empires. It didn't align neither with the USSR and Soviet block, nor with western block, and still had huge profit from both. And, finally, foreign policy included confrontation with Pakistan.

But there is no Soviet block any more and India is one of the leading countries and economical giant, and is said to become second world economic after China in the middle of the century. So foreign policy had to change anyway. And both BJP and INC were anxious about making new relationships with the USA. Not to become their satellite but to improve own status. The result didn't satisfy neither initiators nor general public (Americans don't like to treat anybody as equal, that was the problem). As for Pakistan... there are some problems, but they are included in the worldwide context. Relationships with China, the main Indian neighbour, became very important and are full of ambiguity, they constantly become the object of behind-the-scenes struggle in Indian elite. What is China? Pakistan ally and instigator, the first Indian trade partner (the known fact), or a rival? Not clear yet.

So what India will Russia and other SCO countries have to deal with in the coming years? The answer possibly doesn't exist if even the Indians themselves can't reply.

EVENTS OF THE LAST ONE OR TWO YEARS IN INDIA REMIND WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE REST OF THE WORLD - GLOBAL CHANGES WHICH HAD TO DO WITH FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF EUROPEAN, AMERICAN, EVEN MIDDLE EASTERN LIFE. AND THE INDIANS SEE HOW SERIOUS THE CHANGES ARE.

knows who will rule instead. They say that all of a sudden, presidential institution is becoming really influential, though before it was only formal. Otherwise they will have chaos.

For 65 years of independence India outgrew the single-party structure. It used to be and still stays the rule and the best option for the country which solves serious national tasks of survival and of building the base which used to mean even creation of a nation itself in the previous times. And till now most countries live with single-party system, it's inevitable for some stages of development. «Development» - is a special stage for every nation, which serves as a counterbalance to the stage of keeping the system in a stable working state. Both stages may repeat several times. Now in India we see how they change each other and this change is a long and complicated and unpredictable as India itself.

Visible feature of revolutionary

2004, when the poorest social stratum became very active and the most successful and highly potential Bharatiya Janata party was voted down. It was BJP, which made India one of the key players in the world economics, taking it into the top-ten of world leading countries. But the electorate didn't appreciate the fact. Elections of 2014 are said to be another tragedy - for ruling INC party.

There is some peculiarity in Indian political split. When the present prime-minister Manmohan Singh of INC conducted reforms in 1990s, trying to break half-social economics, - both he and his BJP opponents paid special attention at Indian diaspora abroad, especially in the USA, which consisted of more than 10 million people. Their investments were the key point for Indian economic recovery as it happened with China some time before. And as a result Indian foreign policy changed it course a little bit. INC, which used to

RIAL'S COLLAPSE DOESN'T MEAN IRANIAN ECONOMICS DEMISE

Stanislav Ivanov



Sudden crash of Iranian currency in the beginning of October 2012, when one dollar cost about 37 thousand Iranian rials, caused spontaneous protest actions in the country and attracted attention of media and other countries to Iran. On October, 1, rial fell for 17% and for the last year it lost 80% of its cost.

Rapid crash of national currency lows down purchase power of Iranian rial, which causes damaging increase of prices – i.e. hyperinflation. Such rapid damp of currency value usually leads to lowering of other economic indicators. Devaluation of rial led to price increase for almost all goods, including food and living essentials. According to the latest data from Iranian experts, published on the IRNA news agency website, another 20% of the population went below the poverty line. This social group includes 40% of the country population now.

In Teheran, in the largest trade

center of the country, shop owners closed their shops as a protest action. They demand from the government to take immediate actions to stabilize currency rate. Iranian central bank decided to limit allowed amount of currency for currency import and export - 5 thousand USA dollars, to stabilize currency market. We should note, that notwithstanding spontaneous protest actions towards financial policy of the country, Trade Unions Association of Iran expressed its loyalty to government, which tightened measures aimed to stop illegal currency trade. Situation

in the country is under governmental control. Rial even won back several points and by the end of the first week of October 1 dollar cost 34 rials.

