Dialogue among Civilizations

High-Level Conference
Eurasia in the XXIst Century:
Dialogue of Cultures, or Conflict of Civilizations?

Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan, 10 and 11 June 2004

UNESCO

Askar Akaev
Koïchiro Matsuura

Emomali Sharipovich Rahmonov
Said Mahmud Rahin
Elcin Ilyas-ogly Efendiev
Mohammad Ali Abtahi
Byrganym Sarievna Aitimova
Rais Munir Ahmed
Eleonora Mitrofanova
Huseyin Celik
Sergei Ordzhonikidze
Ara A. Abramian
Chjan Yannyan

with messages from
Vladimir Putin and
Seyyed Mohammad Khatami

Askar Akaev
Ko chiro Matsuura

Emomali Sharipovich Rahmonov
Said Mahmud Rahin
Elcin Ilyas-ogly Efendiev
Mohammad Ali Abtahi
Byrganym Sarievna Aitimova
Rais Munir Ahmed
Eleonora Mitrofanova
Huseyin Celik
Sergei Ordzhonikidze
Ara A. Abramian
Chjan Yannyan

with a message from Vladimir Putin and
Seyyed Mohammad Khatami

Dialogue among Civilizations

High-Level Conference

Eurasia in the XXIst Century:
Dialogue of Cultures, or Conflict of Civilizations?

Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan, 10 and 11 June 2004

Co-organized by
the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the
National Commission of the Kyrgyz Republic for UNESCO

Foreword

The proceedings of the Issyk-Kul high-level conference on "Eurasia in the XXIst Century: Dialogue of Cultures – or Conflict of Civilizations?" capture the constructive discussions held on the shores of Lake Issyk-Kul on 10 and 11 June 2004 on a subject of increasing relevance. The conference, jointly organized by the Presidency of the Kyrgyz Republic and UNESCO, focused on the dialogue in Eurasia with a view to countering the misguided notion of a clash among civilizations, both within and among the countries of the region. It followed a series of similar events that I have organized in collaboration with Member States, UN system agencies and regional intergovernmental organizations since the United Nations Year for Dialogue among Civilizations in 2001.

This publication is the tenth in the "Dialogue" series, contributing to a growing body of academic materials, studies and research. The aim throughout has been to bolster policy dialogue, reflect upon lessons learnt and stimulate concrete forms of action in various fields within the framework of the "dialogue among civilizations" process. UNESCO has sought to promote better understanding and knowledge of others in order to avoid potential clashes of ignorance between cultures, civilizations and peoples.
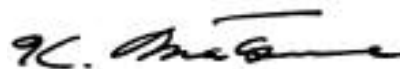
Meeting at Issyk-Kul on the Great Silk Route, political leaders and experts addressed issues relating to shared values, cultural diversity and heritage as well as – a novelty in the international debate – water and sustainable development. Their goal was to identify concrete measures for

the promotion of dialogue and for removing barriers based on prejudice, ignorance and misunderstanding between the peoples of the Eurasian region. Thus, the conference also was in line with UNESCO's new policy to increasingly focus its dialogue endeavours upon regional and sub-regional situations.

The conference, attended by two Presidents, a Vice-President and several senior Ministers, in addition to many leading experts and scholars, broke new ground for Central Asia. Through its outcome document - "The Issyk-Kul Declaration on Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations in Eurasia" – the conference succeeded in elaborating concrete proposals for future action and engagement. Indeed, the Declaration contains several practical proposals for implementation at the sub-regional and regional levels. Emphasis is placed on the pivotal role played by education and the potential of cultural diversity as a vector for dialogue, while issues pertaining to water resources and human security are acknowledged as new and fertile areas for the development of dialogue.

The Proceedings contain statements from Heads of State of the region or their representatives, from international and regional intergovernmental organizations active in Central Asia and from eminent experts, representatives of civil society, academic specialists, spiritual leaders, artists and media professionals. Altogether, the conference attracted participants from over 50 countries within and outside the region.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to the Government and people of Kyrgyzstan for the excellent organization of the conference; the arrangements contributed enormously to the constructive results achieved. The conference programme and associated cultural events, including the 75th birthday celebrations of the world-renowned Kyrgyz writer and diplomat Chingiz Aitmatov, generated a stimulating experience that will live long in the memory of those who took part.

Ko chiro Matsuura
Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Contents

PART I

Message

PART II

Papers presented to the Conference

PART III

The Issyk-Kul Declaration on Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations in Eurasia

We, the participants of the International Conference "Eurasia in XXI Century - Dialogue of Cultures or the Conflict of Civilizations?", convened at the initiative of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Mr. Askar Akaev, together with the Director-General of UNESCO, H.E. Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura;

Welcoming the presence of the President of Tajikistan, H.E. Mr.Emomali Rahmonov; the personal representatives of the Heads of State of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Turkmenistan; the representatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Eurasian Economic Community and the International Fund for the Aral Sea; as well as high-level participants and specialists from some 50 countries;

Expressing its appreciation for the video message delivered by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran;

Encouraged by the participation of personalities and eminent experts, representatives of civil society, academia and science, spiritual leaders, the artistic community, and the media hailing both from the region and from many neighbouring countries and countries outside the region;

Convinced that sustainable and peaceful development is only possible through open and continuous co-operation and dialogue among actors of civil society, States and regions;

Imbued by the dynamism of cultural diversity prevailing in the Eurasian region with its multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic and multi-religious characteristics;

Inspired by the Global Agenda for Dialogue between Civilisations, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 21 November 2001 (resolution 56/6) and by the resolution adopted by the UNESCO General Conference on 16 October 2003 (resolution 47), setting out new perspectives and concrete action for the Organization's work in the area of dialogue among cultures and civilizations;

Recalling previous conferences organized by Kyrgyzstan and UNESCO on "Ideas of Tolerance in Central Asia and Early Warnings of Conflicts" (1996), "Culture and Religion in Central Asia" (1999), "Intercultural and Inter-religious Dialogue as part of Dialogue among Civilizations" (2001);

I. Welcome the timeliness of the Issyk-Kul International Conference, which has allowed to identify concrete measures for the promotion of dialogue and for countering and removing barriers, prejudices and ignorances between the countries and peoples of the Eurasian continent;

II. Applaud the collective commitment expressed by all leaders participating in the conference to dialogue, good governance, sustainable development and cultural diversity;

III. Enjoin all peoples and countries of Eurasia, their youth and political decision-makers to engage in and practice dialogue, aimed at building and strengthening mutual understanding, trust, respect for the Other and cultural diversity, democratic practices and co-operation with the aim of securing peace, development and prosperity throughout the region;

IV. Invite international and in particular regional organizations to facilitate such dialogue and to engage in exchanges among themselves with a view to sharing experiences and identifying best practices;

V. Express our profound appreciation to H.E. President Askar Akaev, the Government and the people of Kyrgyzstan for their gracious

hospitality and for the excellent arrangements made ensuring the success of the International Conference;

VI.   Commend the Director-General of UNESCO, H.E. Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, for the effective and generous support provided;

VII. Join in the joy and celebrations of the 75th birthday of Mr. Chingiz Aitmatov, distinguished son of Kyrgyzstan, internationally acclaimed novelist and writer, humanist and Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the International Conference;

VIII. Hereby unanimously adopt the

Issyk-Kul Declaration on Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations in Eurasia:

1.   For centuries, Eurasia has been at the crossroads of continents, philosophies, ideologies, trade routes and geopolitical and strategic processes and interests. It is a multi-ethnic and multi-faith region, which embodies characteristics and manifestations of both East and West. It has experienced a rich history of interaction, confrontations, co-existence, dialogues and conflicts. Owing to the interpenetration of different traditions, customs and practices, Eurasia has become home for diverse cultures, providing an environment within which the rich experience, aspirations and customs of nations can be effectively shared. Since ancient times, in particular during the era of the Great Silk Route, cultural values as well as material values and riches have moved between East and West.

2.   In Kyrgyzstan, many imprints have been left from historical dialogues, which have provided linkages and bridges between regions, cultures and civilizations. As a modernizing Central Asian state, Kyrgyzstan today sets an example by pursuing through dialogue a greater integration into the globalizing world economy, at a time when new and multifaceted threats to peace and stability have thrust the region again into the international limelight. President Akaev's proposed grand design for a new "Diplomacy of the Silk Road" responds imaginatively to these challenges. This initiative should be accompanied by concrete steps and modalities aimed at regional integration, providing the economic foundations for sustainable development of the region, including through the promotion of free trade, investment and the sharing of innovative solutions. Central Asian countries should further be encouraged to revive and create new international transport-communication routes

and corridors through joint infrastructure projects, to develop tourism, and to share know-how using information and communication technologies (ICTs).

3. Under conditions of globalization, major developments in Eurasian life and culture have acquired an international dimension. Indisputably, globalization begets dialogue and international cooperation. Since the early 1990s, Central Asian countries have advanced in creating modern, secular, and open democratic societies. All these newly independent countries are now going through periods of transition that are driven by complex socio-political processes calling for continuous dialogue on a number of burning issues, including trafficking in drugs and human beings and transnational crime. By moving toward mutual trust, dialogue, social harmony and peace, the states of the region can embark on a most promising journey together. This path must be pursued with a view to constructing genuinely democratic and plural multilingual and multi-ethnic societies, respectful of human rights and ready to cope with the challenges and requirements of the 21st century while remaining true to the spirit of Central Asian contexts and realities. The region as a whole is also called to consolidate its policy responses to these challenges and opportunities, searching for new avenues of socio-economic and political development, and for a more dynamic interaction with the world community. Prosperity and security are inextricably linked.

4. Strong emphasis must be placed on tackling the roots of potential conflicts, by reducing inequalities, combating poverty, enhancing governance and creating necessary conditions for peace. The interaction of cultures and communities is an integral feature of, and precondition for, social progress, the strengthening of socio-cultural pluralism and cultural diversity in the region.

5. Today a multi-level and multi-pronged dialogue must be initiated and fostered both among and within civilizations with a view to developing the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous life of future generations. A major line of dialogue should aim at a synthesis between the values of rights, democracy and autonomy on the one hand and those of responsibilities, community and social order on the other hand. Contemporary trends of nationalism, separatism, and religious extremism as well as the threat of armed conflict call for increased intercultural and intra-civilisational dialogue in the Eurasian geopolitical space. Such

dialogue must categorically denounce, if not ostracize terrorism, extremism, violence and hatred.

6. Nurturing democracy, protecting human rights and promoting social development are indispensable ingredients for a prosperous Eurasia as are partnerships between peoples and countries in the region. Open democratic processes provide the fertile soil for cultures to blossom provided there is freedom for creative expression for all.

7. The notion of a clash between civilizations is not our collective destiny, as we live in an era of globalization, integration and mutual exchange. Setting up a divide between irreconcilable alternatives flies in the face of historical experience and actual dynamic intercultural interactions and exchanges. Yet, a well-founded and honest dialogue among civilizations and cultures is no minor endeavour. Genuine dialogue based on openness towards the Other and an open-endedness of discussion is vital in opening up space for a deeper understanding of the diverse nature of the human family. It helps to shed misconceptions, dispel misperceptions and stereotypes, reveal differences, and generate confidence and trust.

Shared values as a framework for constructive interaction and sustained dialogue

8. Respect for certain core universal values and ethical principles, such as tolerance, human rights, democracy and the rule of law and respect for cultural diversity, are universally shared and transcend all civilizations. They are central to the concept of our common humanity, as is respect for cultural diversity. Dialogue must therefore focus on the centrality of shared values, which confer meaning to life and provide form and substance to human identities. The development of democratic societies is impossible without the capacity of each citizen to integrate his or her values and principles with the values of other socio-cultural groups. Here dialogue is essential. But security is a pre-requisite for the ability of the region to share values and to cooperate fully in trade and social development.

9. In all these processes, education plays a pivotal role. Educational solutions to many of the regional challenges are of paramount importance, underpinning virtually all other aspects, such as regional integration, security and political as well as economic viability.

10. In this area, we call for the following action: Countries of the region should establish both a permanent security structure for the region and an institutionalised mechanism to foster regularly dialogue and mutual understanding on critical issues in the Eurasian geopolitical space, based on shared values and principles;

a) Governments should foster people-to-people contacts through cultural exchanges and the exchange of scholars, students, and media personnel;

b) Consideration should be given to creating a new "Silk Road Project" aimed at gathering knowledge of religions of all Silk Road peoples, including Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism and other faiths, so that greater understanding could be achieved between the peoples of the region, and by the world at large, helping to formulate common ethics and values.

c) Governments should adapt educational programmes, harmonise curricula and develop suitable textbooks and learning materials to impart values education with a view to 'learning to live together", including through multi-lingual education emphasizing mother tongues; UNESCO should be invited to assist in these endeavours;

d) Governments should link educational reforms with the practice of democratic values, activities to promote the observance of human rights, and advocate non-violence;

e) Governments and UNESCO should explore and promote the introduction of a region-wide approach to teacher training;

f) Within the context of education, UNESCO, other international organizations and professional associations should offer training to journalists so as to enhance the level of professionalism in the regional media thereby countering trends towards control and censorship;

g) Institutes of Central Asian Studies should be formed in all regions of the world in order to foster better knowledge and understanding of the region.

The role and potential of cultural diversity as a vector for dialogue

11. The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) underscores that policies for the inclusion and participation of all

citizens are guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society and peace. Cultural diversity denotes the human and societal capacity for expression, creation and innovation, as well as for reconciliation. It benefits from dialogue and interaction within and between societies.

12. The cultures of the region must be enriched by new possibilities of expression, which may require changes in individual and societal norms, values and practices.

13. The role of tangible and intangible cultural heritage is paramount. Indeed, heritage is an increasingly significant vector of identity and reconciliation. Intangible cultural heritage in particular is endangered and the recent adoption of the UNESCO Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage is a signal action for more pro-active international action. Early ratification of this new international instrument will be crucial as it will provide Member States with mechanisms of assistance for the identification, safeguarding and promotion of forms of expression of the intangible cultural heritage. It will also stimulate the exchange of information, experience and joint initiatives in the field of safeguarding.

14. Kyrgyzstan is not only an example of what could be called 'living cultural diversity', but also of a unique cultural heritage. The recent proclamation of the traditional Kyrgyz musicians and storytellers, the Akyns, as Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity clearly underlines this and is welcomed as a recognition of the region's inherent cultural riches and diversity. This follows on the proclamation of the Cultural Space of Boysun District of Uzbekistan as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2001.

15. In this area, we call for the following action:
    a) Governments should agree to reject ideological approaches to any element of common cultural heritage;
    b) Governments should establish a Regional Forum for Dialogue among practitioners in the cultural field;
    c) Cultural dialogue aimed at peace-building at national, regional, and global levels should be supported by Governments, international and regional organizations, the private sector and foundations;
    d) Support should also be solicited for publications aimed at underpinning integration, peace-building exercises and trans-cultural understanding;

e) The countries of the region should act to ensure early ratification of the Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage;

f) UNESCO should recognize to a greater extent the breadth and wealth of the region's intangible cultural heritage, which will be of significance for the development of the entire region.

Water resources and the quest for human security as a new dimension of dialogue

16. Peaceful cooperation and synergies in the region can be advanced by focusing on water, sustainable development and human security at large. Pollution and environmental degradation in the region may jeopardize the management of scarce resources, shared across national boundaries, and impinge on human security. Water, with its trans-cultural symbolic significance, not only has the power to unite but also to cause tensions and conflicts if not addressed adequately. Water can generate tensions between States and within a State – or it can lead to cooperation. The countries of Central Asia benefit from possessing rich natural resources, including oil, gold and the most precious of all, water. The issue of water and its management has become of strategic importance for sustainable development, national well-being and the security of all States of the region – requiring cooperation and dialogue between countries sharing water resources. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in 2002 in Johannesburg, affirmed that one of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals is that both the number of people living in extreme poverty and those being without access to safe drinking water and sanitation should be halved by the year 2015.

17. Geopolitical changes, agricultural demands, energy requirements, urbanization, economic and industrial growth all impact on the water situation and the management of water resources in the region – in complex and highly interdependent ways as can be seen in the five-country Aral Sea Basin, which relies on water resources from the Syr-Darya and the Amu-Darya rivers. These pressures often give rise to tensions and even conflicts, due to the fact that freshwater resources do not correspond to political borders and that spatially they are not evenly distributed.

18. Central Asian countries in particular will be challenged to mount a huge effort aimed at improving water supplies and quality and to reinforce regional cooperation among the countries concerned

through regular and institutionalised dialogue. Bodies like the Interstate Coordinating Water Commission between Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan can help chart and implement effective cooperative approaches. Water has always been a vector of dialogue in the region, involving people at grassroots and local levels, but it merits increased attention given the changing global and regional trends.

19.	In this area, we call for the following action:

a)	Governments should intensify their cooperation and interaction on issues pertaining to water and sustainable development and encourage the formation of informal or semi-formal partnerships involving other actors;

b)	International financing institutions, donor governments and the private sector partners should provide urgent assistance to and funding for irrigation infrastructure projects to foster the sustainable use of water resources and sustainable agricultural production;

c)	Governments at all levels should pay greater attention to the revitalization of traditional water harvesting technologies which have proved their sustainability;

d)	Collaboration between sub-national, national or regional authorities should be encouraged and the development and implementation of concrete projects should be supported, such as the Greater Altai project;

e)	Research should be undertaken to explore ways in which traditional technologies have helped to decrease water-related conflicts with a view to drawing lessons for the future;

f)	Governments and UNESCO are encouraged to support the creation of regional and interregional centres dealing with various aspects of water-related issues in the Eurasia region, also making use of the modality of dialogue.

20.	Dialogue must be built in the present to bear its true fruits in the future. The Appeal presented to us by the Assembly of Associated Schools of UNESCO from Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan was not only moving and timely, it was straight to the point. The successor generation expects from us to take all measures to prevent the outbreak of inter-communal and international conflict, to create the legal basis for peace and development of all nationalities living in a state, to be guided by the precept "we are different, but we are equal", to conduct policies on the basis of mutual respect and

dialogue, and to avoid any action hurting the elderly and children. Their expectations and their unambiguous "No" to national and religious strife, to acts of violence and to the killing of innocent people must be our sacred obligation!

adopted by the International Conference
"Eurasia in the 21st Century –
Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations?"
Cholpon-Ata, Lake Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyz Republic
11 June 2004

Rukh-Ordo" historical cultural center in Cholpon-Ata, Lake Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyz Republic

PART I

Statements

Askar Akaev
President of the Kyrgyz Republic

On behalf of all participants of this event, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, the Director-General of UNESCO whose support to this international conference was instrumental. I would also like to extend my cordial welcome to all eminent guests who honored us by their presence. The list of our guests includes a number of prominent researchers and experts from Russia, the United States and other countries. Their participation raises the level of the conference and attaches it an appropriate significance in theoretical and practical aspects. The chair of the conference is our prominent writer - a classic of world literature, a social and political figure, the renowned intellectual and thinker Chingiz Aitmatov.

Each participant has his own in-depth understanding of the spirit of processes evolving currently in the world, a conceptual vision of the character of development of Eurasia in the XXIst century, and a personal approach to such a complex scientific and practical subject as the dialogue of cultures and the conflict of civilizations.

The subject of this conference interests people across all continents and countries. The XXIst century, having not rid the world from the burden of earlier troubles, has brought to humankind new threats and challenges. Again and again, international terrorism manifests itself by sinister actions and expands its geographical scope. The scale of poverty and misery increases in many regions, while globalization, which victoriously marches across the globe, has not yet brought about the much-anticipated relief.

The unseen acceleration of global economic, social, and political processes under modern conditions, demands from politicians and statesmen, as well as from responsible civic movements, dynamic actions that adequately respond to the character of the prevailing situation in the world.

There are two global and historical occurrences in the title of this conference – culture and civilization. These are not recent or transient creations of humankind, rather these are ancient phenomenon, tested by human historical experience. This subject becomes topical in light of the polemic that evolves around it: what is prevailing in culture and civilizations – a dialogue or conflict?

Conflict was never attributed to inter-cultural relationship in a traditional human perception, also among intellectuals. The essence of culture, imminently vested in its interior as an organic aggregate of a

meaning of human life, cultural and material values, born by creative activity of a human being, rules out the existence of conflict between cultures of different epochs, continents and nations. This in turn suggests a unilateral answer to the question about interaction of cultures, which primordially and organically are built on the basis of a dialogue, collaboration, mutual understanding, mutual penetration, and finally, mutual enrichment. A different approach would have contradicted human experience and a multi-century historical experience.

Already in ancient times, in the era of the Great Silk Route, outstanding cultural values moved from the East to the West, not to mention material values. This is moreover true in our time, when major events in Eurasian life and culture are acquiring an international dimension.

The evidence of this for Kyrgyzstan were the events related to 1000th anniversary of the "Manas" heroic epic and 2200th anniversary of the Kyrgyz State commemorated in accordance with UN and UNESCO resolutions.

A number of research works focus on the role of civilization in human history. Among the most known are the works by British historian Arnold Toynbee, the German philosopher Oskar Spengler, the Russian scientists P. Sorokin, N. Danilevskyi, N. Trubetskoy and others. Until recently this problem had a more scientific and academic nature. The research intensified ten years ago, in 1994, when Samuel Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations" predicted the emergence of "hot fronts" at the "breaking lines" between world civilizations. A special sinister role was attributed to Islam with its alleged bloody trace in history. Later a new book by Huntington, called "The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order", propagated in somewhat milder terms the same ideas. The Huntington concept was widely picked up and supported by some scientists – and vigorously rejected by others.

