

An Expert Opinion | By Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

## BRI & SCO AND ROLE OF UZBEKISTAN:

Time and again, the Head of States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) through a joint communiqué اعلامیہ reaffirmed کیا اعادہ their support to the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative.

The official statement supports the view that in Central Asia, the BRI is rated as an important tool for promoting a Post-Covid era دور of prosperity خوشحالی and stability استحکام.

In this connection, the signing of a joint declaration اعلان between China and Russia linking the BRI to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in 2015 has further strengthened the role of the BRI.

Russia has become a major supporter of the BRI as most railway routes from China to Europe pass through its territory.

Through the BRI, Russia should be able to rejuvenate دوباره جان some of its regions and create new opportunities in several sectors.

Furthermore, the "Silk Fund", a Chinese state fund dedicated to financing BRI projects, has supported several initiatives in Russia.

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are also fully "engaged" in the BRI. The increasing rail traffic between China and Europe has

opened up new opportunities for both the important countries of Central Asia and of course SCO.

The BRI also supports Uzbekistan National Economic Development Strategy and Kazakhstan's own national development policy "Nurly Zhol" that is focused on updating outdated پرانے infrastructure.

Tajikistan is home to several large BRI infrastructure projects (such as the 4G network deployed تعینات by Huawei). In Kyrgyzstan, several BRI projects have been in the process.

Together with Kyrgyzstan and China, Uzbekistan is developing a new highway that will provide a better connection between Central Asia and China.

Currently, the Republic of Uzbekistan holds the "Chairmanship" of SCO. In this regard, the 2022 annual summit of the SCO Heads of State Council will be held on September 15-16 in Samarkand.

Uzbekistan is one of the founders of the SCO established on June 15, 2001, in Shanghai and has been actively participating in its numerous متعدد activities.

Tashkent previously chaired the Organization three times (2003-2004, 2009-2010 & 2015-2016).

For the period (2017-2021) President of Uzbekistan initiated 45 important proposals and subsequently بعد میں submitted in the SCO summits aimed at increasing the effectiveness of cooperation in political, trade, economic, transport and logistics فوجی نظام و انصرام, innovation جدت and other areas. 22 initiatives of these have already been implemented, 23 are in

the process of being implemented لاگو .

Moreover, at the initiative of Uzbekistan, the “Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure” of the SCO was created in Tashkent which is commendable ستائش قابل achievement.

Furthermore, the Uzbekistan SCO Chairmanship has some strategic priorities ترجیحات. Firstly, complete modernization of SCO to achieve its real scope, utility افادیت, potential and functionality. Secondly, integrated and joint efforts to ensure peace and stability in the SCO space.

Thirdly, immense پناہ ہے socio-economic integration, enhanced cooperation in diverse مختلف sectors of economy, trade, investment, joint venture مشترکہ منصوبہ جات , greater regional connectivity, transport communication interconnectedness باہم. Fourthly, extended cooperation in social development in terms of poverty reduction and ensuring food security.

Fifthly, further strengthening مضبوط بنانے of cultural, humanitarian and healthcare and climate change cooperation among the member countries of the SCO. Being chairman of the SCO, Uzbekistan succeeded in holding about 80 important events not in the country but also in the member countries.

Uzbekistan initiated, coordinated and completed the process of harmonization ہم آہنگ سازی of 37 SCO documents in one year.

Moreover, 30 of these documents were initiated by Uzbekistan,

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev adopted a “holistic” مجموعى and “comprehensive” وسيع policy to further enhance بڑھانا and “integrate” “conceptual”, “contextual” متعلق سے مضمون and strategic importance of the SCO.

Thus institutional expansion of the spheres of interaction in the SCO has been further streamlined لانا سامنے, systemized and strengthened.

New innovative جديد ideas and documents have been submitted under the chairmanship of Uzbekistan mainly; “Transport Connectivity Strategy”, the “Plan for the Development of Intra-Regional Trade”, the “Infrastructure Development Program”, and the establishment of the institution of the “SCO Goodwill Ambassador”.

Furthermore, the “Economic Forum”, the “SCO Industrial Innovation Week”, the “Forum of the Heads of Regions”, the “Forum of Industrial Cooperation”, and the exhibition نمائش of fruits and vegetables “Sunny Uzbekistan” were held which further enhanced the efficacy افادیت of the SCO.