Washington is sure that these crisis indicators in Islamic Republic of Iran are caused by restrictive USA and EU sanctions against Teheran. Israel said that Iran is on the edge of the catastrophe (right before default). Israel was sure that damages from unsold oil by the end of current year will make 40-50 bln USA dollars. Dramatic falling of Iranian currency made Israel government sure that sanctions

may be an effective measure against further nuclear development in Iran. Washington and Tel-Aviv, hoping for further increase of domestic Iranian contradictions and overthrow of the regime from inside, started convincing their European and Asian partners in the necessity of further stiffening of sanctions towards Iran. And it seems that some countries' leaders are about to agree. As was announced by French president François Hollande on the UN General Assembly, Paris is ready to pass new sanctions. "Not to punish a great Iranian nation, but to show its governors that they must negotiate un-

UN Assembly was opinion exchange about how to stimulate Iran and IAEA Secretariat to improve collaboration and solve those questions concerning nuclear program of Teheran, said Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

«Introduction of sanctions, according to the Statute, is solely in the competence of the Security Council, - reminded Lavrov in New-York. - Decisions should be made collectively with understanding that they must help a country to start a dialogue and to solve questions which UN has, and not to isolate the country at all". It's known that USA and

ers to be consistent with the responsibilities to keep the regime of nonproliferation of nuclear weapon. Peaceful character of nuclear program is confirmed by special fatwah of spiritual leader of IRI Ayatollah Ali Hamenei, who is equal to the country leader.

But does this mean that Iran will not leave its position in the field of uranium enrichment? Before one of the stages of negotiations with "the six" Ayatollah Hamenei empowered the main Iranian negotiator Said Jalili: «If you feel that refusal from uranium enrichment up to 20% will do good for Iranian republic - you can accept this term. I know you as a real patriot and I approve your any decision in advance». And so? When Jalili asked his western opponents if they were ready to recall all sanctions from Iran if it stopped enriching uranium, he got a reply that sanctions would not be recalled completely, and that Iran would only get right to buy medicine and spare parts for civil aviation! «So what do you want from us finally?» - Jalili asked. His question never got any reasonable answer, and this is easily explained. The ultimate goal of political-diplomatic, financial-economic and information-propagandist pressure of the West is not Iranian nuclear program at all. It serves only as a cause for further repressions of this country and for tightening the sanctions. The West needs the Islam Republic to stop existing as it is. To replace it with some subnational entity where transnational oil and gas companies would be the hosts, the regime would be democratized according to western standards and the foreign policy would be reduced to highest approval of Atlantic society politics.

American politologists, authors of the conception of "Big Middle East" don't exclude possible options of dividing the country according to nationalities: Persians, Azerbaijanians, the Kurds; formation of new countries instead of Iran (Great Kurdis-

til it's too late", - he pinpointed. In fact it's exactly vice-versa: it's the Iranian people who took the main burden of latest EU sanctions and found themselves on the edge of humanitarian disaster. Under unprecedented pressure from USA after some hesitations Asian importers of Iranian oil (China, Japan, South Korea and others) started breaking their contracts with IRI.

Moscow thinks that one-legged sanctions from several countries only interrupt the process of negotiations, which is conducted by the six international mediators. Thus, the goal of the last meeting at the 67th

some other countries of the western world suspect Iran to develop nuclear weapon hiding this development under peaceful nuclear program and they are not satisfied with UN international unilateral sanctions towards this country. The latest include EU ban for Iranian oil export and financial operations with Iran since July, 1, 2012.

Teheran doesn't deny that it enriches uranium up to 20%, but it announces that the nuclear program is one of the national priorities and is aimed only at satisfaction of nation's need in atomic energy. Its right to the enrich uranium Teheran consid-



tan, Great Azerbaijan, Persia). It looks like Washington would be satisfied with a model of new Iran which would be wordly Islamic (like Turkey, Iraq, Turkmenistan). But for now these American projects are non-demanded. Notwithstanding all efforts of USA and their allies, they can't manage to organize "Persian spring" as a continuation of "Arabic spring".

Iran president Makhmud Akhmadinejad admits that sanctions towards Islamic Republic of Iran influence country economic more and more in negative way, but he thinks that government will manage to overcome these temporary difficul-

This is a point of view of Iranian economist Mohammed Masiney, in particular: «Iranian economy has some problems but there is no crisis. Iran has large foreign exchange reserves. More than 100 bln USA dollars, according to estimations. Iran doesn't have any large debts to any country. Iranian economy is self-sufficient in many sectors. Of course, unemployment and inflation will have place, but no global crisis and collapse is going to happen, I don't see any signs of such possibility. It's impossible». Iran will try to compensate losses from termination of relationships with EU countries

In the existing conditions of political ostracism to IRI from the West Russia could start active cooperation with this country in all fields without breaking any UN sanctions. In particular, it could reconsider its decision about cancellation of contracts for supplying Iran with defense systems such as air-defense missile system «C-300». UN sanctions do not touch it.

Such pragmatic approach would be in consistence with national interests of Russia and Iran. We shouldn't forget that Iran is our traditional regional trade partner in the field of trade and economy, science and techniques, energy and other fields, as well as in the field of regional safety. Due to Iranian authorities actions Caspian direction is the safest for Russia from illegal migration point of view (delivery of Arabian contractors) to Northern Caucasus, drug traffic from Afghanistan and Pakistan. To compare, according to international data, Iranian government manages to withdraw about 35% of drugs which go via Iranian border, while Russia can withdraw only 4% of drugs, which go from Afghanistan. Iran together with Russia wants Caspian sea to stay free from military presence of non-regional countries, and Iran also has a very stable position in all ecology problems, oil and gas sources and fish stock in Caspian sea, construction of new strategic oil pipelines and in the question about Nagorno-Karabakh.