In recent times, some American researchers seem to have grown distrustful of the ideas of Huntington and depict them as politically biased, yet the ideology of the "clash of civilizations" has entered into international discourse and any attempt to discard it is senseless from an academic point of view. There must me a reasoned response, to be touched upon during this Conference.

Allow me to express my own viewpoint on this subject. In "Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations" these two phenomena come forth from opposing, almost conflicting positions. To what extent is such an approach justified?

I became involved with this problem while working on the book "The Kyrgyz Statehood and the People's Epic of Manas" which soughts to integrate the historical way of the Kyrgyz people into the Eurasian and world historical context. The ideas of Toynbee and a prominent Russian scientist Lev Gumilev helped in finding a way to analyse the large amount of information. In the research context, Huntington's concept about the clash of civilizations invoked my immediate aversion.

As an academic who adheres to a universally-evolutionist vision of nature and society, I believe that the history of humankind, despite its diachronic nature of development of its certain discrete elements, represents a gradual move from late Stone Age - through millennia - to modernity, in accordance with the laws of self-organization. Over the past few years, certain convincing facts appeared in scientific literature regarding the single fore-motherland or fore-tribe of humans. In the ancient past, a primary human fore-tribe emerged and spread along different azimuths, having started this way different races and peoples that inhabited our planet. All modern cultures and civilizations - in the light of this discovery - have common genetic roots, which extend from a single live substance that emerged on Earth, under certain conditions, and localized in those days in certain parts of Africa.

Culture in its essence is not an abstract concept. It is permanently and smoothly linked with human practice, being an indivisible part of the life of world human civilizations. There could not be a phenomenon outside the culture of civilizations. Under such an approach the existential character of civilization is organically linked with and goes in hand with a culture, ripening in the interior. Decisively rejecting the thesis about the clash of cultures, it rejects also the thesis about an internal genetic code of conflict.

In the light of the above-mentioned ideas, another issue arises – why, and at what stage, could the concept of "clash of civilizations" come into being? Huntington believes that this phenomenon was "screened" in the days of "cold war" by the processes that emerged as a result of confrontation of two blocks. When this obstacle disappeared, inter-civilizational confrontation came to the front, which could radically change the life of the world and go as far as to create the "hot fronts" at the "breaking lines" of civilizations. If civilizations were inherently prone to conflicts, this inclination would have occurred also during the "cold war", as a powerful underground that springs to the surface overcoming every obstacle in its way.

I think that the concept of "clash of civilizations" was conceived in the early 1990s as an outcome of ever-increasing globalization. The

information networks that linked the entire world have vividly demonstrated the gap between the excessive wealth in some parts of the world and a terrifying poverty in others. Accordingly, the bipolar and ideologized mentality of the cold war era was replaced by a new one, in which the poles are different – those of wealth and poverty.

The imposition of conflicting ideas regarding to the relationship between civilizations is not just a harmless theoretical exercise. Such ideas, as they take root in the mentality of people, finally can lead to dangerous consequences. As one Russian saying has it – even an unloaded gun fires once in a while. What invokes even a greater concern is the role attributed to Islamic civilization, especially in light of the acute situation in the Middle East. In my judgment the term "conflict of civilizations" should be entirely deleted from the international political vocabulary.

Where do conflicts come from, if the relations between civilizations are not prone to conflicts? What factors have produced and continue producing conflicts and wars in the world?

Historical analysis proves that there were major wars and conflicts on inter-civilizational "fault lines" over the past centuries. Two bloody world wars and other events of a similar nature in 19th and 20th centuries occurred within an inner-civilizational frame and were of an inter-state nature. Aggression was triggered by irresponsible actions of some leaders, who voluntarily threw their countries and millions of people into criminal adventures.

Today, there remain many acute conflict situations, but hardly any of them could be called as having inter-civilizational roots. The recent article by Robert Kagel on the "Crisis of American Legitimacy" supports the idea that often the aggravation of confrontations, even not antagonistic, occur inside one and the same civilization, without having any specific implication for the field of inter-civilization relationship.

Most of all, humankind today should be concerned in an era of globalization by the aggravation of conflicts between two poles: excessive wealth and horrible poverty. The entire international community should think how to prevent such a clash through effective measures aimed at overcoming poverty. Otherwise, humankind could be doomed for a big misfortune.

Finally, one should look for the reasons of conflict not in the relationship between civilizations, but in the actions of politicians, what could be labled a "human factor".

The 53rd session of the General Assembly of the United Nations supported the initiative of President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami of the

Islamic Republic of Iran on the dialogue among civilizations and it proclaimed 2001 as the year of Dialogue among Civilizations. In developing of this initiative, a group of eminent experts, at the request of the UN Secretary-General, prepared a monograph entitled "Crossing the Divide: Dialogue among Civilizations" which in contrast to the ideas of Huntington cast this problem in a different, life-asserting context and rejected the dichotomy "West vs. the Rest".

Earlier I mentioned the huge gap that separates the world into one of booming affluence, and one of horrible poverty. The hopes for positive changes related to the process of globalization did not come true. "The golden rain" is not raining in the poor countries.

Based on my Presidential experience, as well as on the analysis of the situation in other countries, I came to the conclusion that each country should take its own destiny in its own hands, without placing hopes on the mercy of the external world. The reliance on one's own resources is a benchmark that seems to be most justified. Let me recall that Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz in his book "Globalization and Its Discontents" writes, "developing countries should take their own responsibility for their well-being ... the most important thing for them is to have an effective statehood".

The policies implemented in Kyrgyzstan since independence were aimed at inspiring the people and mobilizing them for the goals of economic development through an enhancement of state, development of democracy and social mobilization. To meet this objective on the basis of the international experience, we developed a Comprehensive Development Framework 2010 and aNational Strategy for Poverty Reduction.

The most fertile soil in which culture could blossom is freedom for creative expression of each personality. Such freedom could be given only by democracy. Democracy is the most effective means for disclosure of the creative energies of the people.

International experience in this field was useful and cognitive for us. But still our own Kyrgyz model of development must guide us. In the light of our national experience, human rights are moving to the centre of our democratic agenda. This is what concrete actions are aimed at. Among them: the new Constitution which came into force in February 2003; the proclamation of the National Strategy "Kyrgyzstan is a country of human rights"; the development of a democratic code of the people of Kyrgyzstan, the establishment of a public council for democratic security, as well as the introduction of the position of Ombudsman. These actions have started bearing fruits.

From the very beginning I am convinced that the people's governance, as a fundation of democracy, should ripen in the national soil and in the hearts of people. Only then can democracy organically enter into the lives of people and be firmly entrenched in public practice and mass conscience. This can be seen in the experience of more established democracies.

There is another dimension that comes to the front related to the country's efforts to enter the robust stream of globalization. This is the development of new information and communications technologies and their introduction in all fields of life, especially drawing on young people as the most dynamic group open to innovation. The aim "digital revolution" has thus become an important part of our state policy. This area of state policy becomes a priority in particular in the organization of educational processes, starting with primary education.

Kyrgyzstan currently has 50 universities, as opposed to six universities during Soviet times. The number of students has increased four fold and a real leapfrog occured in the field of training in information technologies.

The theme of this conference provides a basis for thorough reflection not only about our galloping times but also about what kind of future we are going to have. Many participants of the conference probably remember 1972 when the report to the Club of Rome, "The Limits of Growth", was published. It contained a rather dramatic, almost apocalyptic scenario. To survive, it was suggested that humankind should switch to a "zero growth" regime. The forecast, fortunately, did not come true.

Conflict originating in inter-civilizational relations could have become a kind of a trigger for the proliferation of chaos and ultimately a move towards catastrophy. I am deeply convinced that such a sinister origin, inherent to civilization, does not exist. To the contrary, it is the dialogue of cultures and civilizations that will help to overcome such dangers. The current challenges and threats, including international terrorism should be viewed as a temporary development, if humankind succeeds in mobilizing all its resources to overcome and cope with them. Humankind has survived much greater dangers in the past and sustained without loosing trust into future.

The laws of self-organization of the society are powerful and this is what the historical experience has shown. "God helps those who help themselves" as they say -to hope that everything will evolve by itself would however be a mistake. Our conference should serve as a compass and give guidelines for Eurasia to move ahead. Civilization and culture: these are

two prophetic words. One should permanently affirm them in the mentality of the Eurasians as closely related concepts in their highest humanistic sense.

In his reflections about the logic of historical process, the German philosopher Karl Jaspers proposed a concept of "pivotal time". He interpreted such time as a certain historical period, when humankind is closer to axis of world existence, open to the people. The scientist related the first "pivotal time" to 8th century BC to 2nd century AD that marked a transition from early-localized civilizations to the stage of emergence of sources of world civilizations. Jaspers related the future development of humankind with a transition to a new "pivotal time". Are we not experiencing a new "pivotal time" when a reverse is ripening – from modern civilization, to a great extent based on selfish, consumerist attitude to nature – to a future civilization, which will be built on co-evolution of human and nature, and a harmonious human relationship? Humankind will not be rid of difficulties in such a future either, but these would be difficulties of a different qualitative content.

The most important thing now is a preservation of the diversity of cultures, as well as a stimulation of harmony in a multi-civilizational society as an indivisible condition for sustainability of the Universe.

In conclusion I would like to express my firm belief that this conference will provide a major impetus for a dialogue of civilizations and develop approaches that would become a useful contribution in Eurasia and for humankind in general to make life on this continent and the planet of Earth safe, peaceful and affluent. May all of us be successful in this endeavour!

Ko chiro Matsuura

Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

It is my great pleasure and honour to address you at this opening of the High-Level Conference "Eurasia in the 21st Century – Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations?". It is very meaningful and appropriate that the conference is being held in Kyrgyzstan, a country at the crossroads of important historical dialogues that have left their imprint on the entire region and have provided important linkages and bridges between regions, cultures and civilizations. Furthermore, Kyrgyzstan is a modernizing Central Asian state seeking, through dialogue, greater integration into the world community.

It is very opportunistic to hold this conference in the Kyrgyz Republic on the beautiful shores of Lake Issyk-Kul, one of the largest mountain lakes in the world, famous for its magnificent scenery and unique scientific interest. Its shores are noted for their health resorts, sanatoriums and holiday houses, and it is here that cosmonauts rest and recuperate when they return from the important dialogues that humanity holds with the universe – while orbiting the Earth.

The Bishkek Global Mountain Summit held in late October 2002, which was dedicated to 'Education. Science and Culture as Moving Forces of Sustainable Development', was a major event not only within the International Year of Mountains but also in the wider process of encouraging dialogue and exchange.

Let me also thank all speakers, representatives and participants for being here today. Each of your voices from the region is vital for the harmony of the whole. As we see in so many other contexts, cultural diversity generates meeting points where people discover not only their differences but also what they have in common. This High-Level Conference follows a series of similar events that I have organized, in collaboration with Member States of UNESCO and sister agencies of the UN system, subsequent to the United Nations General Assembly's proclamation of 2001 as the UN Year for Dialogue among Civilizations at the initiative of President Khatami of Iran. What is distinctive about UNESCO's role in these conferences, symposia and meetings is the balance between global and regional perspectives and action.

Last year alone, we sponsored and helped to organize the New Delhi International Ministerial Conference that culminated in the proclamation of the New Delhi Declaration; the Ohrid Forum with its focus on South-East Europe and committed participation by eight Heads

of States; and the International Symposium held in Yemen involving many countries of the Arab region. Through all these events, we signalled our desire to make a shift from a somewhat intellectual, academic and prescriptive approach to the formulation of concrete and practical initiatives at the regional level, thereby providing substance and solidity to the dialogue in UNESCO's domains of expertise – education, the sciences, culture and communication.

This shift of focus was clearly reflected in the landmark resolution unanimously adopted by UNESCO's General Conference on 16 October 2003, which endorsed these new emphases shaping the Organization's activities in regard to the dialogue among civilizations and cultures. Among other things, this resolution seeks to ensure that global approaches receive regional attention, are translated into recommendations with regional relevance and are then followed up by a series of concrete initiatives and actions to ensure maximum impact, by countries acting both jointly and individually. I very much wish that the Kyrgyz Conference will have a similar orientation and outcome so that the countries of Eurasia can move forward through concrete modalities of dialogue and new practical ways of undertaking intercultural exchange.

Several important topics will be discussed here in Issyk-Kul from a specific Eurasian perspective: shared values and ethical principles, cultural diversity and heritage as well as the issues of water, sustainable development and human security. A broad, relevant and very timely agenda is before you. I should like to thank you all for coming to Issyk-Kul and for your willingness to share your knowledge, experience and proposals with us.

The notion of an inevitable conflict or "clash" of civilizations has been the subject of many conferences and debates over the past decade, ever since Professor Samuel Huntington published his provocative thesis. I shall not enter into the details of this debate except to say that I am not convinced that a clash of civilizations exactly describes what is happening in today's world or that such a clash is inevitable. Indeed, the dialogue among civilizations initiative represents an attempt to influence the historical process and its direction by promoting cooperation and mutual understanding among peoples and cultures. Conflict between civilizations is not our collective destiny. After all, we live in an era of globalization, integration and mutual exchange. It serves no useful purpose to set up a binary divide between irreconcilable alternatives, for this flies in the face of historical experience and its story of dynamic intercultural interactions and exchanges. Also, while there are new ignorances being generated by increased globalization, we are capable of addressing them. Since its

foundation, UNESCO has been committed to preventing ignorance, prejudice and suspicion from fomenting a climate of conflict and mistrust. The Organization's recent activities in the field of dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions have reinforced this commitment and have paved the way for your deliberations here today. Although there continues to be talk of a "clash of civilizations", I have been much more impressed by the strong call from many sides for a reinforced international policy dialogue.

However, we must not underestimate the challenge. A well-founded and honest dialogue among civilizations and cultures is no minor endeavour. Genuine dialogue based on openness towards the other and an open-endedness of discussion is far from easy but it is vital. At a time when all societies face new economic, political, social and environmental questions, an open and constructive exchange is essential for peace and sustainable development. In fact, genuine dialogue opens up space for a deeper understanding of the diverse nature of the human family - by removing misconceptions, by revealing differences, and by generating increasing confidence and trust within and among peoples.

Interaction, exchange and sharing are integral features of, and a precondition for, social development. Respect for certain core universal values and ethical principles, such as tolerance and human rights, is central to our central concept of common humanity, as is respect for cultural diversity. Given its multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious texture, Kyrgyzstan is not only an example of what could be called 'lived cultural diversity', but also of a unique cultural heritage. The Kyrgyz Akyns, so skilfully described in his novel "Jamila" by Mr Chingiz Aitmatov – who has played a key role in the preparation of this Conference - are certainly one important element of this cultural diversity. The proclamation of these traditional Kyrgyz musicians and storytellers as Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity clearly underlines this.

As part of the former Soviet Union, the countries of Eurasia were caught up in the ideological conflicts of the twentieth century. Since the breakdown of the Soviet Union, the states of the region have deliberately steered themselves towards greater degrees of democracy, pluralism and related socio-economic development. This path must be pursued with a view to constructing genuinely democratic and plural multilingual and multi-ethnic societies, ready to cope with the challenges and requirements of the 21st century while remaining true to the spirit of Central Asian contexts and realities.

In the search for increased economic growth and social well-being, the countries of Central Asia benefit from possessing rich natural resources, including oil, gold and the most precious of all, water. However, the region's continued development must also meet the social needs of the present generation without preventing the ability of future generations to define their own needs. In this process, the issue of water and its management is of strategic importance for sustainable development in the longer term.

It is no co-incidence that the issue of environmental sustainability occupies a central place as one of the eight Millennium Development Goals defined by the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000. The target indicators here concern levels of safe drinking water and sanitation, carbon emissions, forests and protected areas, among others. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in 2002 in Johannesburg, affirmed that one of the Millennium Development Goals is that by the year 2015 the number of people worldwide without access to safe water and sanitation should be halved. I trust that all these targets will be taken into consideration also in the debates at this conference.

After the winds of change that swept through the former Soviet Union in the 1980s and 1990s, Central Asian states have aspired to create modern, secular and open societies. All these newly independent countries are now moving through periods of transition that are driven by complex socio-political processes calling for continuous dialogue on a number of burning issues. It is my hope and conviction that Central Asia will live up to the task by refraining from the temptations of inward looking nationalism, separatism, fundamentalism and conflict. Through a decisive move toward mutual trust, dialogue, social harmony and peace, the states of the region can embark on a most promising journey together. The celebration of the region's rich cultural diversity and the shared universal values that we all enjoy is a foundation for development that is sustainable because it is peaceful.

Emomali S. Rahmonov
President of the Republic of Tajikistan

Expressing my deep gratitude for the invitation to such an important conference, I would like to note that the theme of the Conference touches the vital interests of the peoples of Eurasia, the biggest and most densely populated land, and of the whole world.

Dialogue of cultures and civilizations in the macro-region of Eurasia covers a wide range of issues both of historical-cultural and political-practical nature.

It is not by chance that Central Asia represented by Kyrgyzstan is the venue of such and authoritative Forum – Central Asia is one of the ancient centres of the world culture.

Our land saw genius creations of human intellect and hands as well as their merciless destruction. The region saw beneficial exchange of experience, interaction of cultures, development of friendly relations and family ties, as well as the most cruel conflicts, wars, invasions, ruining of cities and centuries-old cultural values.

In a word, the historical existence of the peoples of Central Asia is rich with joyful events as well as with tragic ones. I stress the motley character of the historical development of the region to draw your attention to the fact that tragic events happen because people do not learn lessons of history. We must lay foundations of such societies which could develop without tragic events.

Undoubtedly, our ancestors valued cooperation, interaction, mutual respect, mutual assistance and joint struggle against common enemies. Today we develop their traditions and lay foundations for peaceful, friendly and good-neighbour relations between the future generations of our nations.

The recent visit of President Akaev to the Republic of Tajikistan and the Days of Kyrgyz Culture in Tajikistan showed once again, that comprehensive cooperation and dialogue on all levels strengthen friendship between peoples, remove artificial barriers and finally enrich our cultures and bring closer us and our descendants.

Our scholars welcomed heartily the speech by Askar Akaev in which he stressed the contribution of Tajik nation and its great sons: Rudaki, Firdawsi, Avicenna, Omar Hayam to the world science and culture.

Looking into the depths of the problem, we can say that dialogue of cultures and civilizations is a substantial feature of human history. Understanding the importance of the matter, UNESCO adopted at the

proposal of eminent scientists a well-known "East-West" programme implemented in 1957-1966.

One of the organizers and supervisors of this programme was Bobodjon Gafurov, Academician, an outstanding son of the Tajik nation. He proposed the project on studies of Central Asian civilizations in the spirit of this programme and with the aim to lay solid scientific foundation for a wide and multi-lateral dialogue of cultures and civilizations, in particular in Central Asia.

The multi-volume "History of Civilizations of Central Asia" elaborated and published by UNESCO within the framework of this project is an excellent example of joint efforts of scientists from different countries aimed at constructive cooperation in studying history and culture of the nations of the region to develop intercultural dialogue. We are happy that scientists from many Eurasian countries and almost all academic oriental-studies institutions contributed to this unique publication. This scientific cooperation and dialogue practically proved once again that on-going mutual enrichment is an essence of our macro-regional culture.

Therefore, the idea of Mr. Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, President of Iran, about dialogue of civilizations was warmly welcomed by the political and scientific circles of the world, Eurasia in particular. Highly appreciating the role of UNESCO in implementing the idea of dialogue among cultures and civilizations, we stress with gratitude the fruitful efforts of this authoritative Organization and its Director-General, Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, aimed at mutual enrichment of cultures and their constructive dialogue.

Dialogue of civilizations is extremely important in the context of globalization, because it facilitates scientific and cultural exchange. We have to join our efforts to save cultural heritage of the peoples from negative consequences of globalization. Each culture has its unique value which is to be respected and preserved. Dialogue of civilizations enhances interaction of cultures to secure peace and harmony. We all must never forget that intercultural dialogue is possible only if it is based on equality and mutual respect. Respect of cultural values which enrich spiritually the contemporary and future generations must be a moral base of a dialogue on any level.

Dialogue of civilizations implies search of the ways to prevent antagonisms and conflicts. We have to make a serious analysis of the contemporary challenges, threats and negative processes which acquire a global character.

Today we are at the point where we can either give a new impact to dialogue of civilizations and to rise to a higher quality level or we can face the trend of clash of civilizations.

The great ideas of dialogue are to be implemented in the times when controversive processes and trends become even more complicated and rapidly increase global challenges and threats, radical and extremist forms of self-identification (including religious).

It is without any doubt, that Central Asia is an organic part of the Islamic civilization. At the same time we will not accept and acknowledge those organizations which under the cover of Islam are engaged in terrorism and extremism, because their destructive activities are totally incompatible with the spirit and principles of Islam and give occasion to some irresponsible politicians to link the teaching of Islam with such disgusting phenomenon as terrorism.

We in Tajikistan know very well what is religious extremism and terrorism. That is why we are a member of the anti-terrorist coalition. At the same time, the unique experience of Tajikistan in reaching peace and stability, acknowledged by the international community, proves the vital imperative of dialogue of cultures and civilizations based on cooperation and co-existence.

