

Afghanistan-Centered Regional Cooperation and Integration

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Outline

- Overview and importance of regional cooperation in the national agenda;
- Policy and Institutional frameworks for regional cooperation in Afghanistan;
- Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF);
- Afghanistan Centered Regional Cooperation Frameworks;
 - Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA);
 - Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process;

Overview and Importance of Regional Cooperation for Afghanistan

- In the past 16 years, regional cooperation in general and regional economic cooperation in particular, has been a top priority for the government of Afghanistan;
- Regional Cooperation is the key pillar of Afghanistan foreign policy,
- Regional and neighboring countries are located in the first circle of current foreign policy of Afghanistan, therefore regional cooperation is of high importance to this end;
- Cooperation and interaction with regional and international organizations forms the fifth circle of Afghanistan foreign policy;

Overview and Importance of Regional Cooperation for Afghanistan

- Regional economic cooperation is one of the important priorities in the Afghanistan development agenda;
- Regional cooperation has been also considered as an important part of the security policy of Afghanistan;

Policy and Institutional framework for regional cooperation in Afghanistan

- 1. ANPDF) In Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework enhancing of regional integration has been mentioned as one of the priorities, and regional economic cooperation as an important enabler of economic growth;
- 1.1. NPPs) In National Priority Programs, regional connectivity is one of it's important component;
- In other national priority programs the importance of regional projects and activities has been highlighted;

Policy and Institutional framework for regional cooperation in Afghanistan

- 1.2. Infrastructure Development Council) Infrastructure Development Council has been established under the framework of ANPDF, to discuss regional infrastructure and connectivity programs and activities;

Afghanistan Centered Regional Cooperation Frameworks

1. RECCA

RECCA Regional Economic
Cooperation
Conference on Afghanistan

2. Heart of Asia–Istanbul Process



Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA)

- Established in 2005, RECCA has gradually witnessed an increasing number of participating countries and organizations with reached 67 countries and organizations in the RECCA-VII (Ashgabat, 14-15 November 2017);
- RECCA has turned into a leading regional cooperation framework aimed at promoting cross-border economic cooperation through a list of prioritized regional economic cooperation and investment projects that are capable of contributing to economic growth, job creation, income generation and confidence building in the wider Central, South and Southwest Asia and beyond;

Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA);

- **Structure:**

- ❖ Ministerial Meeting

- ❖ Academic Forum

- ❖ Youth Forum

- ❖ Business Forum

- ❖ Inter-ministerial Meeting

- ❖ Ambassadorial Coordination Meeting

- ❖ RECCA National Focal Points Meeting

- ❖ Special Events

Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA)

RECCA Ministerial Meetings

- 2005: RECCA I – Kabul
- 2006: RECCA II – New Delhi
- 2009: RECCA III – Islamabad
- 2010: RECCA IV – Istanbul
- 2012: RECCA V – Dushanbe
- 2015: RECCA VI – Kabul
- 2017: RECCA VII – Ashgabat
- 2019: RECCA VIII - ?

Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA)

- The Seventh Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan
 - RECCA-VII was convened under the theme (Deepening Connectivity & Expanding Trade Through Investment in Infrastructure & Improving Synergy) at a ministerial level with the participation of 67 delegations from RECCA regional and partner countries, and organizations in Ashgabat, on 14-15 November 2017.



RECCA Priority Projects

Energy

- Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Natural Gas Pipeline (TAPI)
- Central Asia-South Asia Regional Energy Market (CASA-1000)
- Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan 500-KV Line (TAP-500)

Transport Networks

- The Belt and Road Initiative and Afghanistan
- Lapis-Lazuli Trade and Transit Route
- Chabahar Corridor
- Five Nation Railway Corridor
- Afghanistan Rail Network
- Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project

RECCA Priority Projects

Trade & Transit Facilitation

- Cross-Border Transport Agreement & TIR Convention
- Special Economic Zones, Multimodal Transport & Logistics Facilities
- Regional Customs & Border Management Cooperation