It would be very profitable from economic point of view for Russian regions, state and private traders to take a niche which formed as a result of western ostracism in trade with Iran. In circumstances of financial-economic global crisis Iran could become a reliable partner for many Russian companies and enterprises.

▶ SO WE CAN SAY THAT CRASH OF IRANIAN NATIONAL CURRENCY AND NEGATIVE FACTORS IN ECONOMY BECAME THE MOST SERIOUS TEST FOR RELIABILITY OF THE CURRENT REGIME.

ties. Iranian leader announced in the interview on the national TV, that the country has some problems concerning oil trade, but he is sure, - he said, - that the matter will be fixed. It is known that export of gas and oil brings to state budget up to 90% of foreign currency. Other leaders of the country also say that they have internal resources to change the financial-economic state of the country to the best. Thus, parliament speaker Ali Larijani announced that about 80% of Iranian problems were caused by misruling and only 20% were caused by international embargo. He also mentioned that the country has more important problems than international sanctions. «For the last seven years liquidity had highly increased - for 83%, - Larijani said. - This increase means that investments are not possible, production is lessening, inflation is growing. As a result we take wrong decisions and make wrong steps». Many Iranian experts still express confidence that in spite of many objective and subjective difficulties and currency problems the country will avoid national economic collapse.

with the help of regional partnership with Southern Caucasus, Central and Southern Asia, Russia, Iraq, Turkey and other countries.

So we can say that crash of Iranian national currency and negative factors in economy became the most serious test for reliability of the current regime. It's directly connected with tightening of sanctions towards Teheran from USA and its allies, but we can't deny the fact that many financial and economic problems are hidden inside the country itself, particularly in non-effectiveness of state management. IRI has significant resources to overcome the crisis. Hopes of USA, EU and Israel that the sanctions will make Teheran refuse its nuclear program or even lead to change of ruling regime are too previous and groundless. One shouldn't forget that Iran with 80 million population and rich natural resources, developed manufacture and agriculture, infrastructure, scientific and technical potential, modern army, good geographic location and very united (on the Shiite ground) people is an influential regional country and plays an important role in Islamic world.

RUSSIAN MINISTER OF ENERGY: WE HAVE A GREAT POTENTIAL IN COOPERATION WITH CHINA



Exchange of new technologies and experience is the most perspective direction for Russian-Chinese energetic cooperation, - was announced by Alexander Novak, Russian minister of energy, in the interview to Xinhua news agency, «Jingji Zhibao» and Russian news agency Interfax.

According to the words of Russian minister, “potential of our cooperation with China in all directions, including energy sources supply is still very big, - he said. - But we should speak not only about energy sources but about technologies exchange as well, and about Russian companies’ participation in projects on Chinese territory, and in Chinese companies’ participation

in our projects, i.e. about interchange of experience”.

We could cooperate more actively in the field of creation of joint ventures on construction of energy and electrical equipment in Russia and China, says Novak. As for cooperation in electric grid industry, the right direction is construction of high voltage lines from Russia. “For today we already have a work-

ing high voltage line with 500kW. In 2012 we plan to supply about 1,3 bln kVt/h to China and to reach estimated capacity of 4,5 bln kV/h”. The agreement between Inter RAO UES and State electrical corporation of China, the cooperation is planned for 20 years. During this period Russia undertakes to supply China with more than 60 5 bln kV/h.

There are also a lot of projects in oil industry in the last years. An agreement about construction of a pipeline "Skovorodino-Mohe" was signed, the construction project was finished in 2010 and in 2011 oil started going via this pipeline. Last year China received from Russia 15 million tons of oil. The agreement was signed for 20 years and it's planned to supply 300 million tons of oil for this period. Now China asks for additional supplies and Rosneft company is about to make a decision, - the minister announced.

Among the projects which are being realized now Alexander No-

We should speak not only about energy sources but about technologies exchange as well, and about Russian companies' participation in projects on Chinese territory, and in Chinese companies' participation in our projects, i.e. about interchange of experience

vak mentioned construction of oil refinery in Tianjin. "Besides, our companies largely cooperate in the field of geologic exploration, for example, now we are studying Veninskoye oil field on "Sakhalin-3" and such projects as "Magadan-1" and «Magadan-2», - he informed.