We are also an organic part of Eurasia, the cradle of the world culture and civilization, the cross-roads of cultures. Central Asia is a unique region manifesting East-West cultural interaction.

In our countries there are no organizations and political bodies advocating anti-West ideas and slogans. We know and understand very well European and Western civilization. We are also close to and understand Chinese, Indian, African, Iberian-American cultures. I would say that East and West meet in Central Asia.

Therefore, the states of Eurasia, and above all Central Asia, must be mediators and promoters of the ideas of dialogue among civilizations and oppose principally the trends of East-West confrontation.

We have to be open, because only openness can bring mutual understanding which is so needed to develop dialogue of civilizations.

I would like to draw your attention to one more aspect of no less importance. Dialogue of civilizations is not only a dialogue of cultures. This formula embraces also constructive cooperation in political, economic and social spheres of life, i.e. all fields of human existence. Therefore, development of our relations with the countries of international community in all the perimeter of relationships will serve directly to mutual understanding and dialogue of civilizations.

In the epoch of close economic, social and informational interaction of nations, the problem of human unity in all its historical-cultural diversity demands not only theoretical but practical solutions. The emerging universal planetary civilization, based on the world outlook pluralism, urges us to seek new institutes of harmony and mutual understanding.

Of special importance for the Eurasian macro-region is the interaction of countries on the Great Silk Road. It is not by chance that nowadays the Great Silk Road is being re-created in its new quality.

Countries of Central Asia as an integral part of the Great Silk Road develop mutually advantageous relations and step aside from political, economic and cultural egoism. However, the tempo and quality of changes have to be more dynamic.

The states, nations and people of the region can join efforts to transform our common space and to develop mutually-favourable, rational and efficient relations on all levels, to elaborate constructive mechanisms of joint practical activities and more open good-neighbouring interaction.

It is important that many social and cultural traditions and customs of the peoples of Central Asia are still significant and valid today.

Our region and bordering zones for many centuries had common principles of existence in everyday life, in science, in poetry, architecture, music etc. The epics ""Gurugly", "Alpamysh", "Manas" and other creations of our ancestors have much in common. The system of the famous Twelve makoms, later constituting Shashmakom, shaped at different historical stages thanks to inspiring efforts of the outstanding talented peoples of Eurasia.

We stand for the formation of national identity and the feeling of national pride in each country on the realistic, humanistic and high-moral basis.

With this purpose we organize in Tajikistan major cultural events jointly with UNESCO. Thus, we had celebrations of the 2500th anniversary of the ancient city Istaravshan, the 1000th anniversary of the great poet Nosiri Khusrava, the 3000th anniversary of "Avesto", the ancient Book of Zoroastrianism. We plan celebrations of the 2700th anniversary of the ancient city Kulyab.

We attach much importance also to the development of our classic musical arts "Shashmakom" and "Falak". I would like to express my special gratitude to UNESCO for the proclamation of Shashmakom as a Masterpiece of the Intangible and Oral Heritage of Humanity.

We should admit, that the political borders with their attributes, such as customs and guard points do not enhance our cultural contacts. The history of our peoples does not remember the situations when we, living so close to each other, were so far from each other.

Today culturologists worry that the emerged borders and contradictions play in favour of those forces which seek to destroy the common system of cultural relations and to inflame cultural-civilizational clash of the peoples of Central Asia and Eurasia as a whole.

Experience and scientific analysis of interaction and inter-influence of cultures show that forced separation of people, closure of exchange of cultural-spiritual values, neglect of other cultures and attempts of artificial assimilation doom nations and ethnic groups for self-isolation. In its turn, it paralyzes the culture itself and threatens the idea of rapprochement between peoples and universal human development. The power of bans and imposed one-sided vision and understanding of the world, is certainly destructive. But as history shows, no barriers and obstacles can stop interaction of cultures and the natural human need in other listeners, spectators, readers, interlocutors, i.e. in mutual enrichment. It is necessary not to impede the natural interaction of cultures, but on the contrary to facilitate their intensive, wide-scale and comprehensive interaction.

Positive dialogue is possible only when there is a willingness to join efforts of all constructive forces for creation and happiness of people. We, Heads of State in Central Asia, must above all foster comprehensive cooperation and cultural exchange, remove artificial barriers hindering free human relations.

I think that to achieve fruitful cooperation and mutual enrichment of cultures in the region, it is necessary to develop dialogue and interaction in the following aspects:

- To provide favourable conditions for dialogue of cultures in the field of policy as well as in the field of peace-keeping theory and practice, being guided by the understanding of democracy as an open process towards public consensus;
- To maintain standing contacts between figures of culture of Central Asia;
- To draw attention of the world community to inter-cultural cooperation and to create systematically and purposefully conditions for integration of Central Asia in the world cultural space;
- To discuss on international level the issues of intercultural cooperation of Central Asia;

- To encourage publications aimed at integration and peace-keeping tasks and promoting the fundamental values of our region in their dynamics;
- To support and develop our today's dialogue of cultures for peace on the national, regional and global level.

We realize that dialogue of civilizations is not a simple process. But is an essential mechanism to ensure stability and peace. Only dialogue based on mutual respect and equality can facilitate recovery of international relations. Dialogue initially implies exception of all forms of force solution of problems.

We are convinced that to prevent conflicts the world community has to acknowledge the axiom of equal co-existence of all forms of cultures, which exclude violence, fanatism, hatred and intolerance.

In the 21st century people must unite to face the global challenges, including the problems of demography, ecology, poverty, education, unequal economic development etc.

Political figures must above all show concrete examples of their commitment to develop dialogue of civilizations. Scientists, cultural actors, non-governmental organizations and mass media must be actively engaged in this process.

Only together and by joint efforts can we practically implement the ideas of the dialogue among civilizations.

Sayed M. Raheen

Minister of Information and Culture of Afghanistan

Allow me to deliver President Karzai's respect to all scholars and participants in this successful conference. I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Kyrgyzstan and to UNESCO for conveening this important meeting.

Our time has made lands and nations close to each other in an unprecedented manner. Today the mass media play a significant role in human lives and in the proximity of the people in a unique manner. They are able to promote understanding among civilizations and cultures. The media can help us ease and remove the difficulties on the path of dialogue among civilizations and cultures. We believe in variety of civilizations and cultures based on present realities and attach great values to all of them. As a result, global participation in the dialogue will be much easier. Under such conditions we should begin with common issues in the world cultures. There are moral values that can be common among most of the nations. Perhaps respect for human dignity and humanity as a whole can be placed as a basic and common point in the dialogue among civilizations and cultures.

Culture and art of different nations can help bringing human society closeer to each other. The language of culture and art is the most beautiful and most effective language for cooperation and collaboration among the nations. Through it we can place the nation's cultures on the path of fresh friendship and understanding.

Afghanistan suffered for several years under the shadow of terrorism and Taliban rule which resembled a nightmare in our national life. Now the country with the efforts of its people and the assistance of the international community is moving ahead towards its moral and material reconstruction. According to President Karzai, Afghanistan is a good example for cooperation of civilizations.

In the course of its history, Afghanistan has been the main connecting point and crossroad for varying civilizations. We had a great role in the development of the Islamic civilization. Our links with other global civilizations and cultures in the course of history is due to Afghanistan's special geographical situation and it has been indeed very creative.

As a cradle of Zoroastrian civilization and culture, Afghanistan has made an immense impact on its neighbouring societies. In the past centuries and millennia, we have had strong cultural links with other

nations. These links have opened the way for the beginning of contacts and links with different civilizations and cultures for our nation. Meanwhile, Afghanistan's links with the Buddhist culture forms a bright and glorious chapter in our pre-Islamic history. Afghanistan's link with Buddhist and Hindu cultures has provided ground for unique artistic creativity. During the first to the sixth centuries, some places of Afghanistan formed main centres of Buddhism. The famed Nawbahar of Balkh and Nawshad temples and the site of Buddha statues in Bamyan and sites in Kabul, Logar, Kapisa and so forth are important proof of this link.

Recognition of the Greek civilization through Hellenist art and culture of Afghanistan – and later during the Islamic civilization having access to the Greek culture through the translations of their works – opened an important chapter in our history.

Close historical links with the culture and civilization of the Chinese people via the Silk Road and commercial links, in particular during the second century AD had their magnificence. This way the people of Afghanistan have vast ancient and traditional links with most of the main global cultures and civilizations.

Today we heartily welcome dialogue and understanding with the different cultures and civilizations.

Elchin Efendiev

Vice Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan

First of all, let me, on behalf of the President of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliev, thank the President of the Kyrgyz Republic for the invitation to attend this International Conference and greet the organizers and all participants.

Undoubtedly this Conference will become a landmark in outlineing main principles for the harmonization of cultures and civilizational processes and new strategies and approaches for the solution to global tasks in our rapidly changing world.

Eurasia is an example of a rather conditional division of the continents on the planet. You can see it clearly also on the physical map of the world. Mountains, which have always been considered as natural formations dividing Europe and Asia, today are considered as a unifying factor. It would be good to use this model in cultural relationships on our common Eurasian continent where the Eastern and Western civilizations meet.

For Azerbaijan - the ancient Eastern country and young independent democratic state - all this has both geographical and social-historical significance. Located right at the junction of Europe and Asia, Azerbaijan is a centre at the crossroads of their influence. Thanks to this fact a unique culture has been shaped here, the canvas of which absorbed both East and West features.

The classical oriental and Cartesian Western systems of education, traditional and modern medicine, folklore and professional theater, oriental miniature and perspective painting, oriental ornamental design, forms and proportions, Western genres of art and architectural styles are deeply intertwined and generate new, sometimes quite unexpected but always organic and beautiful creations. Mugam-opera, jazz-mugam, Western interiors with oriental carpet decorations, traditional Western novels and essays reflecting the traditional oriental spirit and feeling – this is far from being an exhaustive list of samples of the Azerbaijan culture.

Shelter of an ancient man in the Ashel layer of the Azykh Cave, a far ancestor of a modern human being, who had made first steps to civilization 1.5 million years ago, the most ancient Kuruchai culture which is more than 700 thousand years old, rock pictures of Gobustan which had been made more than 2000 years ago (by the way, there are inscriptions, engraved by hands of ancient Roman soldiers), architectural constructions from the most ancient to the super-modern, philosophical poetry of

Nizami, Nasimi and remarkable prose of writers "of the sixties", eternally sincere folklore and many other things testify to continuity and synthesis of cultural traditions in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is an important centre of the Great Silk Road linking Asia and Europe. This is one of the reasons why the project TRACEKA decided to place in Azerbaijan the Secretariat of its Intergovernmental Commission. Azerbaijan is included both in the European and the Asian structures for the protection of monuments and for economic, ecological and other problems.

But for more than 15 years Azerbaidjan has been a state of which 20% of its territory is occupied by neighbouring Armenia. Apart from the political consequences, the seizure of territory has innumerable humanitarian consequences and is tragic for the preservation of cultural heritage and the development of culture. Hundreds of architectural constructions, memorials and monuments, libraries and museums, about thousand of educational institutions including schools, kindergartens and houses of creativity have remained in the occupied territories. All this brings not just enormous material losses. It inflicts irreplaceable damage to the original culture of Azerbaijan and the development of a whole generation of the Azerbaijan people. It causes refugees and immigrants.

The events happening in the world at the turn of the second and third millennia have increased enormously the responsibility of people for preservation of culture in the context of a global ecological approach. Solutions of these problems substantially depend on the solutions of social and psychological issues related to an accumulation of people in cities and huge urban formations, a general overpopulation of the planet, the human exploration of the cosmos, understanding of interrelations of culture and environment etc. While one of the conditions for preservation of nature on the Earth is preservation of its biological diversity, preservation of the world civilization and human community depends on preservation of cultural diversity, each of which expresses and simultaneously forms existential features of a nation, reflecting its life and life style, system of values and beliefs, concepts of goods and evil, justice and criminality.

How is it possible under the conditions of globalization and urbanization, to erase intercultural distinctions? How to prevent bursts of ethno-centrism and regional military conflicts destroying both tangible and intangible culture? Is it necessary to preserve for the new millennium absolutely everything accumulated by humankind? What may become a basis for further development, and what can be left in the past? It is not easy to answer these and many other similar questions. It is not easy to do

so from traditional or narrow specialized positions. It is necessary to use new ideas, to consider all components of life together and in this context to introduce new analytical concepts, for example eco-cultural systems, and to establish new approaches, such as cultural-ecological approaches.

It is necessary to continue a dialogue of peaceful forces on the Eurasian cultural space, to seek constructive solutions of "difficult" problems, to define new directions of development. It will demand enormous efforts: political will, involvement of large segments of the population in this process. Probably it may be expedient to form a Commission for Eurasian Culture, which could undertake the noble historical mission to preserve cultural achievements of previous epochs and ensure worthy, civilized life for future generations

Bright originality and, at the same time openness, tolerance, readiness for cooperation have always been dominating characteristics of the Azerbaijan mentality and Azerbaijan culture. We would like these features of our people to be further developed in the big the family of the peoples of Eurasia and to be useful for all its members.

Mohammad Ali Abtahi
Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Presenting a video-message by
Seyyed Mohammad Khatami
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

In the name of Allah, Gracious and Merciful!

I highly appreciate the International Conference "Eurasia in the 21st Century – Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations?" and consider it as an important step towards culture of understanding and relations based on peace. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic and to UNESCO for their special initiative and to the countries of the region, thinkers and researchers, representatives of civil and international bodies for their active participation.

In spite of its long history and philosophic-cultural foundations existing from the times immemorial, dialogue is a new necessity and new concept in the world of politics and international relations. Dialogue of cultures and civilizations is a significant word-combination implying the necessity to replace violence by intellect in the global relationships. In this paradigm the logic of force gives way to the force of logic, which opens possibilities to understand better what is another and to co-exist with it. In this context, dialogue of civilizations creates a new way regardless of the obstacles existing in international relations, and its proper interpretation and application can open new horizons in intra-civilizational and inter-civilizational spheres. Theoretical and semantic foundations of a dialogue are not mono-subjective, fanatic and egocentric, and their adherents do not consider themselves and their attitude as the only right one.

The attention of the world community to the idea of dialogue of civilizations, in spite of the prevailing distinct directions and factors in international politics, is subjected to the influence of transformation of the theory of dialogue in the scientific and cultural spheres. Now scientific and intellectual structures – in spite of the pollution of the international policy language by violence and rudeness – have the distinct form and contents of a dialogue that differs much from the samples of one-sided thinking of the "cold war" period in comparison with the language structures of the past decades

The approval by the world community in 1998 of the necessity of dialogue of civilizations was well grounded. It arose from the perception of

a dialogue as the matter of inter-subjective nature and international necessity. The efforts having been made by the leading scientists, reformists and all progressive thinkers of the world in promoting the idea of dialogue among civilizations prove it. Though the political picture of the first years of the 21st century is full of terrible manifestations of violence, brutality and monologue, the common feeling and mentality of the world community have no doubt in preference of dialogue over monologue, tolerance over obtrusion, peace over war.

The efforts of UNESCO to promote dialogue of civilizations as a strategic direction in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, organization of prestigious regional and national Forums and creation of new scientific and cultural structures enhancing dialogue of civilizations in different regions of the world testify to the consolidated opinion on the international level.

The strategy of dialogue of civilizations opens and broadens the world surrounding us decreasing its narrowness and tightness of outlook. If globalization is the evident reality of our days, it is possible through dialogue to promote humanization of globalization. If democracy is a peaceful way to govern the today's world, it is possible through dialogue among cultures and civilizations to ensure its internal development and stability.

If terrorism, narrowness, informational vacuum, ethical and spiritual crisis threaten security, peace and sustainable development of the world today, dialogue of civilizations can open new perspectives able to reduce these threats.

We should not forget that cultures and civilizations always have interaction and mutual influence. New abilities were formed due to their interaction. Non-dialogue paradigm leads to a deadlock, to overcome which we inevitably appeal to the dialogue approaches. Constructive indicators of dialogue certainly must not be limited only to the spheres of politics and culture. Not all constructive indicators of culture are only cultural ones; since economic, social, cultural and educational aspects participate in this formation. Therefore, promotion of dialogue of civilizations should be recognized as a multi-sided necessity.

I hope, that similar to UNESCO which does not limit the mentioned subject only to culture, the outcomes of this Forum and further similar events will enhance the strategy of dialogue of civilizations in the fields of education, science, politics, economics and communication. In this field, not only states, but above all scientific and cultural centres and civil institutions must be in the vanguard and undertake new responsibilities.

In the cause of progress of dialogue of civilizations there is more hope for tomorrow than for today. Consequently, any efforts in this direction undoubtedly uphold this great hope of humankind. In realization of this important task we will hope to the help of God and undertake serious steps towards making Eurasia of the 21st century the embodiment of these aspirations owing to our unanimous efforts.

Participants of the High-Level Conference entitled "Eurasia in the XXIst Century: Dialogue of Cultures — or Conflict of Civilizations?"

Byrganym S. Aitimova
Vice Prime Minister of Kazakhstan

I would like to express my gratitude to the President and the Government of Kyrgyzstan and to the UNESCO Director-General for the timely organization of this meeting. The theme of the Conference is very topical, especially against the background of geopolitical processes and global changes taking place in the world and in Central Asia.

The contemporary conflicts, xenophobia, terrorism and extremism generate the ideology of conflict which allows forgetting the elementary moral norms and causes intolerance and cruelty urging religious and ethnic clashes.

Central Asia is a cradle of the original ethnic-cultural civilization, which during many centuries was organically linked with Iranian, Indian, Chinese and Hellenistic civilizations, and during last centuries it underwent great influence of European culture. From the ancient times, Eurasia is the space of East-West dialogue and interaction and mutual influence of cultures. History itself testifies to the fact that peaceful and constructive cooperation between different civilizations and religions is possible today.

We hope that this Forum will contribute to friendship and mutual understanding in the region, will enrich intellectually and spiritually the dialogue of Central Asian and neighbouring countries and will demonstrate to the whole world solidarity of peoples of Eurasia in their strivings to secure stability and peaceful cooperation on the continent.

Kazakhstan is always committed to the development of dialogue and mutual understanding in the world. The following concrete steps were made on this path: at the initiative of President Nursultan Nazarbaev, the International Conference on Peace and Harmony and the First Congress of the Leaders of the World and Traditional Religions were held last year (the Second Congress is planned for October 2006). The Eurasian Media Forum is held every year from 2002. I would like to note especially the successful implementation of Kazakhstan's initiative to convene the Meeting on Issues of Interaction and Trust in Asia, the first Summit of which took place in 2002 in Almaty. Today this Meeting is a regular Forum for dialogue in Asia.

Speaking about measures undertaken in this field on the regional level, I would like also to note the important decisions and documents aimed at the formation of common humanitarian-cultural space to meet the cultural and informational needs of people in Central Asia, adopted by

the Heads of State of the "Central Asian Cooperation" Organization, the summit of which took place in May 2005, in Astana.

Each of these events has contributed to the development of a dialogue among cultures and civilizations and peaceful cooperation aimed at avoiding conflicts.

Kazakhstan fully supports the relevant UN resolutions, including the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations adopted in 2001. Our country is actively engaged in its implementation, promoting the concept of dialogue of civilizations through its external and internal policy, cultural, educational and social programmes.

International fora, such as the New Delhi conference entitled "Dialogue of Civilizations: Search of New Perspectives" and the Ohrid Regional Forum (2003) confirmed once again that tolerance, mutual understanding, respect to cultural diversity, human rights and democratic principles are fundamental values on which any dialogue must be based.

Facing the acute crisis experienced by humankind, we come to the conclusion that it is impossible to solve efficiently the problems of poverty, hunger, conflicts and wars without safeguarding and promoting spiritual values. Therefore, we must attach priority attention to the issues of education of young generations. In this connection, I would like to stress two aspects. First, quality education: it envisages integration of national educational systems into the world educational space, elaboration of common educational standards on the basis of the most advanced criteria, efficient control of the quality of knowledge. Second, education of young generations in the spirit of peace, tolerance, and solidarity. To build up these ideas and idealsin the minds of children, to introduce these disciplines into the school curricula in all countries, to elaborate relevant methods – they must be fully in line with the mandate of UNESCO and the interests of all countries recognizing the paramount importance of peaceful and constructive dialogue among civilizations. Kazakhstan actively cooperates with UNESCO and international organizations on the bilateral and regional levels.

The objective of dialogue of civilizations and cultures is the development of each culture without damaging other cultures, their peaceful interaction, and the formation of mutually acceptable world-conscious approaches. Finally, the process of dialogue will naturally lead to the creation of a common and universal system of views on the world and society and education of planetary consciousness.

Our task, the task of states and international organizations, is to promote dialogue based on the principles of mutual respect and understanding of universal interdependence.

Therefore, the Republic of Kazakhstan came forward with the initiative to proclaim the year of 2006 as the International Year of Planetary Consciousness and Ethics of Dialogue among Peoples, which was approved by the UNESCO General Conference in October 2003. The General Conference noted in its resolution that the world is facing large-scale threats to security, acts of violation and challenges generating speculation on a clash of civilizations that can only be opposed through a dialogue of civilizations paving the way to harmonious development of the world. Such a dialogue must be based on respect for each other and fundamental universal values.