An innovative project “Uzbekistan-SCO industrial zone” is being created in the Samarkand region. It is designed to become an effective mechanism for the implementation of the Program to stimulate فروغ دینا industrial cooperation between the business circles of the SCO countries.

The total population of the SCO countries is almost 3.5 billion, which roughly accounts for half of the world, and the combined GDP is estimated to be exceeding 25 percent of the global GDP. Now SCO is the world’s largest regional

organization.

The total territory of the member countries exceeds 34 million square kilometers, which is more than 60 percent of the territory of the Eurasian continent. It covers three continents: Asia, Europe and Africa.

So SCO holds the key to further socio-economic prosperity خوشحالی and greater regional connectivity in which Uzbekistan being the connecting hub مرکز would play an important role in the days to come.

So BRI-SCO would be an ideal combination to bring peace, stability and prosperity in the region and beyond.

Hopefully, under Uzbekistan's SCO chairmanship, it would lead the member countries towards greater socio-economic integration, resolution of conflicts تنازعات, combating مقابله کرنے state and non-state security threats, smart economies, smart living, green revolution, carbon neutrality, poverty reduction and e-commerce & government etc.

In the past during its chairmanships Uzbekistan streamlined easy & smooth sailing چلانا of the SCO in terms of water diplomacy biodiversity, climate change and delimiting محدود border issues and legal modalities طریقہ کار .

To conclude, for the further strengthening of socio-economic and geopolitical integration, "banking and financial integration" of the SCO member countries is the need of the hour.

Sincere مخلص efforts should be carried out to prepare an "alternative SCO clearing and payment system" in order to

avoid any **imminent** قریب آنے والے، **unilateral** یکطرفہ sanctions پابندیاں of the West.

Last but not the least, promotion of green and **sustainable** پائیدار development, sharing experience and technology in environmental protection and building a beautiful home featuring **harmonious** ہم آہنگ **coexistence** باہمی بقائے between man and nature must be one of the main strategic **priorities** ترجیحات of the SCO 2022.

## FATF & militancy

### Editorial

TWO recent developments – separate but both related to militancy – require the attention of the state as lack of action in these matters can cost the country **dearly** بہت زیادہ in economic terms, along with disturbing internal security.

The first issue concerns **FATF**, the multilateral anti-money laundering and terrorism financing **watchdog** نگران ادارہ.

A **delegation** وفد of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a FATF **affiliate** وابستہ , was recently in the country to monitor **compliance** تعمیل with the watchdog's requirements. It has noted that Pakistan's level of effectiveness is "low" on

10 of 11 anti-money laundering and combating کرنا کے خلاف جنگ کرنا the financing of terror goals, even though the country is compliant with 38 out of 40 technical recommendations سفارشات.

While this is not expected to block Pakistan's exit from the FATF 'grey list' when the body holds its plenary یا ایک میٹنگ next سیشن جس میں تمام شرکاء کانفرنس یا اسمبلی میں شریک ہوں month, it would be in our best interests to ensure all requirements are met so that there are no lacunae کمی which hostile دشمن actors can exploit کرنا to keep Pakistan on this unenviable ناگوار list.

While it appears Pakistan is consistently مسلسل being asked to 'do more' on terror financing, we have little choice in the matter. Among the areas flagged نشان زد کیا گیا for improvement is the need to investigate and prosecute مقدمہ چلایا جانا those involved in money laundering; FATF also wants improvement in the prosecution of individuals involved in terror financing, and the disruption رکاوٹ، خلل of their networks. Pakistan – already facing an economic crisis compounded مزید بڑھنا by the devastating floods – simply cannot afford to ignore this matter, as being put back on the grey list will impact the country's ability to attract foreign investment and trade freely with the world.

That is why the state must do all possible to take Pakistan off the grey list permanently. That said, the foreign powers that are influential بااثر in FATF must also deal with Pakistan's case on merit, and not be swayed متاثر by geopolitical

considerations or the influence of states hostile to this country.

The second issue of importance concerns the return of **militancy** عسکریت پسندی in KP's merged tribal districts and their **adjacent** ملحقہ regions.