Particularly important is cooperation in gas industry. The negotiations are conducted between Gazprom company and Chinese national oil and gas corporation about possible gas supply to China. "We think about several directions including western one with supply of about 30 bln cubic meters», - Novak said. Besides, minister mentioned the construction of liquid gas production plant in Vladivostok, with up to 10 mln tons capacity.

Now these projects are in the stage of feasibility study and of commercial terms finalization. «I suppose, that according to the in-

structions which were given by our country leaders, these commercial terms will be finalized in the nearest future», - Russian minister said.

At the same time Russia talks about its plans to widen cooperation in coal industry. «The strategy till 2030 includes increasing of coal export in far-eastern direction for more than 50 mln tons», - announced Alexander Novak.

According to the words of Russian minister a significant influence on cooperation of Russia and China in energy industry will have a planned move to innovative economy in Russia. This move means, for example, higher coefficient of oil extraction

industry deeper conversion. Russia together with countries of Asia-Pacific region is working on the projects of construction of synthetic liquid fuel, Novak added.

In his interview Alexander Novak said, that foreign partners are actively working in fuel and energy complex in Russia. «Today more than 25% of oil is extracted by companies with partly foreign funds, and it's more than 125 mln tons of oil», - he said. Russian minister also reminded that most part of FEC objects are strategic function enterprises which are responsible for safety and supply of fuel and energy sources to the domes-



on existing fields, implementation of new technologies, which will let use new fields of hard access. All this will become an additional source to increase oil extraction and refining volumes, as well oil export to foreign markets.

Talking about electric power, innovations may raise coefficient of efficiency of power equipment and generating capacities. Perspective innovative directions are also development of coal and coal chem-

tic market. In connection with this point all decisions about privatization which is going to take place in the nearest future when large-scale sale of state assets will start, will be taken very carefully.

ABOUT SCO PARTNERSHIP ADVANTAGES

Sergey Kanavskiy

Speech of secretary of SCO
Business council Sergey
Kanavskiy at Energy Dialogue
«Russia-EU», which took
place in European Parliament
(Brussels, October, 1-2)



For many years we participate in Energy Dialogue «Russia - European Union». So now we can confidently say that the level, the contingent quality is constantly increasing. I hope that this tendency will stay in the future and let us regard this ground as one of the most effective for discussion of energy cooperation problems between Russia and European countries. Our partnership with Europe is rather complex. We have pretty many problems. And during the event we heard a lot of appeals for Russia to pay attention at the eastern sector of its economic targeting. But Russia is not idle at all. It has very serious determination to develop the eastern direction, I assure you, the rather that this field of activity is almost endless. Our eastern partners - the countries which

long-term work. We must stress that China perfectly understands its tasks and conducts an active policy in SCO concerning question of partnership in energy field. In order to create Energy club the work group is organized which includes government representatives, businessmen, scientists and experts. The stake is on complex approach for working out of a strategy which will take into account interests of all parties. What are the partnership advantages of SCO? They are in clear understanding by all countries of good and bad sides of every system, of all strong and weak points, and these countries try not to let happen the situations, which can appear in the process of realization of the third packet of European Energy Charter. For

kindergartens and houses for those who work with petroleum extraction and logistics. I call to close cooperation, to increasing of information traffic connected with cooperation. The law-makers shouldn't close up in their circle of law-making, but they should understand that engines of the whole strategy are state interests and business interests which must be taken into account. I would also like to say, that my speech goes in consistency with the topic of energy partnership. SCO seems to have another, eastern geographic vector, but there are examples when western companies fit well into economic activity of the Organization, they take part in SCO projects as part of state-private partnership. Together with German experts we build

Countries are well aware where the pros and cons of each system, whose strengths, and from whom, and vulnerable, and try to avoid situations that arise during the implementation of the third package of the European Commission

develop quickly and are included in SCO, like India, China and Kazakhstan, - perfectly understand and pragmatically evaluate Russian abilities in the field of energy sources. They also realize that our country is the main partner in such a vital part of economic partnership as energy industry. Why am I so sure? By the initiative of Russian government, with interest from China, Kazakhstan and other countries, now an active formation of SCO Energy Club is taking place. This structure includes the countries with their own sources, the countries which transport petroleum and import it. They clearly understand that it's necessary to come to concession and make a system for a stable

example, nobody gives tasks to create petroleum traffic system to the companies which never did it before and don't know how to do it. Every participant has some advantages and some weak points, and now we try to consider all possibilities and to create stable and highly efficient system. Its main goal will be not to create fake working places but to use effectively the possibilities of energy partnership. It is this system which will allow us to make socially responsible business. Russian companies understand this task and try to be extremely attractive to other actors in the system. They create real working places, organize professional education, build schools and

transport and logistics hub in Chelyabinsk region, for example. Companies which cooperate in SCO clearly see main advantages of western technologies, innovative methods and principles of projects realization. One needs to offer the best of everything and not to be scared of collaboration with us. It was said that Europe had always had its own pioneering spirit which is lost today. But it should be revived for the benefit of everybody.