The International Year of Planetary Consciousness and Ethics of Dialogue between Nations is aimed at the joint search of the conceptual support to the processes of globalization, promotion of intercultural dialogue, shaping of planetary consciousness which will not deny national consciousness but will be based on it reflecting its richness, and strengthening the ethics of international dialogue.

Speaking about the ethics of dialogue, we should note that it is not to be invented. Humankind elaborated it during the millennia of its historical development. But today, under the conditions of international tension existing in the world and, in order to avoid negative consequences for humanity, our task is to bring the moral norms of dialogue between nations to the fore and to emphasize their importance for the fair and sustainable international relations.

I am convinced that the outcomes of the Forum will become a significant contribution to the efforts of the international community enhancing sustainable, peaceful and flourishing development of the world.

Rais Munir Ahmed

Minister of Tourism, Sports and Youth of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

It is a great honour for me to represent His Excellency General Pervez Musharraf, the President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan on this auspicious important occasion. I wish to convey the deepest appreciation of the Government of Pakistan to the President ot he Kyrgyz Republic for his patronage of this initiative. I bring along the greetings and sentiments of fraternity to the Government and people of brotherly Kyrgyz Republic. We are extremely grateful for the hospitality extended to us ever since our arrival here. I would also like to put our appreciations for UNESCO also on record for convening this Conference. I am confident that this assembly of Euro Asia will send a power message of unity of thought and action in face of challenges that are confronting peace and harmony.

Eurasia, representing a confluence of civilizations, and given its strategic location and enormous resources, has an important role in global affairs. 'The current conference can be an important milestone in evolving understanding and shared perceptions among the participating states on issues of common concern to us all. This in my view would be a major contribution towards promotion of global dialogue and understanding.

This Conference is taking place at a critical juncture in contemporary history. The diversity of our world characterized by different religions, cultures, political systems, traditions and value systems is threatened by conflicts and misperceptions. The tragic events of the last decade, and the continuation of a few perennial conflicts have contributed towards a spectre of clash and confrontation. The economic disparities across regions as a result of unequal globalization, and the asymmetries in power and military capabilities further reinforces such feelings.

The prevailing global scenario has two distinct features: apprehensions about loss of cultural identity of peoples and regions under unbridled globalization and misgivings about Islam as a regressive force impeding modernization.

The President of Islamic Republic of Iran, needs to be commended for his initiative of a dialogue among civilizations to bridge differences that divide international community relations among nations at the dawn of the new millennium. The present conference is part of the ongoing process, which enables cross-cultural exchange. We thank UNESCO for its meticulous follow up of this initiative over the last few years. Dialogue is indeed the best medium to bridge the ideological, political, economic divisions that afflict our world. Through dialogue, we can isolate such

forces that are endeavouring to promote the misplaced notion of clash or collision of civilizations.

As an Islamic country, the deliberate campaign of defamation of Islam and its followers, and a policy of denigrating the noble struggles of oppressed Muslims communities as terrorism are of deep concern to Pakistan. We are saddened to see the negative stereotyping of our noble religion and the gap in understanding the true meaning of Islam.

For a considered debate on the theme of the Conference it would be instructive to identify the issues that have continued to foster misunderstanding, acrimony and divisiveness across the globe. First: the biased, ill-informed and self-serving perceptions about Islam and the stereotyping of Islam and Muslims as promoters of terrorism. Our values, traditions and political systems are under scrutiny and assault. The tragic events of 9/11 provide fresh impetus for this thought process. A concerted media campaign to portray Islamic countries as undemocratic and opposed to moderation and modernization is a manifestation of this mindset.

Second: the effort to offer globalization as panacea for all economies without addressing the legitimate concerns of developing nations. Third: the perception about the developing and Islamic countries as the violators of human rights. Fourth: the treatment of millions of Muslim immigrants and migrant workers in the Western countries. Fifth: the quest for imposition of Western political, economic and cultural values upon the rest of the world. Sixth: suppression of legitimate aspirations of self-determination and freedom, denigrating noble freedom struggles as terrorism and continuation of the suffering of Muslim communities under foreign occupation and their gross human rights abuse. Seventh: absence of institutionalized partnership between the West and Islam to resolve the differences and misunderstandings. Eighth: increasing propensity on the part of powerful nations to recourse to unilateral and preemptive military action, flouting the UN Charter and its principles on pacific settlements of disputes.

Given the grave implications of these trends, apathy and inaction on the part of world leaders is not an option. First and foremost, jointly we should highlight similarities between different civilizations and their values, as all of them seek human peace, security and their physical and economic well-being and to enable them to realize their true potenional. This has to be a two-way affair.

President General Pervez Musharraf is of the firm belief that a clash of civilizations is inconceivable for Muslims. In his address to the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, he proposed his strategy

of Enlightened Moderation. This unique initiative has been welcomed and endorsed by the Islamic Summit Conference in Kuala Lumpur in October 2002. The strategy of Enlightened Moderation is two pronged.

The first prong of this strategy is directed to Muslim countries that must address and overcome internal weaknesses and vulnerabilities, pervasive poverty, illiteracy etc., while simultaneously rejecting recourse to militancy and extremism. To promote dynamic development, prosperity and peace within our nations and societies, the President stressed poverty reduction, employment generation, expansion of production, science and technology, higher education, health and human resource development. This gigantic undertaking requires considerable and focused investment of resources to be generated, domestically and externally. Socio-economic progress and growing prosperity will also provide the best antidote to extremism and violent proclivities, which accompany it.

In the wider interest of global peace and harmony, the President also invited the international community to assist the Muslim world in rejecting extremism in favour of self-emancipation through human resource development. The international community can do so in two principal ways. One, by helping to secure just solutions for the political disputes where Muslim peoples are being unjustly oppressed. Two, by assisting the Muslim world in its internal strategy of socio-economic development within the Strategy of Enlightened Moderation.

These efforts need visibility in media, which should focus not only on the misguided and minority that has taken to extremism, but give prominence to the majority in Islamic countries who espouse moderation and tolerance. A renewed and vigorous effort need to be launched to inculcate respect for all religions. Public pronouncements, defamatory of other faiths must be avoided. From the Church and the Mosque alike, the message should be one of respect and understanding for other religions and their followers.

Fruits of globalization are unevenly distributed. The inequality which this breeds is economically intolerable and politically unsustainable. Any viable security architecture would not endure if it were founded on gross economic asymmetry. Decisions on financial flows, trade and investment must conform to the principle of universal benefit. Security and development cannot be addressed individually or separately. Deprivation is a fertile breeding ground for extremism and intolerance.

Pakistan is committed to the path of enlightened moderation. We will not allow extremism to dictate our national agenda. We have faced hard choices and have taken difficult decisions. We have unreservedly

joined the international community to combat the scourge of terrorism. We will not back from our goal of creating a moderate and progressive Islamic State as envisioned by our founding fathers.

The outcome of our deliberations constitutes an important first step for an institutionalized follow up for future action. We hope that the current meeting would lead to a permanent process of regular inter-action and consultations among the participants to advance the objectives of understanding and cooperation within this region. By developing common themes and objectives and delineating agreed strategies our region can set a positive example for the other members of the international community and regions. We face challenges that warrant joint and collective response such as terrorism, harnessing human and natural resources available in abundance in the region for rapid economic development, eradication of poverty and disease.

Creation of a permanent mechanism providing for consultations on critical issues and consolidating cooperation in fighting threats to regional and global peace and security can be an important contribution of this Conference. Peoples to peoples contact through cultural exchanges and exchange of media personnel, scholars, students, joint business councils and joint ventures can be important confidence building measures and practically contribute to materializing the objectives of dialogue and cooperation. The theme of the Conference needs to transpire in reality, both through bilateral and multilateral frameworks.

Space for peace and security within and across nations and societies depends on strengthening the prospects of dialogue. Exclusion of force and violence, and sharing the benefits of economic boom and technological revolutions can be major contribution in this context. We need to strengthen such mutually beneficial cooperation and this Conference would be an important contribution to this noble objective.

Eleonora Mitrofanova

First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

I would like to express my gratitude to the authorities of Kyrgyzstan and UNESCO for the initiative to organize the international conference on such an important theme and for inviting me to this conference.

The events of 11 September became a tragic reference point bringing changes to the nature of international relations. One of the most significant lessons of this tragic event is realization of the necessity to develop a dialogue of cultures and civilizations as one of the key directions of activities of the world community and its important structures, above all the UN and UNESCO.

A number of resolutions in this field were adopted by the UN General Assembly, including the UN Global Agenda for Dialogue of Civilizations approved in November 2001. Of principal importance is the definition of dialogue by the UNESCO General Conference in its resolution31 C/39 as "a fundamental challenge based on the unity of humankind and universally shared values, recognition of cultural diversity and equal dignity of each civilization and each culture".

The authorities of the Russian Federation attach paramount importance to the development of dialogue, especially in the context of multi-ethnic and multi-faith nature of the population of our country.

As it was noted by President Putin at the session of the Culture Board attended by Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura in November last year, Russia fully supports UNESCO's position in favour of the development of dialogue of civilizations, on the depth and character of which depends stability in the world and prosperity of each country.

Russia, as the biggest Eurasian country at the crossroads of East and West, Europe and Asia, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, is in itself a unique example, where dialogue of cultural civilizations is a centuries-old tradition of the state and social life. We consider it as the advantage and wealth of our country, whose experience has undoubtedly universal importance. It shows that a "clash of civilizations" is not unavoidable, that humanity can make a reality in the 21st century of the Christian idea of "unity in diversity", the essence of which was revealed by Apostle Paul two millennia ago.

The rich traditions of dialogue existing in the Russian Federation pre-determine its multi-vector foreign policy and its mission to unite countries with different cultures and civilizations. In addition, preservation of cultural diversity and cultural pluralism contribute to the existence of the multi-polar world.

Our principal approaches to the perspectives of developing dialogue were stated at the Ministerial Conference in New Delhi. Therefore, I will emphasize only some of the most important dimensions, in particular in the context of Eurasia.

In spite of the popularization of dialogue and its in-depth philosophic justification we still lack the proper realization of the significance of dialogue of civilizations for future international relations at the level of decision-and policy makers.

The contemporary stage of world development is exceptionally complicated, uncertain and unpredictable. The character of world events itself does not allow us to comprehend fully the deep-laid processes and their consequences. There are signs of a crisis in understanding of the contemporary world processes as well as in the existing mechanisms of managing them. In fact, this is a crisis of controllability. It started after the breakdown of the two-block system, when the negative stability of the "cold war" was replaced by chaos. Among other reasons is the negative side of globalization, especially in terms of social and economic aspects, an increase in the disproportion and division of the world into zones of development and stagnation, even degradation. Globalization and attendant challenges such as increasing interdependence of states, non-traditional threats to international and regional security and a growing wave of regional conflicts became a serious trial for the whole system of international relations and its participants.

Iraq is the "rub" in the further shaping of the new international system. The way how the Iraq crisis is resolved will much influence the viability of the collective methods of regulating critical situations under the pivotal role of the United Nations. Today, one of the main lessons of Iraq is quite evident: it is impossible to enforce Western-type democracy in a country with non-Western civilization against the will of its population. Evidently, the concept of the Great Middle East has the same vulnerability. This region has its own civilizational features, centuries-old history, original mentality and deeply rooted traditions of governance and social life. Any attempts of forced intrusion breaking the civilizational matrix of another society are doomed to failure, and with destructive consequences for the international stability. Therefore, dialogue of cultures and civilizations and their perspective equal partnership is not only a vital necessity, actually this is the way with no alternative.

Combining the imperatives of modernization and respect of cultural identities, the world can avoid a suicidal clash of civilizations and achieve

a successful resolution of the acute global problems, including the fight against international terrorism and extremism.

The Fight against terrorism is one of the main foreign policy priorities of our country. Russia is an active member and initiator in many aspects of the anti-terrorist coalition. After the explosions of houses in Russia in August 1999 and invasion of terrorists from Chechnya to Dagestan, at the initiative of Russia the UN Security Council adopted the first anti-terrorist resolution, containing the main principles of the contemporary strategy of fighting this threat. These principles were confirmed after 11 September, when the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1373 on the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

On 27 May 2004, the UN Security Council designated the Russian Federation to chair this Committee, which confirms the recognition of our country's constructive contribution to the strengthening of the international anti-terrorist cooperation under the auspices of the UN.

It is important to show that the actions of terrorists, who exploit national and religious feelings of people, have nothing to do with the true teachings of the great religions based on the principles of compassion, tolerance and respect. Therefore, we think it very important that religious figures be widely involved in the process of dialogue among civilizations, education in the spirit of a culture of peace and denunciation of cultural vandalism.

Russia holds a firm position that religious sacred objects must never be subject to any attacks. Several years ago we actively supported and co-authored a UN resolution calling upon all states and participants of military actions to do their best not to allow attacks and destruction of religious sacred objects. We firmly adhered to this approach when the Taliban were destroying the statue of Buddha in Afghanistan and when Kosovo-Albanian extremists destroyed the Orthodox sacred objects in Kosovo. We also stand against destruction of the Islamic sacred objects in Iraq.

The complicated situation dictates the necessity to strengthen cooperation within the framework of the Shanghai Group to oppose the new threats. Russia strongly condemns the recent terrorist acts in Uzbekistan aimed at destabilizing the situation in the whole region of Central Asia.

We must respond to international terrorism by joining efforts to shape a common cultural, scientific and educational space within the framework of the Eurasian civilization.

3. There is an urgent necessity to fill inter-civilizational dialogue with more concrete content, in particular in the form of multi-lateral projects.

We think that for the Eurasian region the most promising projects are in following fields:

development of transport arterial roads, in particular a North-South corridor;

ecology and power energy security in the region;

development of civilizational and historical-cultural tourism. This direction is very important, because dialogue of civilizations will become a reality if it is not limited to dialogue among scientists and officials, but becomes a part of practical life for millions of common people from different countries. Within the 300th anniversary of Saint Petersburg, Russia elaborated a number of tourist routes for such kind of tourism, including the North-Western Russia, the Great Volga Road, Varagian-Persian Way etc. An international conference on civilizational tourism is planned for October 2005;

mobilizing UNESCO competence in the fields of education, science, culture and communications, where we have to revitalize long-standing traditions, using more actively new technologies, including distance education. Politicians and scientists must come closer to people, explaining to them ideas of a culture of peace and shape the frame of mind of common people.

Special attention should be given to the application of ICTs, mass media, television, internet and cinematography to promote a dialogue of civilizations. Television and cinema replicate the scenes of violence and vandalism, and there is a great cultural-informational flow of values of the Western civilization causing the threat of having a unified and mono-polar world and a loss of cultural originality. We fully support the efforts of UNESCO in this field, particularly in the context of the recent World Summit of the Information Society held in Geneva. Of great interest are the projects on using ICTs for safeguarding and transfer to future generations of the rich scientific-cultural heritage of Eurasian countries. To this end, the UNESCO publication of "History of Humanity" is a very good basis.

We also think that greater attention should be given to teaching history in the spirit of respect to other cultures and to teaching history of civilizations at the universities in the region.

Eurasian civilization could be also revitalized through the increase of integration processes, in particular, within the framework of the CIS and EurasEC. Russia expressed its readiness to participate in the creation of the Central Asian Common Market.

Speaking about the compatibility of spiritual values of different cultures and civilizations, we do believe in their capability to develop creative interaction and in their constructive contribution to upholding moral and spiritual norms and criteria in the world politics taking into consideration the new challenges.

In conclusion, I would like to note the contribution of Kyrgyzstan, its President and humanist writer Chingiz Aitmatov to the development of dialogue of cultures and civilizations. Judging by the attitude in this country to the Russian language, which has the status of the official language, to the Russian literature and ethnic Russians, we can say that in Kyrgyzstan there is a great tolerance to other ethnic groups, languages and religions. It would be good, if the concept "Kyrgyzstan is Our Common Home" successfully implemented in this country, could be transformed into the concept "Eurasia is Our Common Home".

Eleonora Mitrofanova, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and Serguei Kapitza, Russian Federation, Professor, Russian Academy of Natural Sciences

H seyin Çelik
Minister of National Education of the Republic of Turkey

Allow me to extend my gratitude on behalf of the Turkish government to our hosts, the Kyrgyz Republic, which brought together, in cooperation with UNESCO, important personalities to discuss such a current and vital issue.

I owe one other debt of gratitude to UNESCO and its Director-General. I had called on him in Paris, in October 2003, as the Head of the Turkish Delegation attending the 32nd General Conference of UNESCO. I had, at that time, thanked him for his contributions to pluralism, dialogue, tolerance, protection of the common heritage of humanity, recognition and continuation of diversity and finally for his contribution to world peace.

I would like to express that, following the conferences that were held at the initiative of UNESCO in New Delhi and Ohrid the previous year, I deem this conference, the brainchild of the Kyrgyz government, as a very important initiative for world peace.

The word we use for human being in Turkish *"insan"* is of Arabic origin and is derived from the participle *"unsiyet"*. *"Unsiyet"*, in turn, refers to people who are accustomed to each other, at peace with one another. The antonym of this word is "violence". And this shows us that being a human being in itself is synonymous with living in peace and harmony in a community.

Humanity has reached our day undergoing through periods of violence and slavery in its history. We are now in the age of civilization. History is a science of admonition. It should be incumbent upon the civilized people to reflect upon the reasons of past conflicts and misunderstandings and not to repeat the same mistakes.

In our age, rule of law and democracy should constitute the common values as well as the common ground for all of humanity. All diversity, including religion, language and ethnic origin should be considered as different colours on the face of the earth. We will actually have solved many problems the day we learn to accept that diversity of humanity is like diversity of colours in a rainbow. And indeed, in a country as well as in a world, where democracy reigns, all these different colours will be safeguarded.

Civilization is the common heritage of humanity as a whole. Therefore, I am pleased that this understanding constitutes the indispensable basis of UNESCO. On the face of the earth exists not one pure language, architecture or music. Since the time even when dialogue

between cultures was minimal, there exists a significant amount of interaction between different cultures. It is this interaction that have enriched and developed cultures and civilization and brought them to its current level.

We can compare diversity in a country or in the world at large to different instruments in an orchestra. In an orchestra, there are instruments that have totally contradictory sounds, shapes and peculiarities. Provided that the orchestra conductor is talented and skilful, different sounds from these various instruments will turn into an amusing melody. However, if he is not so, what you will hear will be an unpleasant tune without any harmony.

In this regard, leaders and international organizations, such as the United Nations, that are in a position to manage people, are the conductors of humanity. Therefore if we are hearing unpleasant tunes rather than an amusing melody in our age, then we should think over and over again where we went wrong.

Humanity should use "and" instead of "or". Using the frame "you or I" means the ignorance or denial of the existence of the "Other". But if we could say "you and I", this would bring everybody from different cultural origins together. I believe that if we could say "both you and I", peace instead of war, prosperity and serenity instead of chaos would prevail.

Some among us could say that in spite of the presence of the concepts of intercultural dialogue, tolerance and peace as popular notions in the agenda of humanity for many years, the world has been experiencing the contrary in practice. I would like to remind these friends that the endeavour to make these concepts prevail in the world is a constructive and productive effort. We should always bear in our minds that it is easy to destroy but difficult to create, as it was obvious in the construction and the destruction of Twin Towers in New York.

One Turkish intellectual, in order to express the strength of determination and willpower, remarks that "it is not the water drops what deform a stone but their continuity and persistence".

Therefore, if necessary, we can repeat and underline the same views and we can hold such meetings on this theme over and over again. But as being on the right path, I appeal to you not to be discouraged and not to lose our determination.

As a current phenomenon of our era, globalisation along with its positive aspects, at the same time has some drawbacks. Unfortunately, the economic, political and social globalization has brought the concept "global terror threat" to the international agenda. We condemn all kinds of

terrorism regardless of religious, racial or whatsoever motivation they have behind. It can not be justified by any argument. Humanity should have learned that "bloodshed and violence bear no results".

The appropriate concept that should be endorsed and implemented not only for Eurasia but also for the whole world is not a "clash of civilizations" but one of a "dialogue among civilizations". I have no doubt that the recognition and protection of cultural diversity and the improvement of intercultural dialogue will facilitate to construct bridges of friendship among cultures.

Sergei Ordzhonikidze
United Nations Under-Secretary-General
Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva

Our world faces unprecedented threats and challenges: Global terrorism has given rise to a new sense of profound insecurity. Globalization brings unparalleled potential for economic growth through integration of markets but also the prospect of entrenching existing inequalities and polarisation. Pollution and environmental degradation may jeopardize the management of scare resources, shared across national boundaries, and could cause conflict, if not addressed adequately. Trafficking in drugs and human beings constitute an acute security problem, affecting all states along the route from the lace of origin to the destination, and it severely undermines economic development by stunting the growth of legitimate business initiatives.

These challenges are inter-related and, in some instances, mutually reinforcing. Common to all of them is that dialogue is essential if we are to address – and eventually overcome – them. Such dialogue should take place not only among civilizations but also within these civilizations themselves. We should not talk a single dialogue but of several dialogues on the different dimensions of the challenges before us. Here, it is important to keep in mind that civilizations are not uniform, static entities but collections of individuals with different backgrounds and aspirations. At times, we may find greater differences – and even tensions – within a single so-called civilization than among civilizations. When we consider civilizations in this way, we can get away from unhelpful divisions of the world, for example, East versus West or South versus North.