The issue was recently raised in the KP Assembly, with opposition lawmakers **hammering** تنقید کرنا the PTI's provincial government for its 'poor' response to the renewed threat. They pointed to the rising incidents of gun attacks, targeted killings and **extortion** خوری بھتہ in the sensitive area, while it was also said that militants were **roaming** گھومنا around freely in parts of the province. One ANP member went as far as to **accuse** الزام دینا the provincial administration of playing the role of "Taliban facilitator".

Also, families from Tirah in Khyber district have started to **flee** فرار ہونا after **TTP** fighters were reportedly spotted in the region.

Moreover, Tuesday's bombing in Swat's Kabal area indicates that such fears are not **unfounded** بے بنیاد.

The state can ill afford to ignore these warning signs. There must be **transparency** شفافیت **vis-à-vis** the status of **negotiations** مذاکرات with the TTP, while under no circumstances should space be given to these **bloodthirsty** خون کے پیاسے actors to do as they please.



## SCO

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is a Eurasian political, economic and security organization. In terms of geographic scope and population, it is the world's largest regional organization, covering approximately 60% of the area of Eurasia, 40% of the world population, and more than 30% of global GDP.

Headquarters: Beijing, China

Founded: June 15, 2001

## BRI

The Belt and Road Initiative, formerly known as One Belt One Road or OBOR for short, is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 to invest in nearly 150 countries and international organizations.

Planned completion date: 2049

The **Eurasian Economic Union** (EAEU or EEU) is an economic union of some post-Soviet states located in Eurasia. The Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union was signed on 29 May 2014 by the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia, and came into force on 1 January 2015

The **Silk Road Fund** ) is a state-owned investment fund of the Chinese government to foster increased investment in countries along the One Belt, One Road, an economic development initiative primarily covering Eurasia. The Chinese government pledged US\$40 billion for the creation of the investment fund established on 29 December 2014.

**Nurly Zhol** is a US\$9 billion domestic economic stimulus plan to develop and modernize roads, railways, ports, IT infrastructure, and education and civil services in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Nurly Zhol plan was announced by Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev in November 2014

**GDP** stands for "Gross Domestic Product" and represents the total monetary value of all final goods and services produced (and sold on the market) within a country during a period of time (typically 1 year). GDP is the most commonly used measure of economic activity.

**Eurasia** is the largest continental area on Earth, comprising all of Europe and Asia. Primarily in the Northern and Eastern Hemispheres, it spans from the British Isles and the Iberian Peninsula in the west to the Japanese archipelago and the Russian Far East in the east

**Water diplomacy** can be defined as the use of diplomatic instruments to existing or emerging disagreements and conflicts over shared water resources with the aim to solve or mitigate those for the sake of cooperation, regional stability, and peace

**Biodiversity** is all the different kinds of life you'll find in one area—the variety of animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms like bacteria that make up our natural world. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems, like an intricate web, to maintain balance and support life

### **FATF**

The Financial Action Task Force, also known by its French name, Groupe d'action financière, is an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1989 on the initiative of the G7 to develop policies to combat money laundering. In 2001, its mandate was expanded to include terrorism financing.

### **TTP**

Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, commonly known as the Pakistani Taliban, is an umbrella organization of various Islamist armed militant groups operating along the Afghan–Pakistani border. Formed in 2007 by Baitullah Mehsud, its current leader is Noor Wali Mehsud, who has publicly pledged allegiance to the Afghan Taliban.

### **vis-à-vis**

preposition

in relation to; with regard to.

"many agencies now have a unit to deal with women's needs  
vis-à-vis employment

## Today's words Synonyms

rejuvenate (verb): revive; revitalize; renew.

unenviable (adjective): disagreeable; unpleasant; undesirable.

modality (noun): method, mode, paradigm.

efficacy (noun): effectiveness; power; benefit.

lacunae (noun): cavity, depression, gap.

extortion (noun): extraction; blackmail; shakedown.

sustenance (noun): support; maintenance; food.

rapacious (adjective): grasping; greedy; avaricious.

imbroglio (noun): complication; complexity; problem.

detention (noun): custody; imprisonment; confinement.