PRECIOUS GIFT TO CHINESE PEOPLE

Tatiana Sinitsina



Presentation of a unique book “China with the eyes of Russian friends” took place in Moscow, in the Institute of Far East of Russian Academy of sciences. Ambassador of China in Russia Li Hui called it “a precious gift to Chinese people”.

Let me share a Chinese picture with you... Magician was just a boy. He went up on a bandstand in the restaurant where we dropped in for lunch on our way to the Great Wall. He was holding a golden ball near his chest. And suddenly this spherical glaring «thing» started multiplying in his hands, the new ones were appearing so quickly. His face was calm but his hands were moving as boneless laces controlling the bubbling balls easily. One more minute and the action changed - the balls started disappearing one by one until the first one was left ... This trick with golden balls amazed me but also made me think about the destiny of this country. China in the stage of «re-

forms and openness», which managed to become one of the world leading countries, is no more and no less than a kind of trick for the rest of the world... And it's the understanding of this mechanic, of how this trick works, which was the main purpose of the book authors.

CHINA: PRICE FOR THE IMAGE WHICH IT HAS IN THE WORLD

A wonderful book “China with the eyes of Russian friends” was presented in an overcrowded hall of the cultural and information center of Russian-Chinese friendship society, which is located in the Institute of Far East of Russian Academy of Science. In the end

everybody had some Champaign - as the winners, who managed to realize a remarkable and pained idea. The atmosphere was very festive, people were smiling and talking spiritedly, with a great interest, as those whose life work was understanding of China and strengthening of friendship with this earthshattering neighbour. Among guests there were a lot of Chinese people, standing for friendship with Russia - they were mainly diplomats together with Chinese ambassador in Russia Li Hui, and also scientists, public people, journalists. The first vice-president of Chinese Foundation of international researches, former Chinese ambassador in Russia Liu Guchan arrived from

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Beijing together with vice-president of the Foundation Yu Chenchi (both are Drs. h. c. of IFE RAS). Huge efforts were made to publish this unique book with collected works of twenty authors, and it is really an important event in the life of two countries. The book impresses by its feelings and thoughts, analysis and the level of intellectual depth. Each name is a great figure in sinology, diplomacy, and in the international affairs field in general. Academician Mikhail Titarenko, director of the Institute of Far East of Russian Academy of Science, chairman of Russian-Chinese friendship society, outlined this point in his speech on the opening of the event. Almost all authors devoted their lives to study China and the history of Russian-Chinese relationships. «This book is the brainchild of joint project, it appeared as a sign of our respect to Chinese people and admiration with its achievements,

of our desire to learn and to communicate, - said Titarenko. - In fact, it's a cross section of China development for the last hundred years, attempt to find this strange truth and romantic on the way of its development». The scientists called it a big point of the book - objective look, friendly intonation, attempt to understand and accept the reality of Chinese life, the logic of its internal and foreign policy. He pointed out that the authors were completely free in their work and expressed his confidence that «the readers will not stay indifferent to the thoughts, which nobody tried to reduce to the same level, to the memories and even confessions of the authors about their discoveries, about their understanding of the great Chinese culture and perspectives of friendly collaboration between our countries». So how did the book appear? The participants talked a lot about it but the essence is expressed in the preface: «Higher management of Russian-Chinese friendship society had this idea for a long time - to make a book of essays and memories of countless friends of China: of those few veterans of the liberation mission of the Soviet Army, which together with Chinese patriots defeated Japanese militarists in 1945, who occupied North-Eastern China in 1930-s, and of thousands of Soviet experts, who helped the new China in 1950-s to restore industry, science, technical and educational fields». Meanwhile the realization of this unusual idea lacked finances and finally this question was solved with the help of Chinese businessmen.

THE IDEA WAS WAITING

The idea of such a book was long waiting to come true. During one of his visits to Russia the former Chinese ambassador in Russia Chan Deguan, now president of Chinese Research Foundation of international problems - one of the brain centers which analyze and work out strategy of foreign policy, - came to the Institute of Far East RAS and suggested its director Titarenko to

publish a series of books about China as a joint project. In October, 2011 Beijing sent an official offer to publish a book «China with the eyes of Russian friends».