This is important because the challenges that we face cut across all such categorizations. Global terrorism poses a real and equal threat to all countries and to all citizens within them. If we are to fight terrorism effectively, we also need to consider the underlying causes that drive its perpetrators and its supporters: their grievances and aspirations. This is not to condone the criminal acts of terrorists but it is a critical component of our fight against terrorism. If we do not fully appreciate the nature and dimensions of the threat, we can never be effective in combating it. Here, we should also not lose sight of the economic dimension of terrorism. It has a profound impact on the international economy, and therefore undercuts development and growth across the world. Nobody is immune from the consequences of the globalization of violence.

Trafficking in drugs and human beings is also a global threat that respects no distinctions. It affects deeply the countries of origin, transit and destination. All these countries have an important role and a clear responsibility in the fight against this menace. Strengthening our collective capacity to tackle this problem – from finding alternatives to the growing of narcotic crops to eliminating criminal networks that disseminate them – is an urgent challenge. In this context, we should also keep in mind the links between terrorism and international criminal networks, and between their sources of funding.

Economic and social development constitutes a formidable global challenge. And it is not separate from our security challenges. On the contrary, prosperity and security are closely connected. Without security for the state and the individual, development cannot take root – in conditions of poverty and despair, insecurity will always prevail. Achieving sustainable development and ensuring that the benefits of globalization are distributed fairly is essential. Here also, dialogue is indispensable – in setting up frameworks and mechanisms that facilitate economic interaction and in ensuring trade without barriers where all countries may benefit. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals, adopted by world leaders in 2000, are both a practical guideline for development and an inspiration for implementation.

Dialogue is not only essential among cultures and communities but also across these different dimensions of our common challenges. We cannot focus on these challenges in isolation – we have to address them together. Our ability to tackle them effectively depends on our ability to see the connections between them and addressing them in parallel.

Good governance and respect for human rights is crucial in addressing these threats effectively. Accountable and transparent institutions and involvement of civil society is key. Good governance means empowerment of the citizen to be able to move the country forward collectively. Good governance and respect for the dignity of the individual are preconditions for development. In essence, good governance is also an on-going dialogue involving all society's stakeholders.

While these threats and challenges are indeed global in character and scope, they also have regional dimensions. Individual regions are affected in different ways and to different extents. Region-wide dialogue can accelerate and support economic and democratic reforms at the national level. It is not an alternative to national efforts but an important complement that reinforces national initiatives to the benefit of the individual country and the region at large. Regional economic integration

has been a motor for growth and reform in a number of regions across the world. Central Asia has great potential for reaping similar benefits through free movement of goods and ideas within the region.

Regional cooperation is also vital consolidating peace and in addressing security concerns. In this respect, I would like to highlight the Central Asian Nuclear Free Zone initiative as an example. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, agreed to by the States of the region, strengthens the security of those States as well as to contributes to achieving disarmament and security at the global level. The importance of this initiative was recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in 2002, and I would like to assure you that you may rely on the continued support and assistance of the United Nations in this notable endeavour. Enhancing regional security arrangements is also invaluable in strengthening regional economic growth, not only by contributing to creating a secure atmosphere for growth to take root, but also by bolstering collaboration among regional partners.

It is indeed very appropriate that we have come together for these exchanges in Central Asia. It is a region with a long history and proud traditions with great potential for mutual enrichment through dialogue. It is also a diverse region and a home to many peoples and cultures. This has at times created tension – even conflict. But the collective commitment to dialogue, to good governance and to development – which is so clearly illustrated by the presence at this Forum of the distinguished leaders of the region – clearly demonstrates the region's will to build on their strengths together. In the future, this may be an example to other regions.

The United Nations itself is a forum for dialogue, founded on the belief that our diversity is an asset. Cultural pluralism is a condition for progress and development, not an obstacle. You may count on the support of the United Nations family in your continued efforts to strengthen dialogue and cooperation within the region. It is important that your voices are heard at the United Nations so that the international community hears you concerns as well as benefits from your experiences in a fruitful global dialogue.

Ara A. Abramian
UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for the Dialogue among Civilizations

I express sincere gratitude to the President of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Director-General of UNESCO for the invitation to take part in this important regional forum.

The discussion about ways and means of conducting the dialogue among civilizations on all continents, in particular in Eurasia, is gaining importance against a background of conflicts and outbursts of instability on various spots on the globe. Being one of the largest world crossroads, Eurasia plays the unique role of a bridge connecting the most ancient and modern civilizations. Thus it is not difficult to imagine what amount of problems and contradictions might have accumulated in this field for thousands of years if the wisdom of intercultural dialogue, the respect for the variety of civilizations itself and a tolerant attitude to each other had not become a guarantee of securing peace between nations. Undoubtedly, at the beginning of the twenty-first century there were still some major interethnic problems, but as the ancients said, "one should be able to forgive, but one must not forget". In this sense it is only the dialogue among civilizations that can create conditions under which the past will be neither a barrier to the formation of civilized relations in the epoch of globalization, new technologies and a synthesis of cultures and traditions, nor will it hamper our progress on the way of preserving national originality.

I believe that in this field any UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador has a wide room for activity where it is possible to realize the UNESCO mission. The "Union of Armenians of Russia" which I head and which became an appreciable part of the civil society of our multinational country, Russia, actively supports the observance of human rights, eradication of radical extremism and nationalism, formation of efficient mechanisms of interaction between the state and numerous national-ethnic associations of peoples populating Russia. Besides we aspire to bring specific contributions to the establishment of a good neighbourhood between countries, including Armenia and Turkey. I am convinced that the dialogue among civilizations will be a basis and a guarantee for peace between peoples for many years to come. Today it is one of the basic preventive means against propagation of international terrorism and, in many respects, a real basis of securing sustainable development of countries and continents.

I would like to underline one of the modern world realities: we live in an epoch of change and mixture of civilizations where the culture or the

national-cultural factors taken in their complex meaning are an integral component providing stability in a transition to new modes of production and relations. In other words, it is also a manifestation of the dialogue among civilizations. If such a dialogue is conducted meaningly and consistently, it is really capable to promote progress of society and relationship of peoples. Thus, all the constituents of the civil society can win, benefiting from sustainable development of countries and regions. The concept of the main components or factors of development does not mean that they are identical for all countries. On the contrary, it is the variety of these factors contributing to harmonious development of each country, region and society that is the precondition for the dialogue among civilizations.

From this point of view I suggest that we think, together with UNESCO, about the development of a special programme which could be entitled: "The dialogue among civilizations with a view to promoting sustainable economic and social development". Such a programme could give the international format for business activities which being a component of civil society and it could demonstrate convincingly the advantages of working under the aegis of UNESCO in order to strengthen economic and social stability in a number of the countries and regions. Such a programme could get modest financial support on the part of UNESCO, for example, at the rate of 0.5% of the Organization's budget, on the understanding that these funds would be increased many times by additional off-budget international financing.Projects within the framework of the new programme would concern, in a complex economy, education and culture and would be developed on the basis of an analysis of key parameters for each country. For one of them the main part could be the sector of energy systems, for others transport, educational infrastructure, manpower training or cultural industries. On the whole it would be a question to what extent UNESCO could offer businessmen, within the framework of partnership, an intellectual complex product which would be claimed in various parts of the world by virtue of its real potential strengthening step-by-step basic elements of sustainable development in a specific country. I would be ready to launch such a programme by offering projects of cooperation with certain Member States such as Armenia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Argentina. I am sure that national business as an active part of a society will be capable to respond seriously to specific programmes and projects of UNESCO.

Within the framework of the present forum we have created together with UNESCO a project of opening two computer classes here in Issyk-Kul

and in the city of Talas, emphasizing the historical importance of these places not only on the national, but also on the global scale. We want to help the younger generation to enter into the global streams of the educational, scientific, economic, cultural information and engage in exchanges more actively. For this purposes I am financing 30 sets of new computers as a starting point for the formation of modern computer educational networks in Kyrgyzstan with the assistance of the National Commission of the Kyrgyz Republic for UNESCO.

Let me also emphasize the importance of protecting languages serving as means of international communication. Various languages represent the national wealth of any country. The experience of the "Union of Armenians of Russia" shows that Russian language contests and Olympiads organized by us under the patronage of the first Heads of Sstate within the framework of the CIS countries, in particular in Armenia and Kazakhstan, can serve the purpose of national cultures enrichment and display a true dialogue among cultures and civilizations. They promote the identification of talented multilingual youth receiving grants to continue education in higher educational institutions in Russia. It seems to me that UNESCO could encourage replication of similar experiences in other continents, drawing on extra-budgetary funds provided among others by the private sector.

In conclusion, I would like to invite all interested participants of the forum to cooperate within the framework of the General agreement that I concluded with UNESCO at the end of last year. The agreement provides projects promoting development of the dialogue among civilizations aimed mainly at involving youth, women, and various humanitarian organizations in strengthening this Dialogue under the direction of UNESCO.

Chjan Yannyan
Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Kyrgyz Republic

On behalf of the government of the People's Republic of China, I have the pleasure to express our gratitude to the government of Kyrgyzstan and UNESCO for organization of such an important conference and I wish it a great success.

Diversity is an objective reality of the contemporary world. According to the ancient Chinese saying, there are no even two identical things. This is the essence of nature. Today there are about 200 states in the world and more than 6 billion people. History, social order, culture, religion and level of development in each country has its unique character. In the whole world there cannot exist only one civilization, concept of values and model of development. Diversity and differences between cultures and civilizations must not be a source of conflicts. Development of dialogue among civilizations, based on mutual respect and peaceful resolution of regional and international conflicts, is one of the most efficient ways to avoid discrepancies and to prevent confrontation. In the context of globalization, diversity of the world and differences between civilizations are the objective reality which must be respected and they present a rich resource which must be used.

Terrorism is the common enemy of the humankind. It has a complex source. The international community including the countries of Central Asia make continuous efforts to fight against terrorism. The association of terrorism with any civilization or religion cannot contribute to peace and sustainability in the world.

The UN always attaches great importance to dialogue among civilizations. Since the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution on proclaiming the year of 2001 as the Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, UNESCO and many countries and regions organized a number of events and developed the ways of enhancing dialogue among civilizations, which should be studied and implemented.

Kyrgyzstan has an ancient culture and history. The written data about the Kyrgyz nation appeared in the third century B.C. The wisdom and diligence of Kyrgyz people made an important contribution to the development of civilization and progress of humankind. Kyrgyzstan has developed in the economic, social and other fields of life. As a friendly neighbour of Kyrgyzstan we are glad to witness it.

China as a very ancient country, with more than a five thousand-year history and culture, made its contribution to the development and progress

of humanity. We are ready to develop cultural exchange and dialogue of civilizations on the basis of equality and mutual respect with all countries of the world, including Central Asia.

China attaches great importance to the development of the dialogue of civilizations within the framework of the UN system and participates actively in all events organized by the UN and UNESCO. Today, the Government of Kyrgyzstan together with UNESCO organize the important Conference "Eurasia in the 21st Century – Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations?" in search of ways and methods of developing dialogue. I am deeply convinced that joint efforts of participants from different countries will contribute to the achievement of the main goals of the conference: development of dialogue and mutual understanding, and this event will enhance peace and stability in Central Asia.

Message

Vladimir Putin
President of the Russian Federation

Your Conference is held in quite a complicated international situation. Today the forces inflaming inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts, intolerance and violence, are becoming more and more active. Organizers and inspirers of international terrorism want to use in their own political aims the objective difficulties caused by the processes of globalization.

We must respond to this challenge by forming the united cultural, scientific and educational space within the frame of the Eurasian civilization and by implementing multilateral projects enhancing intracivilizational dialogue.

Of special importance is the policy promoting true cultural pluralism. We must encourage linguistic diversity and develop active international cooperation in the fields of culture and information. It is important to make the idea of dialogue of civilizations acceptable and understandable for the public at large in our countries.

Interaction of different cultures is a centuries-old tradition of our social life and state activities, and the national diversity of Russia is a great wealth of our country. Therefore, we fully support the activities of UNESCO promoting a culture of peace and tolerance as the principle conditions for dialogue among civilizations.

I am sure, that the practical outcomes of your meeting will contribute to the safeguarding of national and cultural originality of the peoples of Eurasia and enhance partnership for peace and sustainable development.

PART II

Papers presented to the Conference

Ko chiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO with Chinghiz Aitmatov, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to Belgium, Permanent Delegate of Kyrgyzstan to UNESCO and Madame Aitmatova

Issyk-Kul Sails with UNESCO Winds

Chinghiz Aitmatov
People's Writer of Kyrgyzstan
Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Kingdom of Belgium
Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to UNESCO

The period which we are experiencing in the 21st century concentrates the colossal experience of the past times and the new challenges, and probably as never before demands peaceful consensus of peoples, countries and states on the Earth, which implies compatibility and interaction of political and social ways of life, and institutes of civilizations and cultures. Today the main strategy of human development becomes more and more evident. Once there were times when a piece of bread was the main task for people living on the earth and there were battles between people for a piece of bread. Today the main task for contemporary people is to live in mutual trust, mutual agreement, cooperation and partnership, because under the contemporary conditions of civilizations old stereotypes have no prospects and no future for all people and for each of us.

Having this in mind, we gathered today at Lake Issyk-Kul under the aegis of UNESCO to make our contribution to the ideas of the world integration, in particular the concept of Eurasian integration.

Before speaking about the contents of our Conference, let me make a short excursus, i.e. the Issyk-Kul preamble, because there is a kind of sacrality in the fact that we have gathered at Lake Issyk-Kul.

So, we are here, on the shores of the crystal-clean, deep-water, blue, mountainous sea, which is initially under the protection of the Heavens according to the legends; the sea which is surrounded with mighty mountains, resembling a cosmic amphitheatre; the sea with 62 rivers flowing into it and not a single river flowing out of it though it is necessary to keep the water balance, but it seems to be the will of the Heavens. Here, on the Issyk-Kul shores, our ancestors practiced their rites with clean thoughts, praying and addressing the Heavens, the Spirits and the Celestial God Tengri to give them force to survive, to be inspired, to protect people from invasions, to live in harmony with the

environment and in peace with neighbours; for their everyday life our ancestors asked to increase their herds. And above all they asked to increase their kin, for what love of dzhigit to his bride must be deep and clean like the Issyk-Kul lake, the waves of which reflect the Sun at the sunset, the Moon at midnight and at the dawn and stars during the whole night. All this is the gift of Nature inspiring those who are in love to sing songs, to admire the Moon and stars, their spirits flying over the mountains.

Centuries passed, epochs changed each other, new civilizations appeared, new generations grew up and today we came from different parts of the world to these places of worship with the same original thoughts but in other parameters and in other historical dimensions provided with the fabulous achievements of human intellect and human labour.

I apologize for being carried away by romanticism, though we are having a serious meeting of serious people who gathered to make their contribution in dialogue of civilizations with the aim to avoid clash of civilizations and all those things which provoke the historically phenomenal crisis of civilizations with its consequences aggravating the life of the world community through terrorist violence and religious dogmatism and fundamentalism.

I think that we came here to continue the humanistic traditions of the Issyk-Kul, we have the same clean thoughts, but we are deeply concerned with the problems of the contemporaneity, i.e. the geopolitical situation in the 21st century. The Sun, the Moon and the Stars are the same as glorified in the Issyk-Kul legends, but we are not the same! Technologically we have become as powerful as the Cosmic Gods themselves, but in the moral sense we have the apocalyptical misgivings, sometimes even the feelings of the end of the world. This is the paradox: we are given such a power of human intellect and at the same time we have the threat of self-extermination of humanity on the earth.

Nobody from outside brings the Apocalypse to us, nobody from outside involves us in the world catastrophe; we, bearers of Human Intellect, ourselves generate this threat by our geopolitical confrontation, by the inextinguishable cult of militarism, by our distorted perception of the essence of the universal and local problems. We have to change such state of our epoch by ourselves, each of us and all together. This is the responsibility of all states, all powers, all regimes including the democratic ones, all religions which are absolutely responsible not only before God but also before mere mortals, and it is a special responsibility of the mass

culture which is exploited and raised by the world market in its own egoistic interests.

Within Eurasia we are directly concerned with these problems. Therefore, I would like to say a few words about Eurasia as a new geopolitical continent as the starting point of my reflections.

It seems that the well-known formula by Kipling that East is East, West is West and they never come together, today is subject to revision. How realistic and vitally important is the idea of their unification? What mechanisms should be used to make countries and peoples with different cultures and mentality, different history and economic potential have a common interest for unification?

This theme becomes increasingly topical both in the East and West – here the paradigm is one. Therefore, it is important, that as many people as possible accept this idea. We, living and thinking in common perception of the components of the two worlds – Europe and Asia – discover for ourselves the new, or rather the renewed continent, which virtually has been existing for a long time, since the Great Silk Roads, and mentioned as Eurasia in intellectual surveys. Nowadays, Eurasia is given a new dimension. But many people do not understand distinctly – is it a geographical space or a generalized political notion? I personally think, and my colleagues and friends in Moscow and Istanbul agree with me, that Eurasia is our common historical field, which is now a consolidating factor under the conditions of the present geopolitical disconnection. To be more exact, my understanding is that for us Eurasia is Central Asia with the European keel in the world ocean – with Russia, we all are on the same deck, and now with the European Union plus some East European countries and of course Mongolia. Greater significance in the Eurasian context belongs to the contemporary democratic Turkey. And such giants of the planet as China and India are independent worlds, subcontinents with huge populations, own problems and own life-style. We can friendly cooperate with them, have good-will neighbouring relations, find common directions of geopolitics; but in order to go hand-in-hand in our everyday life more interaction and unity is needed. Russia, though it is for centuries a centre of revolutionary ordeals and transformations, experiencing periods of growth and recession, is the main core around which the main Eurasian formation must develop. Along with it, I stress again the important, intensive and system role of contemporary Turkey in the context of Eurasia. Today all great and small countries strive to this universally needed unity. Under the conditions of globalization it is necessary not

only to feel but also to count on our Eurasian unity as the highest dimension and format of the contemporary co-existence. The moreover, in the forthcoming era of the global informational civilization, the Eurasian basis will help us to safeguard our national identities in the context of globalization. We can certainly make the way to the world proscenium all by oneself, though it will be a long and exhausting way, but on this way also Russia with its territory from Eastern Europe to Japan Islands, with its life experience of East and West and with its present understanding of its mission, is for us the main connecting link, I would stress again. I do not speak about our cultural ties, which developed and formed historically. This is axiomatic. One of the emperors in his time formulated the ideology of the Roman Empire as follows: it must be profitable for people to live together. Within ten years of independence, the former Soviet Republics understood that it is extremely difficult to push the way to the world market one by one and turned to the former common values. Now all the achievements in the CIS space can become again profitable for each country and for all countries together. Sooner or later life will bring us to such situation. We are people of common civilization and we have common historical self-identification. For example, China is very near to Central Asia. However, we are far away from the Chinese way of life, though we feel the greatest friendly respect to this giant of the world. Nevertheless, the geopolitical matrix of peaceful good-neighbourly co-existence with China presents the high level of civilized relations. We are in the orbit of different forms of civilization, better or worse – this is another matter… But we have what we have. This is history, our destiny, as our development was and is through the Russian imperial experience. Historically, we are on the same foundation with Russia from the Middle Ages to our days.

At the same time, in the Eurasian development we face two contradictory trends: globalization and increased attention to national cultures. While the processes of globalization as never before spread in science, technology, mass media, trade, finance, tourism, migration, criminality and diseases, the increasing national and cultural self-identity becomes the main feature of our times.

Such characteristic features of modernization as market economy, democratic governance, civil society and human rights acquire global significance. At the same time, influence of traditions on the formation of the contemporary world is actually only increasing. Co-existence and interaction of globalization and national-cultural identities urge us to act beyond the simple view of the world "either…or".

Here we are in the face of today's reality. On the horizon there are great perspectives of the future human development, future scientific and technical achievements. This is how a dramatic symphony of the human mind and human spirit is always composed on the earth. But at the same time there are everywhere the alarming problems of the current state of the human race. This side of life demands new ideas and actions, new ways of dialogue of cultures and viewpoints.

Contemporary nations and countries have just got rid of the challenging threats of the bipolar world. During the cold war the irreconcilable and fanatic ideologies and countries opposed each other…Today the world is not bipolar. It is the epochal achievement in the historical development. But in the process of globalization new hotbeds of conflicts appeared provoking dreadful local wars that probably will be followed by future large-scale wars. Alas, today the ideology of violence is again cultivated and terrorism acquires mega-ominous influence. And not only because the terrorist acts themselves are terrible and bring much sorrow and suffering to people. Terrorist acts being local in their method of action are global in their influence. Due to the highly developed information technologies, electronic and print media they instantly and destructively influence the feelings and views of people – our contemporaries. This is terrifying! Terrorism itself aims not so much at the direct effect (how many buildings are destroyed and how many people are killed); it is rather aimed at the immediate impact on the whole world, as it is immediately shown on TV throughout the world. And this is the triumph of the ideologists of international terrorism.

This phenomenon is based on the dominant components of social life, such as religion and culture… Religion's mission is to serve peace, social harmony and spiritual elevation of people. But narrow-mindedness, egoism and conservatism of the main faiths, when each of them claims to the total rule over the minds and souls of people, have an inevitable inverse effect. Regretfully, in the field of culture irreversible processes take place as well, because the mass culture filling our life is the social scourge, which destroys the true moral values. We go from one extreme to another.