Communications

- Digital Silk Road

RECCA Priority Projects

B2B & Labor Support

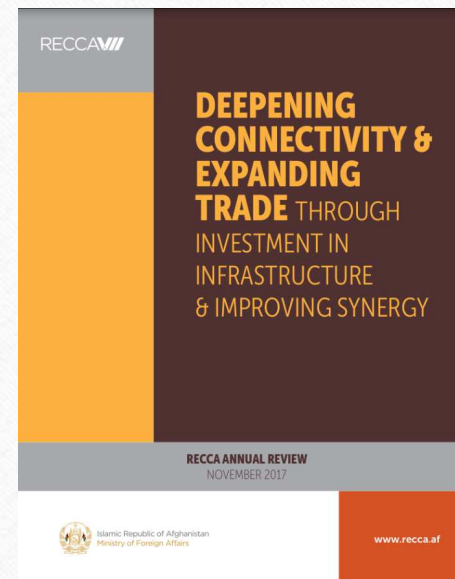
- Enhancing Regional B2B Partnership through a RECCA Chamber of Commerce & Industries
- Women's Economic Empowerment through Regional Economic Cooperation
- Labor Exchange and Remittances
- Regional Agro Food Industry Development

Research, Monitoring & Evaluation

- RECCA Center for Research & Evaluation

Policy Documents in the RECCA Framework

- RECCA Annual Review;
- RECCA Outcome documents;
- RECCA Policy Papers;
- ✓ How can Regional Economic Cooperation be Accelerated within the RECCA Region?
- ✓ Empowering Women Entrepreneurs Towards Access to Markets



RECCA 2.0

- Enable the RECCA National Focal Points to pull together and support the various RECCA 2.0 approach tracks;
- Establish a RECCA Center for Research and Evaluation;
- Stand-up a RECCA Chamber of Commerce & Industries to help mobilize governments and national chambers of commerce in support of Investment-Road-Shows, Business Forums, and wider B2B Cooperation;
- Prioritize women economic empowerment through regional economic cooperation;

RECCA 2.0

- Build strategic partnership between RECCA and other regional organizations and initiatives;
- Continue efforts to transform the RECCA website into an interactive web-portal for regional investment promotion and knowledge sharing;
- Synergies with the Afghan government Infrastructure Development Council;

Hear of Asia – Istanbul Process



Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process

- HoA-IP is also one of the Afghanistan centered regional cooperation frameworks;
- The HoA-IP was created in 2011 with aim of strengthening of regional confidence building and enhancing economic, security and political cooperation;
- The HoA-IP containing 14 participating countries, 16 supporting countries and 12 regional and international organizations;
- The HoA-IP includes three main pillars:
 - Political Consultations;
 - Confidence Building Measures;
 - Cooperation with Regional Organizations;

Confidence Building Measures of HoA-IP

- CBM on counter narcotics led jointly by Russia and Azerbaijan;
- CBM on counter terrorism led jointly by Afghanistan, Turkey and UAE;
- CBM on disaster management led jointly by Kazakhstan and Pakistan;
- CBM on education led by Iran;
- CBM on regional infrastructure led jointly by Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan;
- CBM on trade commerce and investment led by India;

Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process

HoA-IP ministerial meetings in the past:

- 2011, Istanbul;
- 2012, Kabul;
- 2013, Astana;
- 2014, Beijing;
- 2015, Islamabad;
- 2016, Amritsar, India;
- 2017, Baku;
- 2018, Scheduled in Istanbul;

Policy Documents in the HoA-IP Framework

- **Annual Review:**

- The secretariat of the HoA-IP prepare annual reviews on progress in the three main areas: Political Consultations, Regional Technical Groups on Confidence Building Measures and Cooperation with Regional Organizations;

- **Outcome documents:**

- the declaration of the seventh ministerial meeting of HoA-IP contains the following issues: counter terrorism, counter narcotics and organized crime, migration, role of international community, interaction with regional organizations, peace and reconciliation efforts, regional economic cooperation centered on regional projects and confidence building measures;



Thank you for your attention!