As Mikhail Titarenko said in the role of chief editor of the book, «the articles which we received, according to their content and topics may be in short described with one Chinese phrase «Let all flowers bloom...». As for the second part of the phrase «... and let a hundred school be rivals» - there is no such rivalry between the authors. All essays, memories and notes are filled with sincere sympathy to Chinese people and its great achievements, its also filled with a deep understanding of huge importance of development and strengthening of good relationships, cooperation and friendship between our people and countries». Of course the book touches upon hard times of 1960-1980, when some conflicts between the two countries took place, but all words about it sound only as a good lesson to contemporaries. Finishing his speech, Titarenko noted, that the Institute of Far East in the last ten years published 250 multifold works about China where the country was shown as a participant of the global dialog of civilizations. These works reflect the price which China had to pay for its achievements and for the image which it has earned. Unfortunately, Chinese people don't know much about these works because of tiny circulation - just 300-500 copies. The academician also attracted his listeners' attention to many books on the long table. They include a wide range of topics - from martial arts and cinema, literature and demographic researches to politics, economy and philosophy. «We as scientists are the flag-bearers of friendship between China and Russia, and this is our mission. We don't embellish China but we show its weak and strong sides as they are, so that people could understand the multiplicity of achievements and difficulties. Russia and China are meant to be together and only having a concept of peaceful

coexistence they could save the unique advantage of their cultures', - said Mikhail Titarenko. The second speaker was the first vice-president of Chinese Foundation of international researches Liu Guchan, who said that the book was dedicated to the decennary of the Pact of friendship and collaboration and it shows the mutual understanding and good relationships, cultural and historical traditions and real life of Chinese people. Twenty authors shared their vivid impressions about bright palette of Chinese reality and about reformations. "I would like to express my gratitude for this wonderful book on behalf of Chinese Foundation of international researches", - he mentioned. Liu Guchan also highly praised now-deceased Igor Rogachev, a former ambassador of Russia in China, deputy of Foreign Affairs Minister, who did a lot to improve friendship among the countries, who was a scientist-sinologist, and his last article, very touching, was also included in the book. The speaker thanked academician Mikhail

Li Hui characterized modern Chinese-Russian relationships in all their variety as "the best period in the history of the two countries relationships", adding that this point is especially important for dynamic development of strategic partnership. Li Hui outlined that both peoples have extreme interest in each other: annually two millions of Russians visit China and a million of Chinese people come to Russia. The embassy will keep relations with the Russian-Chinese friendship society and with the Institute of Far East, improving friendship between countries, - the ambassador added. The project was "genius as an idea and as a real thing", said the representative of Russian diplomatic circles Andrey Kulik, director of Asian department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. The list of authors is so impressive that all texts are trustful. We should do everything to let their words be heard in all social levels, he supposes. "Today in both countries we have a new generation which doesn't remember any "black" pages of his-

ditions", says Vadim Shabalin, one of the authors, IFE member, a scientist, a former diplomat, political and social personality. According to his words, "Chinese patriotism doesn't depend on revolutions, political campaigns and occasional changes", - this people is moved by "a proud singularity, which makes Chinese people very special". And shouldn't we, Russian people, think deeply about the inner sense of this paradigm and to learn wisdom from our great neighbour? The same point is mentioned by Vsevolod Ovchinnikov, a famous international journalist who started his career in China. "The key feature of the country besides continuity of its five-thousand year history, but also deep respect to it. Chinese people used to think their country to be the center of the universe... They are sure that the stones of the past are the steps of the future".

"Some political analysts try to assure Russia that her true ally is the West, and not the East, - the scientist said during the book presentation, - but a

China of the era of "reforms and openness", which managed to rise as a supreme geopolitical power, is also a "stunt" for the world, nothing less...

Titarenko for his contribution to the book creation as the chief editor. Also Liu Guchan expressed his gratitude to the whole team which worked on the book. He said that "China with the eyes of Russian friends" book meant "realization of political spirit of the two countries, aimed at their friendship and strategic partnership". "Innovation" and "precious gift to Chinese people" - that's what Ambassador of China in Russia Li Hui said about the book, expressing hope that it would be the first but not the last one. According to his words, "those pages where authors express their positive impressions and friendly feelings towards Chinese people are equally important as those where they talk about existing problems, and their words worth deep analysis and thinking". Mister

tory and knows only good. And this is a great victory, it's like a precious thing which should be kept carefully - Russian diplomat said. - Partnership between the countries is really total and there is no field missed. Dynamics of our relations and their direction are irreversible now. But we should work further, improving spiritual and social base and keeping to the words - "Forever friends and never enemies!"