Previously artists were suppressed by the ideological regime, but today they are paralyzed by the market and commercialization. American mass culture reigns all over the world spreading destructive stereotypes and standards of thinking and behaviour. Therefore, Eurasia, which is represented by different countries and nations, must implement its historical mission.

This should always be kept in mind…

Background Paper

Hans d'Orville
Director, the Bureau of Strategic Planning, UNESCO

Ann-Belinda Preis
Senior Programme Planning Specialist, the Bureau of Strategic Planning, UNESCO

Adash Toktosunova
Secretary General of the Kyrgyz National Commission for UNESCO

1. Introduction

Today, all societies, including those in Eurasia, have to cope with new economic and political challenges as well as with the need to further develop their social and cultural conditions.

In the face of new and multidimensional threats to global peace and security, the concept of a "Dialogue among Civilization" has assumed ever greater salience. In past years, and especially since the tragic events of 11 September 2001, activities promoting dialogue among cultures and civilizations have attracted renewed attention at the highest political levels throughout the world.

Subsequent to the global observance of 2001 as United Nations Year for the Dialogue among Civilizations – launched by UNESCO on the eve of the Millennium Summit in New York -, and the UN General Assembly resolution 56/6 of 21 November 2001 adopting the UN Global Agenda for the Dialogue among Civilisations,, UNESCO has intensified its own activities in this domain. New impetus was provided by the adoption of 31 C/Resolution 39 on the fight against terrorism by the General Conference in November 2001, which affirmed, among others that dialogue "constitutes a fundamental challenge based on the unity of humankind and commonly shared values, the recognition of cultural diversity and the equal dignity of each civilization and each culture".More recently, two important events have provided the Organizations with renewed

orientation for the dialogue in future: the international ministerial conference "Dialogue among Civilizations – Quest for New Perspectives", held in New Delhi on 9 and 10 July 2003 and "The Regional Forum on the Dialogue among Civilizations", held in Ohrid, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on 29 and 30 August 2003.

Based on the outcomes of these two events, on 16 October 2003, the General Conference of UNESCO unanimously adopted a landmark resolution (Resolution 47), which endorsed the "New Delhi Declaration" and the "Message from Ohrid".

For its part, UNESCO has welcomed and supported manifold initiatives and actions by governments, international organizations, the academic community, religious and spiritual leaders, the private sector, actors of civil society and individuals aimed at carrying forward and invigorating the dialogue among cultures and civilizations. The Forum "Eurasia in the 21st Century – Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations?" to be held in Issyk-Kul (Kyrgyzstan) on 10 and 11 June 2004 provides another welcome occasion to focus on this important issue in a concrete regional and interregional context.

A central objective of the Forum will be to define practical measures and modalities for the implementation of the recommendations of the New Delhi and Ohrid conferences at the regional level, and to formulate future approaches for UNESCO and other relevant actors. Guided by the precepts of tolerance and intercultural and inter-civilizational dialogue, the Issyk-Kul Forum will address the following topics in Eurasia, characterised as it is by multi-ethnic and multi-faith societies:

- Shared values, ethical principles and human rights – the cornerstone of every dialogue;
- Cultural diversity and heritage: a shared experience, a font for identities and a tool for reconciliation;
- Water and sustainable development – promoting peaceful cooperation and developing synergies through dialogue involving the natural sciences;
- The impact of integration processes on inter-ethnic and inter-faith relationships and on the emergence and reinforcement of tolerance;
- New paradigms of education in the context of dialogue among civilizations, especially through the pursuit of the six Education for All (EFA) goals;
- The role of international organizations in helping to prevent the occurrence of conflicts at the sub-regional and regional levels.

The Conference will seek to advance the emergence and articulation of a model of integration for civilizational development in Eurasia.

2. The challenge of dialogue

Over the past years, UNESCO has been involved in broadening the scope of dialogue making it more relevant to contemporary challenges. The concept of a dialogue among civilizations has been reviewed and assessed with a view to identifying obstacles to dialogue, including old and new ignorances and prejudices, which can lead to new fractures and conflicts especially at local community levels. An opposition to the vision of a future world characterized by anarchy and conflict lies at the core of this effort.

It could be argued that civilizations may intermingle as well as may be in conflict, but it is obvious that neither "clash of civilizations" which exaggerates "difference" and "division" nor the assumption of "civilization" as a homogenous integral and coherent unity do not correspond to a lived reality in the contemporary world of vivid interpenetration of cultural experience and practice everywhere.

In this situation, the challenge posed by the dialogue concept is to build a future on the accomplishments of a dialogue among and cross-fertilization of civilizations. Seen in this perspective, the dialogue among civilizations leaves no room for an evolutionary perspective that separates civilizations in such a way that some are ranked above others and some are set in opposition to others. The term "civilization" can only denote a universal, plural and non-hierarchical phenomenon and one that is also interactive since every civilization has been enriched by contact an exchange with other civilizations.

3. The role of intercultural and inter-civilizational dialogue

Modern pluralistic societies, if they wish to ensure peace and to preserve the well-being of their citizens, cannot afford to pay the price of cultural monologue or cultural fundamentalism. Today, as the population of many countries has acquired a multi-ethnic character, the development of a democratic society is impossible without the capacity of each citizen to integrate his or her values and principles with the values of other social-cultural groups.

Certain values and principles are universally shared and cut across all civilizations, establishing a sense of human commonality and

community. They propound basic truths and standards of behaviour that constitute the very basis of social cohesions and collective purpose. Any dialogue must therefore focus on the importance of shared values, which give meaning to life and provide form and substance to identities. It must also foster respect for the Other and acknowledge and uphold diversity. In situations of major social and economic transformations, often induced by the consequences of globalization, the constant promotion and renewed awareness of the ethical principles and human rights are of key importance.

In the quest for sustainable development, the significance of social-cultural pluralism must be highlighted: how can European values and principles be adapted to the Central Asian context? Can "Western culture" be valued in a different cultural environment? What could be the next stage in the historical development of Eurasia – dialogue or conflict? – An answer to these questions depends on the interpretation of the notions of "culture" and "civilization". The analysis of the social processes involved - their impact on the interaction of, and compromise between, different civilizations – is essential.

A dialogue among cultures and civilisations knows no limits and boundaries. Intercultural contact and exchange open new opportunities for societies to better understand others - and themselves. The interaction of cultures is therefore an integral feature and precondition of social progress.

Education's central contribution to mutual understanding, tolerance and respect for cultural diversity is undeniable. Thus, educational programmes should not focus on differences, but on the ways in which diversity can enrich lives and on "leaning to live together". This may also include improving dialogue with marginalized groups and promoting tolerance and conflict-resolution programmes in schools, which could be furthered through cooperation with civil society organizations already working on good practices for conflict-resolution. Dialogue nurtured within the minds of human beings through appropriate education can inform and shape overt dialogues among individuals and among groups brought up in different cultural environments leading towards new harmonious existence capable of defining and meeting mutual interests.

The universal - political - commitment to the six goals of Education for All (EFA) adopted in Dakar in April 2000 has created a particularly powerful base for a range of initiatives and approaches, among others to attain universal primary education by 2015 and gender parity in schooling by 2005. At the national level, a systematic incorporation of dialogue approaches necessitates substantial educational reforms. Purposes and

goals of national education policies may need to be revised, the precepts of sustainable development promoted, appreciation for and the practice of democratic values, human rights, pluralism and non-violence taught, all complemented and enriched through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Emphasis must be put on curricula, which should promote life skills, human rights, respect for diversity and a culture that helps people learn to live together. Processes include active and learner-centered teaching-learning methods, greater community involvement in more school-based management and the use of appropriate language. The aim is a combination of achievement and attainment in regard to knowledge, attitudes, skills, and the standards and tools needed to assess them. Education for justice, liberty and peace is education of quality.

4. Eurasian and regional aspects of dialogue

In Central Asia, the system of social relations at different levels is far from being perfect and is often of a contradictory character. On the one hand, the efforts of people to meet their growing demands can enhance development; on the other hand, it may reduce the impact of culture and its values on this process. This may create a basis for social conflict. The aspiration to create modern, open societies and a corresponding democratic secular state of the Western type, is viewed by some to bring with it a hidden threat of ethnic and cultural assimilation – reinforced by the dynamics of globalization.

Cultural diversity may be defined as a principle for organizing sustainable cultural plurality, both within and across societies. The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) underscores that "…policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens are guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society and peace. Thus defined, cultural pluralism gives policy expression to the reality of cultural diversity. Indissociable from a democratic framework, cultural pluralism is conducive to cultural exchange and to the flourishing of creative capacities that sustain public life" (Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Article 2).

Cultural diversity is therefore more than an open-ended menu of differences or variations. It is a mechanism for organizing the most productive dialogue between meaningful pasts and desirables futures. As such it cannot operate strictly within national boundaries and must profit from the dialogue between societies, much as market-based globalization

can profit from commerce across national borders. The Declaration aims both to preserve cultural diversity as a living, and thus renewable treasure, that must not be perceived as being unchanging heritage but as a process guaranteeing the survival of humanity; and to prevent segregation and fundamentalism which, in the name of cultural differences, would sanctify those differences and so counter the message of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

A revitalized dialogue between culture and development will be necessary to address this challenge. Only in this way can cultural diversity be preserved as an adaptive process and as a capacity for expression, creation and innovation – as well as understanding and reconciliation, where required.

National cultures may be enriched by new possibilities of expression. In that regard, transformations suppose changes of individual and societal norms and values and a readiness to demonstrate tolerance vis-à-vis other values in addressing social and economic questions.

5. Water and water resources as a factor of national well-being

One of the principal challenges for the Central Asian region and sub-region is to engage in a sustained and effective dialogue to address the range of issues associated with water resources and management.

The crucial role of water and water resources for development, national well-being and often times even security is increasingly being recognized in a region which has the benefit of water sources flowing from the ubiquitous mountains of one country to the many valleys of other neighbouring countries – opening up the possibilities for disputes or even conflicts.

Geopolitical changes, population growth, agricultural demands, energy requirements, urbanization, economic growth and industry and globalization all impact on the water situation – and the management of water resources - in complex and highly interdependent ways.

International conflicts over water are predicted to become more frequent as competition for available freshwater resources increases. But as reported by the UN World Water Development Report, the historical record shows that international water disputes do get resolved by treaties between nations with the support of the international community. The Interstate Coordinating Water Commission between Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, the Indus River Commission between

India and Pakistan and the Senegal River in West Africa provide examples of effective trans-boundary water mechanisms.

In this wider context, water as an issue of strategic importance and one of the challenge of the 21st century, has been expressed in global dialogues such as the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 where derived the eight Millennium Development Goals, a widely accepted approach for moving forward on the unfinished development and transition agenda in a way that integrates economics, education, health, gender, environmental and global partnerships issues into a comprehensive development framework and focuses on real monitorable outcomes. Millennium Development Goal number seven, which addresses environmental sustainability, requires Governments to commit to meet the target indicators concerning levels of safe drinking water and sanitation, carbon emissions, forests and protected areas, and improving the situation of slum dwellers - all inter-related.

This was reaffirmed at the World Water fora and further specified by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in August 2002, whereby the number of persons without access to safe water and sanitation should be halved by the year 2015. Meeting the challenge of Water requires substantially increased efforts of global, regional cooperation and dialogues among the countries themselves.

Official data shows that in Europe and Central Asia, 91% of the population have access to improved water supplies, there is a serious issue of water quality, constituting a major health threat. Among the countries, those in Central Asian countries will need to mount the biggest effort in this area. Within Central and Southern Europe, the biggest gaps are in Romania and Albania. Roughly 30% of rural households in the Region do not have access to piped water, much of which is of unhealthy quality. In rural Moldova, 60% of water sampled from water supply systems did not meet water quality standards. Even in Ukraine, 25% of non-piped water is of unacceptable quality with regard to bacteriological and chemical standards. In this context, a specific target relates to environmental stability sustained by improved water management.

There is at present a strong momentum in the international community to recognize the importance of water management in the wider processes of poverty reduction and sustainable development. Dialogue and action to support future reform and concrete programmes through enhanced international cooperation will be key issues in future.

6. The regional context

All these topics are relevant both for the multi-ethnic and multi-faith host country of Kyrgyzstan and for the wider regional setting. The region of Central Asia is historically divided into several parts, depending on the specific focus:

a- cultural : nomads (Kazakhs, Kirghizes) and urban/settled (Uzbeks, Tadjiks) ;

b- religious/denominational : Sunni muslims (Kazakhs, Kirghizes, Uzbeks) et Shiite Muslims (Tadjiks) ;

c- linguistic : Turcophones (Kazakhs et Kirghizes, Uzbeks) et Persanophones (Tadjiks) – with a presence of Russian language in all countries

d- economic : more prosperous regions (Kazakhs, Uzbeks) and less prosperous regions (Kirghizes, Tadjiks)

All people of Central Asia share a common heritage and influences, which can be briefly summarized as follows:

a- Islam;

b- the Silk Road as a commercial and trade route and as a vehicle for disseminating and sharing knowledge and technologies;

c- the Russian influence;

d- the Soviet period.

More information on the region can be found at the website http://www.eurasianet.org/.

Given its geographic situation in the heart of Eurasia and its landlocked status, its multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-denominatonal countries and societies, its rich and unique cultures, the Central Asian region is uniquely placed to help advance the dialogue among cultures and civilizations – and above all a peaceful development.

In early 1990's, the governments of the Central Asian countries made great progress in the sphere of foreign policy. All of them became members of the United Nations and subsequently also members of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Today, the Central Asian countries also play an active role in international religious organizations, the most influential of which are the Islamic Conference and the World Islamic Congress, which enjoys the status of non-governmental consultancy organization under the UN.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, all Central Asian states have aspired to create modern, secular, open democratic societies. The main features of political development consist of living through a new stage of synthesis of foreign, and local socio-political systems and relations, the

latter being characterized by the intertwined processes of "modernization" and "re-traditionalization".

The international conference "EurAsia in the 21st century – Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations", taking its point of departure in the recent resolution (resolution 47) of UNESCO's General Conference, will focus on the socio-political, cultural and religious context of the region. To that end, a number of questions will need to be addressed, such as:

- How can a dialogue among cultures and civilizations provide a new, inclusive model of human relationships for sustainable development in the region?
- Can the dialogue become a guide in the political, economic and cultural transition that the region must live through in the age of globalisation?
- Can the region find a place in the global context through the application of a paradigm of dialogue among cultures and civilizations, by agreeing on the relevance of and promoting universally shared values, by integrating the concept of cultural diversity and by applying the precepts of dialogue to the critically important area of water management?

7. The geo-political, economic and cultural situation of Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan is an ancient country at the crossroads of cultures and civilizations, situated in the heart of Eurasia, through which passed the Great Silk Road linking East and West. The Kyrgyz land witnessed many historical events – migration of peoples, changes of religious and traditional orientations, social cataclysms and revolutions. The Kyrgyz nomadic culture is characterized by syncreticism and recognized for its tolerance. At the crossroads of major processes of historical development, Kyrgyzstan underwent the influence of various cultures and civilizations: Tengrianism, Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. All these major socio-cultural phenomena had their impact to social memory and philosophy of the people.

Kyrgyzstan as a newly independent country is in search of qualitatively new parameters of its socio-economic and political evolution and efficient interaction with the world community. Kyrgyzstan takes an active part in the processes ensuring regional security, civil peace and harmony. Taking into account the complex socio-political circumstances in Central Asia – growth of nationalist forces, separatism, religious

fundamentalism, the threat of armed conflict – the first Democratic Congress of the Central Asian Countries took place on 30 -31 May 1992 in Kyrgyzstan, the participants of which decided to found a Coordinated Congress Centre in Bishkek.

As one of the measures ensuring regional security is the proposal of Kyrgyzstan to create on its territory an open zone for intercultural and intra-civilizational dialogue in the Eurasian geopolitical space.

8. Intercultural, interethnic and inter-faith interaction as the development resource of the Kyrgyzstan

The idea of dialogue among civilizations may seem to be a dream, influenced by the fear of other cultures and by prejudices, misunderstandings and failures. In that context it can be adduced that Kyrgyzstan presents an example of unique mixture of Asian and European cultural environment. From ancient times till today its syncretic nature determines the economic and cultural development of the country. Kyrgyzstan is a Eurasian country. The Eurasian cultural space had a great influence on the way of development chosen by the Kyrgyz people in the building of its civil society. This choice was preconditioned by the specificities of the country, the historically traditional way of life, and its rich ancient culture.

The realization of the tasks at hand implies radical reforms in all spheres of social life – democratization of the state power, liberalization of the economy, poverty alleviation, preservation and enrichment of traditional cultural values, drawing on accomplishments of science and technology. Such transformations in multi-ethnic Kyrgyzstan are impossible without intercultural interaction. Hence, the presence of various ethnic groups in Kyrgyzstan enriches the spiritual and economic potential of the country.

In Kyrgyzstan, the development of democratic reforms has enabled the provision of many basic human rights, including the right to religious freedom. The Kyrgyz authorities view religion and its cultural and educational role in constructive terms and there is a revival of interest in the traditions and values of Islam, including moral values. The challenge of fostering good relations between nationalities and confessions, and promoting peace and harmony, are among the preoccupations of the Kyrgyz authorities at present.

The increased tolerance vis-à-vis other ethnicities and religions, and the aspiration towards interfaith harmony, as well as the strengthening of

civic peace and harmony within society would seem to be in accordance with the slogan 'Kyrgystan – our common home' (Kyrgyzstan – nash obshchi dom').

The spiritual life of the new Eurasian states today is free and multicultural. However, new social values have not yet been shaped in the minds of people liberated from the previous ideological monopoly. Principles of civil society in statehood formation have not acquired yet the irreversible character either. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a qualitatively new level, namely the concept of a modern democratic society based on socio-cultural pluralism. In this context, the Forum may draw up a "catalogue" of relevant new systems and modalities, such as consolidation, conventionality, communicativeness, "co-existence" of differences in a trans-boundary, confederative and spatial vision.

9. Select issues for consideration by the Forum

- East and West as socio-cultural formations need to develop dialogue as equal partners, based on the precepts of tolerance and mutual understanding.
- ultural values shall not be divided and opposed merely because they emanate from different civilizations.
- The complex problems of security, international terrorism and globalization of violence can only be solved through dialogue, mutual understanding, respect and partnership.
- The economic basis of a dialogue among civilizations lies in international trade, investment and innovative cooperation, the revival and creation of new international transportation corridors and the development of tourism.
- The benefits of globalization shall accrue to all peoples and shall help to tackle poverty alleviation and to resolve water and environment problems.
- The paradigms of the culture of peace and the dialogue among civilisations shall permeate the education of young generations and their value orientation.
- The integration of ecological problems with economic and social problems will be a precondition for a successful development and management of acute issues.

The need for a dialogue among civilizations is as old as civilizations themselves. The phenomena of globalization and the emergence of new challenges and threats to humankind make this need more topical than

ever. The fact that the overwhelming majority of the population of Eurasia understand the vital necessity of dialogue among civilizations and the mutual enrichment of cultures, provides a basis for optimism indeed.

Chinghiz Aitmatov, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to Belgium, Permanent Delegate of Kyrgyzstan to UNESCO; FW (Russ) Russell, Propgramme Planning Specialist, UNESCO Bureau of Strategic Planning; Ann-Belinda Preis, Senior Programme Planning Specialist, UNESCO, Bureau of Strategic Planning; and Osmonakun Ibraimov, State Secretary of the Kyrgyz Republic

Central Asia as a Space, Polity, Peoples, and Fate

Farkhod Tolipov

Assistant Professor, University of World Economy and Diplomacy
Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies

Introduction

The study of contemporary Central Asia faces the problems of ontology and conceptualization. Especially after 11 September, not only the modern scholarly works on Central Asia, but also recent post-independence studies of the region lack adequate and strong scientific approaches. The spectrum of incorrect views on Central Asia stretches from the assertions about the Uzbekistan's expansionism and hegemonism in the region and prognosis of "Balkanization" of Central Asia, to rejection of the applicability of the regional integration concept with regard the five countries of the region on the ground that they are too different cultures and political systems. More than that, most locals – that is Central Asians themselves – have been carried away by the perceptional works which were submitted to them and written about them by Western scholars.

What is Central Asia? For Westerners it is there, for locals it is here. Is it strictly definable? There is an idea of Americas, there is an idea of Europe, there is an idea of Eurasia, and etc. Is there an idea of Central Asia? I cannot but remember Adward Said's research. One can find interesting methodological warning in his "Orientalism" that both geographical and cultural entities – to say nothing of historical entities – such locales, regions, geographical sectors as "Orient" and "Occident" are man-made. "Therefore as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West". [1]

This kind of contemplations, I believe, can be applied to the Central Asian case. It is not about to attempt at replacing all lies by the truths, all

myths by real history and all conjecture and prejudices by strong and final research about Central Asia. It is only to attempt at compensating the lack of positive approach to the region from the viewpoint of the historical predisposition of its countries and peoples to the integration.

Central Asia as a Space

After the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, the whole system of the world order was shaken, and the world community was impelled to reconsider the very paradigm of international relations. In this paradigm Central Asia seems to have its own place and status.

The matter is that today more and more countries express strong interest in land communication between Europe and Asia, and the idea of a new Great Silk Road becomes more and more popular.

In the long run the role of Central Asia would increase, as the creation of trans-Asian railroad, highways and communication networks in Afghanistan will yield new possibilities to reach Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Besides, the creation and exploitation of the transport corridor TRACECA, which connects in the single network railroads and highways of 5 Central Asian and 3 Caucasian countries, will increase transit capabilities of as well as improve investment climate in the countries concerned. [2]

As R. Munro pointed out "A new Silk Road of modern railroads and highways that would effectively give China a land route far to the west, ultimately to Europe and to an Iranian opening on the Persian Gulf, would have enormous strategic consequences, possibly comparable to the impact that the advent of Suez and Panama Canals once had". [3]

By Central Asia we mean five newly independent post-Soviet states Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. These five represent in themselves a vast region with the territory of about 4 mln. sq. km. and population of about 55 mln. people. The geopolitical role of the region is stipulated by its intermediate location between Heartland and Rimland – the area of permanent clashes of world powers. In the West the natural frontiers of the region stretch along the shoreline of the Caspian sea, in the East along the mountain systems of Djungar Alatau of Tyan Shan, in the South along the Khorasan mountains and rivers of Amu-Darya, Pyandj and Amrek, and in the North along the edges of steps of Kazakhstan.

Besides, Central Asia is a unique region in the OSCE area. For the first time in the OSCE history it covers the region with not only

predominantly Muslim population but also countries non-democratic by the character of their political regime. From this point of view a question arises about to what extent the region will comply with the European values and standards of democracy and to what extent it will keep its archaic Eastern paternalistic nature. Where is the region, in the East or in the West?

Central Asia becomes a test ground for experiencing the traditional theory of division of the world into East and West. It can be said that it is a form of a new delimitation between East and West.

Central Asia as a polity

Profound and comprehensive changes are experienced by states of Central Asia since gaining independence. These changes embrace by-and-large economic, social, political, military, cultural and even ideological spheres. It is a very complicated process that can be described by one sophisticated concept of the national state-building. The latter process goes side by side with that of the proclaimed regional integration. In other words, the factor of the national self-identification currently co-exists with the factor of unification.

It should be mentioned that in this part of the world in all times certain supra-national integrative quasi-polities existed, such as the empire of Genghis Khan and that of Tamerlane, the Bukhara Emirate, the Kokand and Khiva khanates, Turan, Turkistan, Russian Empire and the Soviet Union with its "Central Asia and Kazakhstan", and all sorts of post-Soviet formations of the Central Asian Economic Commonwealth or the CIS types. The waves of integration and disintegration come and retreat to create a complex geo-socio-cultural-political tectonics of regional development in which the line between the national and the regional is barely seen.

These very complicated circumstances became the reason of misperception and misrepresentation of Central Asia and the overall transformation processes unfolding in the region. One of such misrepresentations, to my mind, is Brzezinski's theory of "Balkanization" of Central Asia. Deeper analysis of like concepts doesn't allow accepting such an analogy. If any resemblance would take place, it was the likelihood of "Afghanization" of Tajikistan – the most vulnerable to external threats country of Central Asia – in 1990-s up to 2001. [4] However, the irony of events was not the latter scenario, but the opposite one: the cultural and civilizational experience is being traced nowadays in Afghanistan which so

swiftly, within one year, jumped from medieval, brutal and man-hating obscurantism to a status of a partner-country of the OSCE.

In this regard, Central Asia is a quite unique polity. From the very outset of the Commonwealth of Independent States which substituted the Soviet Union Central Asians adopted, among their first interstate documents, Treaties on Eternal Friendship. They acknowledged the then-existing former Soviet administrative boundaries between them as interstate borders, and declared that they don't have any territorial claims to each other.

At the same time, the Soviet legacy and the general context of processes within the CIS stipulated one-sided Western perceptions of newly independent states as immanently weak and conflict-prone. Moreover, the region in many geopolitical researches was regarded, as a rule, from the viewpoint of the well known "zero-sum game" of external powers over the region. Perhaps, the sustainability of such a conception predetermined current anticipations of diversification of Central Asian states' foreign policy orientations, diversification negative by its character, and negative in a sense that it is being organized and formed on the basis of traditional model of balance of power. Even such a phenomenon as nationalism in this part of the world was historically caused to a great extent by geopolitical processes and itself became a tool of the latter. [5]

It should be noted that the concept of balance of power was appealed by both external powers and Central Asians themselves merely because it was world-wide spread and only known and relevant for them model of construction of international relations at the stage when the formation of independent foreign policy of any NIS is inescapably associated by "tested', albeit incorporated from outside, forms. Such elements of ersatz-policy have led to the negative foreign policy diversification. More than that, Central Asian countries found themselves in a situation of, if one can say so, double balancing: from one side balancing of the policy of external powers, and from the other side – their exaggerated apprehension about the necessity to balance each other in the region-vide scale.

Balance of power policy should be rejected as irrelevant conception of relationship between and among Central Asian states as well as between them and external powers. Instead, the current strategic task for the region is to strengthen integrationist attempts and efforts. The alternative to the integration policy is only mutual isolationism.

Countries considered are predisposed to work out their own common Model of integration. For this sake they should bring an order in their awareness about what they have, don't have and should have, in

which directions they failed and in which they succeeded regarding the all-embracing integration process. In other words, it is a question of assets, conditions, problems and possible directions of integration. Briefly:

- **Assets of Central Asian integration are:** Common origin and history ; recognition and official declaration from the very beginning of independence and in different forms of the Central Asian regional commonwealth; establishment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Central Asia; existence of region-wide multilateral format of summits and dialogue mechanisms developed to the level of Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO) ; creation of functional inter-state institutions/consortiums; slow but constantly ongoing institutionalization of the regional integration.

- **Conditions of Central Asian integration are:** Common trans-boundary challenges to the regional security; specific geographical location of the region; mutual economic, social, strategic dependence; pressure of post-Cold war geopolitical realities and formation of the new world order.

- **Problems of Central Asian integration are:** Information warfare; destructive geopolitics; exaggerated understanding of national interests; autocratic political regime and weakness of democratic institutions; lack of confidence and mutual trust; different false apprehensions of the so-called Uzbek hegemonism and alleged struggle between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan for domination in Central Asia.

- **Directions of Central Asian integration are:** Common information, scientific and socio-economic space in Central Asia; common market; renouncing of the visa regime; de-mining of certain border sites; re-consideration of modalities of economic relations and foreign policy strategies; full implementation of Treaties on Eternal Friendship ; setting up of a collective security system.

Central Asia as peoples

Are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan so different peoples, even alien, to talk about conflict prevention and crisis management between and among them? I don't doubt they are not; however, they were forced to believe they are, forced by newly emerged geopolitical circumstances that turned out the most negative outcome of independence and confused their self-identification. These countries found

themselves hostages of their own independence that requires inventing, shaping, constructing and defending the full-fledged statehood.

There is no doubt that crisis management and conflict prevention tools and mechanisms and building up confidence among states and peoples have become one of the major trends of international politics in conflict-prone areas. This is acquiring even greater importance in Central Asian countries because the relations among them are increasingly affected by the geopolitical factor. At all times the states' efforts to prevent conflicts will remain valuable as a sign of their goodwill. "Ultimately, the content of confidence building efforts may be less important than the process in instilling habits of cooperation that, over time, may result in greater understanding and increased levels of trust". [6]

From this point of view the "win-win" formula that is an antithesis to the "zero-sum game" looks like the most valid one to be applied to the search of adequate relationship models in Central Asia. It is a single 'oecumene' for all ethnic groups living in it. This is a positive factor. It is impossible to ignore the fact that the Central Asian countries and nations are interconnected and interdependent. Even their national self-identification cannot but intermingle. The existence in the territory of each particular country of diaspora of each other neighbouring country and a number of enclaves is a reflection of this intermingling. Any search for the so-called national ideology should be complemented and, more exactly, enriched by the aspirations to construct a regional ideology. In this sense nationalism and, so to say, supernationalism/regionalism co-exist and are mutually complementary to each other.

This means that if ethnic pluralism within and cohesiveness of a particular country are of vital importance for the national survival and prosperity, then ethnic pluralism among and cohesiveness of countries are, too, vitally important for the regional security and stability. The win-win strategy implies that the national should never be pursued and put on the agenda at the expense of the regional and vice versa.

On the other hand, the process of national self-determination, in its traditional sense, is doomed to remain incomplete. Just as the region's division into five parts within the borders of the current republics was arbitrary and artificial, so, too, any effort to conclude the process of building nation-states that is based purely on an idealization of the traditional, outmoded concept of nationhood, state and democracy will be ineffective.

The study of transformation processes which take place in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan reveals

in their content, direction and peculiarities, so to say, a national-regional dualism. Therefore, the overall geopolitical transformation of the region might be characterized as a real revitalization and reinforcement of regionalism in Central Asia.

Unfortunately, this factor is very often overlooked by scholars who study Central Asia. They mostly neglect the necessity of novel approaches to various intra-regional political issues which typically may look on the surface national or producing inter-national tensions and conflicts. The list of most "popular" issues of such kind include, for instance: inequality of Central Asian countries and peoples; Uzbek intention to establish own hegemony over the region; struggle for natural resources and water; territorial disputes; interethnic tension, and etc. The independence revealed the problem of stronger and weaker states in the region, the problem of equality of conditions and equality of statuses. This problem deliberately or not is played off by those who express pessimism about Central Asian regional unity. I see only one path away from the exacerbation of this problem, namely equalization of countries and peoples in one regional polity.

In this regard, cultural diversity among peoples of Central Asia should not be understood as if they belong to different civilizations. They belong to the same civilization and therefore political dialogue develops within one civilization. I cannot but remember our historians who conclude: "It is necessary to remember that all peoples populating Central Asia are descendants and heirs of rich historical past of this huge centre of the world civilization". [7] I would add 'equal heirs'.

Meanwhile not so much a cultural diversity is troublesome as is inadequately constructed foreign policy diversification of Central Asian states. Hence, we encounter "cultural pluralism versus geopolitical pluralism" situation. Indeed, the concept of cultural diversity or pluralism serves as the ground for and manifestation of peaceful coexistence of peoples and thereby undermines differences and stresses on cohesiveness between them. Geopolitical pluralism, on the contrary, undermines cultural pluralism just because it stresses on differences and, thereby, serves destructive geopolitics.

Talking about such issues as borders, interstate economic cooperation and solution of diverse problems of their relations we, as a rule, limit ourselves to consideration of only state actors, while there exist so called trans-boundary actors which very often challenge the classic activity of the former. They are people, families, business groups, professional non-governmental organizations and a number of others. Cultural and

civilization differences for them have never been essential to conduct their trans-boundary way of life and activities in the Central Asian context.

Besides, it should be reminded that all Central Asian peoples have one similar peculiarity: they are all composed by sub-national local communities which have their origin in ancient tribes, so that the respective nations as such can symbolically be divided into micro-communities. (Take, for instance, Uzbeks – the nation that, by origin, was composed of more than 90 tribe-related communities.) The peoples of the region are not only separated within the region that is divided externally. They are internally divided, as well. And we can surely assume that, in fact, these two forms of division reflect the same phenomenon – genesis of a nation in a modern sense of the word.

But interestingly, such a division can be continued and extended from micro- and macro-level to even a mega-level. If micro-level pertains to sub-national communities, macro-level – to the nation itself, a mega-level is associated with a super-national community. The sub-national, the national and the super-national co-exist simultaneously! And this is the same people.

Central Asia as fate

A fate for me is not an imagination of a fatalist. By fate I mean not simply a fortune or misfortune. It is not only a state of affairs. It is also a future that is being built and should be built.

From the viewpoint of "searching for a future", a question should be put forward: Will Central Asia be a common home for people residing in it? Will they share common destiny by creating common market and common democracy? What is and will be the correlation between Islam and secular statehood in these countries? Will the idea of pan-Turkism shape their future destiny?

It seems that one common answer to all these questions can emanate from the option by Central Asian peoples which is reflected in the principle "Central Asia first!" It means the expediency and urgency to work out common regional strategy regarding the key intraregional and international developments. They have to refrain deliberately from straightforward and short-sighted attempts at creating pure national model of everything – statehood, democracy, socio-economic system and especially security. Any searches of the national model of democracy should be substituted by the searches of the democratic model of the nation. Otherwise, isolationistic justifications of autocratic regimes will always be advanced.

Prof. S. Huntington in his brilliant book rightly notes that after the collapse of communism the view was reinforced in the West, especially in the U.S., that its ideology of democratic liberalism had triumphed globally and hence was universally valid. However, the dominant attitudes toward these Western values in non-Western cultures range from widespread skepticism to intense opposition. "What is universalism to the West is imperialism to the rest". [8] In our case, I guess, it is not about incompatibility of Western and Eastern values but about unwillingness of certain dominant political forces in Central Asian countries to incorporate democracy which is, by-and-large, not a Western invention.

Central Asia is undemocratic not because democracy is alien; on the contrary, they are not democratic because they are isolated from each other. D. Mitrany was quite right when he said that social activity in the region, in the widest sense of the word, is cut off by state frontiers and may (or may not) be combined with similar activities beyond the boundaries with help of "uncertain and cramping political ligatures". [9] What happens when social activity (which by nature can spread beyond state frontiers) is cut off at the randomly drawn boundaries is, in fact, dismemberment of national self-identification, an effort to strengthen national specificity that leads nowhere.

"Central Asia first" principle implies, that all – security and survival, socio-political structure and well-being as well as values – should be, so to say, nationally-regionally defined.

One of the great founding fathers of the united Europe Jean Monet once wrote in Europe there would never be peace if states would again revitalize on the ground of the national sovereignty which leads to the policy of prestige and economic protectionism. Countries of Europe are too small to secure the possible and needed degree of their peoples' well-being. He warned that well-being and necessary social development are inconceivable without European federation or confederation which would form their economic unity. [10] Alike deliberations can rightfully be applied to the Central Asian case.

One has to recognize that the carried out in Central Asia national division of 1920-s-1930-s which installed rigid limits on economic and social development of the republics was erroneous. [11] Therefore, re-unification is a timely and strategic task. It is also a way of overcoming inequality as was said above.

Equalization of countries concerned, that is integration, not only creates a new status-quo – a club of equals, – but also reduces the potential for separatism, irredentism, mutual suspicions, mistrust and rivalry which can be stipulated by inter-ethnic tension. Thus, integrationist political

equality is a precondition and prerequisite of equality of multiethnic societies.

By their destiny Central Asian peoples find themselves divided into several states. And divided, they were being persuaded that they need a mediator in their newly emerged disputes, they need help, foreign security assistance, including foreign military presence. Now they must re-shape their destiny. Their readiness to help themselves, to prevent crises in their relationships, as well as their will to resist together common security threats and to build common regional home are a precondition of respectful attitude towards Central Asian countries of external powers. Central Asian integration should not remain only a good will, but be widely and democratically discussed, nurtured, planned, constructed and secured. It is a historical responsibility of governments, nations and peoples.

"Security of each Central Asian country will be more valuable on the base of the principle of cooperative development; otherwise the risk to lose more and find oneself on the periphery increases". [12] Peripheral development, weakness, division plus wrong stereotypes and misperception of Central Asia (what can be called 'Central Asianism') will inevitably require a certain form of foreign peacekeeping presence. Paraphrasing the author of "Orientalism" E. Said, we can assume that in the worst case 'Central Asianism' will be successfully accommodated to the new imperialism, where its ruling paradigm do not contest, and even confirm, the continuing imperial design to dominate Central Asia.

Conclusion

The new studies of Central Asian political processes are dominated with conscious or unconscious consideration of the overall relations among Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as their foreign policy strategy, through the prism of the balance of power. However, the region's becoming the buffer zone between global superpowers and the loss of its independence just as a result of destructive balance of power politics are very often overlooked. Yet Hans Morgenthau warned: "The more intimately a local balance of power is connected with the dominant one, the less opportunity it has to operate autonomously and the more it tends to become merely a localized manifestation of the dominant balance of power". [13] The apprehension of such a would-be perspective must impel Central Asians to escape it and resist it by means of unification.

Meanwhile a new geopolitics arises in this part of the world that implies the own role of very Central Asians in international system and world politics. 11 September just accelerated this process. And scholarly works reveal again the problem of theory: we just observe the passage from old stereotypes and prejudices to new ones. Different wide spread analytical speculations, official statements, public suspicions and allegations about newly established American military-political presence in Central Asia can prove this thesis.

Public opinion, knowledge and perceptions of international relations are very often limited to such oversimplified "pro-" or "anti-" dichotomy, or to the idea that "military-economic power necessitates hegemony-prone politics", that the typical balance of power frameworks appeared the only theory that was demanded and accepted. The adherents of this theory – they constitute a majority – constantly repeat the phrase about the Russian domination of Central Asia which is nowadays being replaced by the alleged American domination.

At the same time, the new Central Asian library is just being created. Due to the new discovery of the region, 'Central Asianism', like 'Orientalism', as a system of knowledge needs renovation. The leading idea for such renovation might be the thesis: "the notion that there are geographical spaces with indigenous, radically "different" inhabitants who can be defined on the basis of some religion, culture, or racial essence proper to that geographical space is a highly debatable idea". [14]

References:

1. Said, E. Orientalism (N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1979), p.5.

2. См. подробнее: «Центральная Азия: геоэкономика, геополитика, безопасность», под ред. Р. Алимова, Ш. Арифханова, С. Ризаева и Ф. Толипова. – Ташкент: «Шарк», 2002.

3. Munro, R.H. "China, India, and Central Asia", in J.Snyder, ed., After Empire. The Emerging Geopolitics of Central Asia (Washington: National Defense University Press,1995), p. 130.

4. Tolipov F. Certain Theoretical Aspects of Central Asian Geopolitics, in "Central Asia and Caucasus", No. 6, 2001.

5. Tolipov, F. "Nationalism as a Geopolitical Phenomenon: the Central Asian Case", in Central Asian Survey, No. 2, 2001.

6. M. Susan Pederson and Stanley Weeks, "A Survey of Confidence and Security Building Measures", in Ralph A. Cossa, ed., Asia Pacific Confidence and Security Building Measures (Washington, DC: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995); See also: Susan L. Clark-Sestak, "Confidence and Security Building (CSBMs)

in Central Asia: Trends and Prospects", Conference on Regional Stability and Security in Central Asia, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, 7-11 December, 1998.

7. D. Alimova, Y. Buryakov, M. Filanovich. Objectivity in History and Responsibility for Future (in Russian). Tashkent, in "Uchitel Uzbekistana", 28/07/2003.

8. Huntington, S. The Clash of Civilizations. Remaking of World Order. (N.Y.: A Touchstone Book, 1997), p.184.

9. Mitrany, D. The Functional Theory of Politics (London School of Economics and Political Science; Martin Robertson and Co., 1975), p. 118.

10. Kohl H. Die Europaische Gemeinschaft. – Bilans und Perspective, in "Europe – unsere Zukunft". Herford, 1989, S.21.

11. Razvitie mejetnicheskih otnosheniy v novyh nezvisimyh gosudarstvah Centralnoy Azii. (Bishkek: "Ilim", 1996), S.201. See also: S. Kushkumbaev. Centralnaya Azia na putyah integracii: geopolitika, etnichnost, bezopasnost. (Almaty: "Kazakhstan", 2002), p.75.

12. S. Kushkumbaev. Centralnaya Azia na putyah integracii: geopolitika, etnichnost, bezopasnost. (Almaty: "Kazakhstan", 2002), p.146.

13. H.J. Morgenthau. Politics Among Nations. The Struggle for Power and Peace (NY: Alfred-A-Knopf, 1985), p.219.

14. Said, E. Orientalism (N.Y.: Vintage Books,1979), p.322.

Aspects of a Historical and Cultural Commonness of the Countries of Central Asia

Shaislam Akmalov
Vice Rector, Tashkent Islamic University

After the disintegration of the former Soviet Union research interest of a number of scientists and experts in the history and culture of the Central Asia has increased. From the first years of independence a great number of works devoted to various aspects of the national and political development of the Central Asia republics has been published. Undoubtedly, such sort of research promotes more objective understanding of many issues that reveal different milestones in historical formation of the nations of the modern countries of the Central Asia region.

However, the research stipulated by the various reasons, depending on the purposes, which were set up to themselves by scientists and experts, have not downsized the number of questions, it's rather quite the contrary that some from them have led to the even greater polemic. In this connection it is worth noting that the researches have, as a rule, an external and internal estimations, which, to a greater extent form the image of the nations of Central Asia, their history and culture. Having said that the trend, which in a historical science can be called "mythologization" looks a little bit chaotic, and therefore not logical. On the one hand, mythologization of the histories of the nations have a purpose of the national self-eminence, which acts as one of the important historical and cultural resources of ideology of the states. Similar phenomena were observed in the American history[1], and also, that is better known by us, in formation of the Soviet ideology. On the other hand, "mythologization" acted as an ideological tool of the so-called "great nations" the objects of which were so-called "small nations".

In this connection thepolitical dimension of the "mythologization" phenomenon is difficult to overestimate, especially in the view of the fact that it, being an important factor of the relations, plays a powerful role in

forming the image of the states, including the states of Central Asia. To date, characterizing displays "mythologization" in relation to the countries of the region, we would like to cover in brief some of its aspects.