"EVERY STONE OF THE PAST IS A STEP TO THE FUTURE"

Chinese perception of their own civil identity is "based not on their belonging to any social system or political regime and not on the cosmopolitan or universal values but on a strong base of their belonging to a great country, with thousand years of history and tra-

country can't change its place of living on the planet. China is a solid strategic rearward of Russia. We should use dynamism of our eastern partner and cling our "far eastern train" to the Chinese locomotive engine. Mission of our countries is to become a Great Silk Road, a bridge between East and West". «To catch Chinese wind with Russian sails" appealed another author - scientist and writer Alexey Lomanov. "we can learn from each other, work together and harmonize each other in peaceful atmosphere. Chinese mentality has a "twoness principle", - Lomanov said, - and now it's time for them to publish a book "Russia with the eyes of Chinese friends".

HIS GREAT SPIRIT EMBRACED THE WORLD

A MEMORY OF CHINGHIZ AITMATOV

Tatiana Kunina



For the second time in my life I had the privilege of seeing the miracle of Issyk-Kul. Once again, I gazed in astonishment at the “precious aquamarine in the silver setting of snowy mountains,” as the famous Russian explorer of Asian mysteries, Pyotr Semyonov-Tyan-Shansky, wrote about the lake. A participant in a conference devoted to integration processes in Central Asia, I was thinking that the choice of the place for such a discussion was just right. The shores of Issyk-Kul are home to the spirit of Chinghiz Aitmatov, the explorer of the world’s spiritual values, the wise man who dreamed of connecting all of the humankind’s Babylonian parts with the threads of his thoughts.

...I saw Chinghiz Aitmatov during the last winter of his life. It was at a news conference at RIA Novosti that was devoted to fighting drug trafficking. The author of *The Scaffold*, the flesh of which is jagged with this horrible problem, Aitmatov was an active participant in the work of international anti-drug organizations.

The magnetism of the great persona kept drawing my eyes to Aitmatov. After the news conference, he came up to me, "Your face seems familiar. Would you remind me where we met?" I said that I had once visited Cholpon-Ata, his family's country house; it was at the time when *The Scaffold* was being written. "Of course," he nodded and then smiled. "I remember now what happened:

"You lived like a lighting, which flashed once and died. But lightings are made in the sky. And the sky is eternal. And this is my consolation."

Chinghiz Aitmatov

my pranksters of children tied your hair to a bench so tightly that we had to use scissors. This mischief was actually a compliment to you: they didn't want you to leave too soon..." We joked recalling the details of the sweet episode that still lived in our memory.

...Then, in Cholpon-Ata, we talked in a beautiful little garden smelling of roses on the shore of Issyk-Kul, listening to the murmur of tea poured in tea bowls and with unbelievable lightness of soul, created by concordant human auras and suggested by the nature. The lake was breathing primeval purity, its waves lazily picking pebbles on the shore. At a distance, the sapphire blue water rocked a huge fleet of all kinds of boats and steamers under self-made white sails. It seemed that heavenly birds had come down to drink the

pure Issyk-Kul water...

That summer, the lake area was hosting a unique international experiment, Issyk-Kul - Batavia. Researchers and students from several universities went out on boats and motorboats every day, led by internationally renowned physicists (Noble Prize winner Peter Kocer, Professor Sergei Lebedev, etc.). They were getting ready to launch neutrino through the thickness of pure Issyk-Kul water (the test white disc is seen here even from a depth of 20 meters). American physicists were to pick up the neutrino at the other end of the Earth, in Batavia. The particles, having passed through the earth, were expected to bring information about its mantle and core.

Aitmatov showed lively interest in the event and pondered how this could give him material for a new novel... After all, he had taken up cosmogenesis when writing *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years*, so why not going down inside the earth? Unfortunately, this creative dream was not to come true. And the experiment could not be completed: the Soviet Union was withering away financially and morally, on its way to breakup.

Aitmatov was eager to discuss anything, but did not say a word about his new book that, word by word, was being extracted from the "world's air" like a statue from stone. There were rumors that it was going to be something grand. I managed to get



“Knowing your language is wealth, but making a foreign language your native is doubling that wealth.”

“We are all in one boat; outside is cosmic eternity.”

“You cannot take away your fatherland like a sack; you can only take away your longing.”

Chinghiz Aitmatov

only one statement from him, “One of the main characters of the new novel will be a blue-eyed she-wolf that mountainous shepherds once told me about...” Later, I learned that he was working on *The Scaffold* at the time. The master wrote in absolute secrecy, giving the completed parts to his wife Maria for typing and editing.

Journalists often asked Aitmatov why he wrote his best works in Russian. I remember him telling a story of how he, six years old at the time, acted as an interpreter from Kyrgyz into Russian. His mother had taken him to his grandmother’s village in the mountains for the summer. The wife of a “public enemy” (Chinghiz’s father, a party official, was shot during the repressions), she had difficulty raising her son, lived as a pariah and relied on her relatives for support. That year, the village was losing lots of cattle to some disease. A veterinary doctor was called in from town, but he was Russian and villagers didn’t understand him. Then the shepherds brought the six-year Chinghiz, who spoke both Russian and Kyrgyz. The young interpreter succeeded in making the parties understand each other.

“I believe the feeling of bilingualism entered my subconscious at that time,” Aitmatov told me. “Knowing your language is wealth, but making a foreign language your native is doubling that wealth. The Russian language opened for me a huge part of the world; it was a big river that took me to the world ocean. So I synthesized the two mentalities, the

two cultures, the fates of the two people in my writing.”

Aitmatov is a wise man among writers. He discovers reality, which is in fact fantastic, brimmed with magic and wrapped in a tragic shadow. His word is like a “cast of eternity.” But his power is not only in strong emotions that fill all of his books, but also in his deep foresight, in the moral “feeling of guilt and responsibility” that he defined. He had this right, since he had a deep understanding of what was happening to people.

His creative retreat was the Kyrgyz village whose life suggested a lot of his characters. “I cannot say what exactly I write about,” the classic would confess. “Separating the idea, the message of a book from the book itself is the same as trying to separate water and flour from baked bread.” However, his idea is transparent: it is unprecedented belief in man, a motif inherent for Aitmatov’s aesthetics, the fundamental message of all of his works, written both in the era of one great country and in the post-Soviet time.

Sovereign Kyrgyzstan sent Chinghiz Aitmatov (as the country’s immaculate image) to Brussels as its ambassador extraordinary to Benelux. Yet his office of a diplomat also was that of a writer. His last books, *Cassandra’s Brand* and *Genghis Khan’s White Cloud* were written with the same economical and stylistically succinct pen. The world of Aitmatov’s books was always created to a special recipe, a personally suffered aesthetic law.

Chinghiz Aitmatov’s novels and stories have numerous bird characters. There is the white mythical bird *Donenbai* (*The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years...*), the mystic polar owl *Aguluk* that shows the way to the earth (*Spotted Dog Running On Seashore*), the story titled *Cranes Fly Early*, mountainous birds in the story *Farewell Gulsary!* “A bird flying high in the sky connects the past, the present and the future, the sea and the earth; moreover, it is also a point of view that allows you to have a broader view of life and its events,” the writer explained his love of birds.

Yedigei, the character of one of Aitmatov’s best known novels, *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years*, says to God, “If it is true that the soul goes somewhere after death... I would like to become a white-tailed kite, so that I would fly and look at my land for as long as I can.”

The writer’s spirit has found its height. Like peasant *Tananbai*, who dreamed of becoming a white eagle after death to spend hours floating high admiring the earth, Aitmatov rose above his native Kyrgyzstan, and his great spirit embraced the entire world...

...I have a book in my home library signed by Aitmatov, and the key words of the inscription are “In the memory of *Issyk-Kul*.” Of course, I remember. The strong birds in the sky, whose flight I admired standing on the lakeshore, tied together the past, the present and the future.

LIN XUGUANG

A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SCO BUSINESS CLUB FOR ST PETERSBURG, CHAIRMAN OF THE UNION OF CHINESE ENTREPRENEURS OF ST. PETERSBURG



Russia and China - the two major world powers, and our relationship is not only a factor of geopolitical stability, but also demonstrate an example of an open international partnership, which is not directed against third countries and promote the development of a better and more just world order. Despite the difficult turns of history, the peoples of Russia and China is not just to maintain good relations. Today, we are even more so understand the strategic advantages of the close bilateral contacts and develop them for the benefit of both countries. Building on this foundation, we have made a breakthrough in the trade and economic cooperation. In 2011, the volume of bilateral trade reached \$ 80 billion, an increase of 40% compared to the previous year. Russia ranks tenth among the major trading partners of

China. With the growth of bilateral trade is increasing the share of investment projects. In recent years direct investment China to Russia increased by more than 70% and reached the level of a few tens of billions of dollars. China actively lends important joint projects. For 20 years in Russia before my eyes changed priorities in the development of business relations between our two countries. In the 90 years of the most actively developing cooperation in light industry. At that time the business was conducted rarely in a civilized people could quickly earn, but just as quickly lose everything. Now the situation has changed significantly. We learned how to work in the Russian legal field, properly allocate investments and implement long-term business projects. Today, we think more and talk about

co-productions and projects, in particular for processing Russian crude. Seems promising market innovative technologies in the industry, namely the production of machinery and electronic equipment of the new generation. At the heart of the Russian-Chinese cooperation at this stage are the global strategic interests of our two countries. Currently, the booming China seeks equal cooperation with the international community in maintaining global and regional stability. In this regard, the strategic partnership with Russia helps China to ensure the rapid development and counter modern threats and challenges.



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