It is deemed that in many works of the Western experts certain tendentiousness is observed in estimating and analyzing Central Asia, in relation to which a certain prejudiced perception of a "barbarity"[2] has been formed. According to Roland Dannreuter, "the image of primitive and barbarous region has been consistently used by the apologists of the Tsar imperialism in order to justify the Russian colonial expansion to Central Asia as the mission of civilization, similar to the British and French headways to Africa … The true history of the Central Asia is far from this popular image. Indigenous nations have actually inherited the culture of great wealth and refinement"[3].

Indeed, one can hardly have doubts that the Central Asia is one of the most unique regions of the world with ancient history and rich spiritual and cultural heritage. Since the most ancient times at the territories of the modern region of Central Asia dozens of states had have emerged and broken up4, numerous aggressive wars were observed. The location of the Central Asia between Buddhist, Islamic, Confucian and Christian cultures has promoted its becoming a crossroad of various civilizations.

This unique factor was shown on architecture and paintings of the region. In particular, the French scientists believe that the ensemble of the wall paintings of the Ambassador's Hall of the Palace of the King Varckhuman, who ruled approximately in 660 Common Era in Afrasiab, modern Samarkand, is a good evidence for the above. According to the Chinese chronicles, "Varckhuman had ordered to decorate the Reception Hall of his personal palace with pictures, that depicted the neighbouring princedoms, with which he had maintained political, cultural and commercial relations... Without any doubt, it is possible to assert that nowhere in the world, except for the given region, it is possible to find such diverse culture concentrated in one Hall. This ensemble of pictures is the bright illustration of the exclusive situation of the Central Asia, a crossroad of the worlds"[5].

At the same time, the given factor, in turn, promoted formation of favourable conditions for development of a science and culture, especially during the tenth and eleventh centuries, which have become known throughout the world as the Muslim Renaissance. That unique phenomenon was showed during the period of formation and blossoming of some the states in this region. According to the President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, "the states prospering in this territory, such as ancient

Turana, Maverounnackhra and Turkestan have left a bright trace in development of world culture … Timur the Great, who made Samarkand the capital of the state, was famous of protecting scientists, philosophers, architects, poets and musicians. Spiritual, cognitive and aesthetic values had an important place in the way of life and traditional culture of our people. We honour their history and are proud of these great ancestors — thinkers of the East: Al Bukhari, At-Termezi, Ahmad Jassavi, Bahoutdin Nakshband, Al Khorezmi, Beruni, Ibn Sino, Navoi, Ulugkbek and others – that have made an invaluable contribution to the development of the world's civilization"[6].

Moreover, it is necessary to note, that some foreign scientists and historians assumed certain influence over the ethno-cultural elements of the Central Asia nations on the formation of ethnic groups and cultures in neighbouring regions. In particular, the well-known scientist-sinologist L.S. Vasiljev who stated "at the present time it is well-recognized that ancient Chinese is an indigene culture. However this is still not enough for resolving the question on ethnogeny of those ancient Chinese tribes that, in due course, have served as a basis for the formation of Chinese nationality". In this connection, L.S. Vasiljev specifies that according to the research of German sinologist W. Eberhard *(W.Eberhard, "Early Chinese cultures and their development", - Annual reports of the Smithsonian institution, 1937)*, in III-II millennia before common era in the northwest part of the Huang He River basin the Proto-Turk group prevailed, which along with the Pro-Tungus and Tibet-Tangut groups had played "a major role in the formation of two most significant late Stone Age cultures" in ancient China [7].

The given hypothesis gives the basis to believe, that the history of the nations of modern Central Asia in earlier centuries remains insufficiently studied by virtue of the objective reasons. However it is obvious, that the culture of the Central Asia region as of one of the most ancient centres of world civilization, is not only the result of external influence of cultural systems, but it by itself had rendered essential influence on development of the other large civilizations.

On the other hand, studies about the history of Central Asia, which is many millennia old, are exposed to political situation, especially among the intellectuals of the countries of the region[8], causing doubts among the scientists that are far from aspirations for engagement. Similar studies, which often ignore the objective laws historic developments of civilization have pseudoscientific character. It is well-known that attempts of artificial "self-eminence" of the nation tend to turn, to put it mildly, into paranoiac

phenomena. The thesis of R. Rahimov that "Samarkand and Bukhara are historically the cities that used to belong to Tadjiks, and that they were given to Uzbekistan as a result of national delimitation"[9] might be considered as the above mentioned phenomena.

In this connection, one can hardly disagree with S. Sharapova's opinion that "the history of the nations of Central Asia, are interconnected and mutually conditioned, and cannot be considered separately. In the past in region there were no divisions of the states by ethnic characteristic … There were no borders here in the Western understanding, they were conditional enough, while contacts both inside the region and beyond it had a universal nature"[10].

As the well-known French expert, Olivier Rua asserts, "the territories, borders, capitals and even languages, at least in their written form, are the invention or the fiction of the Soviet regime of 1920-1930"[11]. Studies of the authoritative scientists-anthropologists L. Oshanina and V. Zezenkova are another evidence of the above. They stated that "all history of Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan with persuasiveness shows, that ethnogeny issues of the Uzbeks are closely connected with the ethnogeny of the Tadjiks. The same point of view is obviously presented in the work of B. Gafurov devoted to the history of Tadjik people"[12]. Moreover, in their opinion, the uniform sogd-baktriy layer of the population of Central Asia had later on become part of both, Tadjiks and Uzbeks[13], which practically undermines the so-called "theory of ethnic superiority" in the Central Asia.

The close interlacing of historical destinies of Central Asia nations has predetermined the present of the modern region, which has kept its uniqueness. As well as in the last centuries, the societies of Central Asia are characterized with bi-linguism and poly-linguism, inter-confessional and the inter-ethnic tolerance, which are almost similar world-view systems. In general, this cultural-civilized factor forms the common socio-cultural platform, which will promote national development of the countries of the region, in-depth dialogue and cooperation between them in various areas, providing preservation of integrity of the entire Central Asia.

Iranian scientist A. Bahramjan once rightly said that "identity of Central Asia during history has precisely corresponded with the formula: 'unity in many'. Today the nations of the region should follow their ancestors and once again to become a herald of the identity 'unity in many'"[14].

However to date under the name of Central Asia various options of geographical space in the centre of the Eurasian continent are perceived. In particular, French expert Z.P. Ru noted that under the term Central Asia he

understands the geographical space, comprised of "Mongolia, south of Siberia, parts of today's Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrghyzstan, northern Afghanistan and the Iranian Khurasan connected with both Heart and Merv, Tibet, Sintzyan, Gansu"15. A practically similar geographical definition is given in English scientific sources to the region called *"Internal Asia/Inner Asia"*[16].

A number of other options for the definition of conditional borders of Central Asia was also offered. In particular in 1978 in Paris a group of UNESCO experts was formed which, being based on historical and cultural criteria, should have defined the geographical space of the region. In the report of the given group it was mentioned that in order to make the document on the history of civilizations of Central Asia it is necessary to study civilizations of Afghanistan, the northeast of Iran, Pakistan, northern India, western China, Mongolia and Soviet Central Asia".[17]

In this connection, as to the historical and cultural identity of Central Asia, it would be desirable to draw attention to the fact that the given dominant really covers the wider territories including Afghanistan. The above is proved by anthropological studies of L. Oshanina, V. Zezenkova, as well as by other scientists that have studied the region from various points of view[18]. Undoubtedly, Afghanistan and the countries of Central Asia share almost common historical past, at least, before the region had been conquered by imperial Russia, and then by the Bolsheviks. It is well-known that many of our ancestors, in particular Alisher Navoi and Mukhammad Zahiriddin Babur have spent years at the territory of the present Afghanistan, certain parts of which used to be the part of Central Asian states. As the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I.A. Karimov said "the nations of Uzbekistan and Afghanistan have traditionally been connected with a century-old historical generality … There never was enmity between Uzbeks and Afghans – the Amu Darya river throughout many centuries has only united us"[19].

It is well-known that as of to date there are plenty of ethnic Tadjiks, Uzbeks and Turkmens in Afghanistan, which, alongside with other ethnos make up large national minorities of the country. Moreover, the fact that state status was granted to Uzbek and Tadjik languages demonstrates that from historical and cultural points of view Afghanistan is a part, if we may say so, of the uniform Central Asia civilized natural habitat.

Even a similar sort of the brief analysis objectively gives the basis to assert on the historical and cultural generality of the countries of Central Asia. Despite various scientists trying to give geographical characteristic to the Central Asia region, the ethno-cultural factor continues to play a key

role in preservation of the unity of the region. A more objective approach to the problem of a deepening the regional cooperation in Central Asia becomes obvious that the ethno-cultural dominant in particular forms the base, capable to lead to the active and trust-based dialogue as well as to deepening of cooperation between the states of the region in various areas, including economic area, transport, communications and political area.

However, by virtue of the fact that these issues become the object for study by mainly political scientists and experts in the field of international relations and security, discussions thus acquire a political character. It is hardly possible to object that an excessive politization will inevitably lead to revealing the differences between the countries of the region, focusing attention on their "advantages" and "disadvantages" as major factors of "regional rivalry". Thus those basics are ignored, which throughout many centuries have continued to serve as an integrated force for preserving by the region the inseparable Central Asia historical and cultural natural habitat.

Similar sorts of estimations and reasoning by Western scientists unintentionally result in the idea that scientific studies in the area concerned tend to promote in-depth comprehension of the importance of historical and cultural preconditions of regional cooperation in Central Asia. In conditions of globalization when the process of regionalization is unavoidable the objective factors, which as never before can play a key role in relations between the Central Asia countries, should be given the greater attention.

It is hardly possible to deny the uniqueness of modern Central Asia, historical and cultural generality of the nations of the region which up to this day remains to be one of fundamental bases, alongside with their direct geographical proximity for deepening of regional cooperation. It is deemed that societies of the Central Asia states today, as never before, tend increasingly to realize the importance of the process for their future, for the future of the entire Central Asia.

Notes:

1 See: Burstin D. The Americans: National Experience. Moscow. Publishing group "Progress". 1993. (trans. English).

2 Dannreuther R. Creating New States in Central Asia. Strategic implications of the collapse of Soviet power in Central Asia. IISS/Brassey's. 1994. P. 7.

3 Ibid

4 See Resul Yalcin. The rebirth of Uzbekistan. Politics, economy and society in the post-Soviet era. Ithaca Press. London. 2002. Page 1.

5 Mohammad-Reza Djalili and Thierry Kellner. "Géopolitique de la nouvelle Asie centrale. De la fin l'URSS à l'après 11 sepembre". Presses Universitaires de France. Paris. 2003. WITH 13.

6 Karimov I.A., Our goal: free and prospering motherland. ?. 2.-?.: "Yzbekiston", 1996.-380 p. P. 45-46.

7 Vasiliev L.S. Agrarian relations and community in Ancient China. Publishing house of Oriental literature, M.: 1961.–P. 52.

8 See Petrova S. Cultural and historic heritage as a resource of foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan. "East", 1998.N°3. P. 82; Rachimov R. Die Berge und die Problem des etnischen Selbstverstaendnisses der Bevoelkerung Tadzikistans // Berliner Ostereurope Info. 1995, N°5.

9 Rachimov R. Die Berge und die Problem des etnischen Selbstverstaendnisses der Bevoelkerung Tadzikistans // Berliner Ostereurope Info. 1995, N°5, S. 16;

10 Sharapova S. Foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan: cultural, historical and social factors. Tashkent. 2000. With. 85-86.

11 Roy, O., La nouvelle Asie centrale ou la fabrication des nations, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1997, 326 p.

12 Oshanin L.V., Zezenkova V.I Ethnogeny issues of the nations of Central Asia in view of the anthropology data. Tashkent. 1953. P. 34..

13 Ibid P. 35.

14 Bakhramyan ?. "Peculiarities of formation of independence of the countries of Central Asia". Materials of the International Conference "Central Asia: yesterday, today, tomorrow". Bishkek. 2002. P. 170.

15 Roux., J.-P., L ` Asie centrale. Histoire et civilizations, Paris, Fayard, 1997, pp.13-14.

16 See: The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia. Edited by Denni Sinor, Cambridge/New York, Cambridge University Press, 1990, 518p.

History of civilizations of Central Asia. Vol., 1, The Dawn of civilization: earliest times to 700 B.C., ed. A.H. Dani, V.M. Masson, Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 1996, 535p. See: The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia. Edited by Denni Sinor, Cambridge/New York, Cambridge University Press, 1990, 518p.

17 History of civilizations of Central Asia. Vol., 1, The Dawn of civilization: earliest times to 700 B.C., ed. A.H. Dani, V.M. Masson, Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 1996, 535p. See: The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia. Edited by Denni Sinor, Cambridge/New York, Cambridge University Press, 1990, 518p.

18 See Resul Yalcin. The rebirth of Uzbekistan. Politics, economy and society in the post-Soviet era. Ithaca Press. London. 2002; Oshanin L.V., Zezenkova V.I. Ethnogeny issues of the nations of Central Asia in view of anthropology data . Tashkent. 1953; Roux., J.-P., L'Asie centrale. Histoire et civilisations, Paris, Fayard, 1997

19 Karimov I.A. Peace and stability : basis for the progress of our region. Our prime target is independence and prosperity of the motherland, freedom and well-being of people. V.-8. "Uzbekistan". 2000. P 32.

Globalization and Political Islam: The Challenges of Modernity

Mehdi Parvizi Amineh

Senior Research Fellow, International Institute for Asian Studies

All traditional cultures face the difficulty of having to tackle an ever more pluralistic world. As a result, the obstinacy of the individual cultures comes into conflict with the increasing plurality of lifestyles and values. There are two ways of solving this conflict: defence or innovation. In the first case, the obstinacy of the individual culture will be identified; traditionalism and orthodoxy prevail. The second case will lead to renewal, through the adaptation of identity to meet the requirements of new circumstances and challenges. The Islamic world, particularly, is increasingly confronted with this problem.

Dieter Senghaas (2002)[1]

When we speak of modernity, however, we refer to institutional transformation that have their origins in West […] In terms of institutional clustering, two distinct organisational complexes are of particular significance in the development of modernity: the nation states and systemic capitalist production. Both have their roots on specific characteristics of European history and have few parallels in prior periods or in other cultural settings. If, in close conjunction with one another, they have since swept across the world, this is above all because of the power they have generated. No other, more traditional social forms have been able to contest this power in respect of maintaining complete autonomy outside the trends of global development. Is the

modernity distinctively a Western project in terms of the ways of life fostered by these two great transformative agencies? To this query, the blunt answer must be yes.

Antony Giddens (1990)[2]

1. International relations and politicised religion / Islam

During the Cold War period and the bi-polar system, the main International Relations (IR) approaches were divided along two lines: the study of International Political Economy (IPE – e.g. realism, pluralism or liberalism and structuralism) and security and strategic studies. These streams of thought and scholarly debates fail to take into account that politicised religion could become not only a political ideology but also a material force with a strong, effective mobilising capacity for both local and global politics. Political Islam, especially its radical and extremist variety known as 'Islamism', 'revivalism', 'fundamentalism' and *Wahhabism*[3] presents a challenge both to domestic and global politics and security.

Some scholars, like Samuel Huntington declare the phenomenon of political Islam as a characteristic of the inevitable 'clash of civilizations' according to which conflicts and threats to world peace and security in the 21st century will be carried out along civilizational fault lines. In his popularly cited article from 1993 in Foreign Affairs, Huntington predicts that in the post-Cold War world the fundamental source of conflict will not be primarily ideological or economic but rather that 'the great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural'. Whereas international conflicts of the past witnessed alliances of nations subscribing to one political ideology face-off against an alliance of nations holding an opposing ideology, Huntington suggests that this will not be the case in future world conflicts. Rather than forming ideological blocks, Huntington argues that nations will increasingly group and ally themselves as 'civilizations' or cultures against opposing civilizations. 'The clash of civilizations will be the battle lines of the future' he contends. His approach treats 'Confucianism', 'Buddhism', 'Hinduism', 'Islam', and 'Western culture' as distinct cultural regions that are compared and often played off against each other.

In contrast to the a-historical and cultural-essentialist assumptions of Huntington's analysis we argue that the main fault-lines between and

within cultures are socio-economic but not geo-cultural and that conflicts in the world of today do not take place *between* cultures but *within* them.

First, of all cultures, internal differentiations, if not conflicts, were a distinctive feature long before they came under the pressure of modernisation from outside and from within. Thus internal differentiation was a characteristic feature of all traditional societies long before they came under the pressure of modernisation. That means, differentiations in traditional societies were not incidental but an essential component of the level of development of societies;

Second, Europe was the first region to be confronted with the challenges of material and intellectual modernisation in the 18th and 19th centuries. Political rivalry within the different traditional forms of the European culture developed into a political elimination contest, in which it led occasionally to victory for the stronger party if not a consensus. In a way this political rivalry had positive effects on the innovative potential of Europe. As Senghaas states: "Innovation was encouraged by the subsequent development of a competitive economy [as result of industrial revolution in Great Britain in the late 18th century], that extended over whole territories and was later to become a global phenomenon, making economic competition the quintessential logic of social systems."[5] It eventually led to the modern society that determines life in all Western societies nowadays.

Third, in the non-European world, the exogenous modernisation pressures due to colonist and imperialist expansion were followed by endogenous economic and societal modernisation processes. This resulted in different counter reactions:

1- A modernistic imitation of the west in order to catch up with European development in order to beat off the west by using its own weapons. The experience in the Turkish Republic under Kemal Atatürk from 1923 and in Iran under Reza Shah from 1921 are an example of this model.

2- Reconsideration of own traditions and attempts at revitalising them. This type of anti-modernist and western reaction can be observed all over the world, where non-European traditions are confronted with the ideas of modernity. Sometimes, movements that want to go back to the past are accompanied by a moderate endeavour for reform, as in the case of the Islamic modernist/reformist movement in the late 19th and the early 20th century in the Islamic world.

3- Imitation of the west and reconsideration of own traditions. An important representative of this position, which accepts industrial

and technological modernization while upholding traditional values, was Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and a great part of his followers in the current Islamic Republic of Iran.

4- Innovation as an unprecedented response to an unparalleled challenge. The new generation of Islamic intellectuals like Abdolkarim Soroush from Iran or Mohamed Arkoun from Algeria believe that to meet the challenges of modernity, Muslims should not seek to change their religion, but rather should reconcile their understanding of religion with changes in the outside world. This necessitates a conception of religion that accepts the predictability of change in human understanding of religion.

Fourth, the debate became more intense wherever internal modernization processes took place or where they were deliberately stages as a consequence of challenges from outside. Cultural differentiation is directly associated with this process and when it gains a momentum of its own it leads to either two possible situations.

1- On the one hand it leads to cultural modernization
2- On the other hand it culminates in a developmental crisis and an accentuation of the cultural struggle.

The history of 20th century modernisation from above is an example of successful and/or failed modernisation in the late industrialised world. In both cases the internal dynamic processes are compounded with global influences that become more and more difficult to resist.

2. Modernisation in the Islamic countries in the 20th century

Attempts at an endogenous modernisation of politics, society and economy have discontinuously taken place from the mid-19th century, first under the Islamic Empires of Ottoman / Turkey, Persia / Iran, and also Egypt. In the 20th century, after the disintegration of Islamic Empires, this trend was continued, in the newly nation states in the Middle East and North Africa.

This experience that we can refer to as the long-term historical process of social, political and economic modernisation guided from above into the public sphere without the integration of the 'mass' is what we term the 'passive revolution' or 'revolution from above'.[6] Through this policy the state activated from above the complex process of industrialisation and tried to impose social development in a forced tempo. The wave of revolution from above or passive revolution took place during the 20th century in the great part of the world first in Europe, and finally in great

parts of the Soviet-Bloc and Third World [examples are Russia, East European countries, China, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, India, Iran, Turkey, Korea, China, Singapore, Malaysia, South-Africa].

With other words, in resisting marginalization, or peripheralization in the global political economy, the state tried to achieve an autonomous, catch-up development, through the *revolution from above*, involving authoritarian or what we call 'Hobbesian' patterns of political domination and the subordination of a weak, embryonic civil society to the state-led social and economic modernisation.

The successful socio-economic modernisation from above demanded the creation of a political system in which authoritarian rule is changed by the formal legal guarantees which will permit the legitimate expression of different social classes and groups' interests, to place the struggle of contending political forces in a legal and constitutional framework and make it visible to all, and guarantee its public control over important decisions.

The global resurgence of a radical variant of Islam is mainly the consequence of the unsuccessful attempt at modernisation by secular-authoritarian states to bring about both development and democracy in the Islamic countries. Thus, since the colonial period the developing countries have been confronted with a dilemma:

1- On the one hand they could start a *catch up* programme and spurn their own culture to become equal in power with the West.
2- On the other hand they could stick to their own culture and religious traditions while remaining materially weak[7].

In the first years after colonial independence many countries resolved the dilemma of identity and development by choosing the first option. After the disintegration of the Islamic Empires the first generation of their elite that gained power in the beginning of the 1930s - Atatürk in Turkey (1923), Reza Shah (1921) in Iran and in the late 1940s Nasser in Egypt started an authoritarian modernisation similar to the West. The authoritarian modernisation in most Islamic societies embraced 'economic welfare', 'democracy', 'secularism', 'democratic socialism', and 'non-alignment' in international relations. In general, the political élites of these Islamic societies were convinced that 'developmental or authoritarian states' could promote political stability and economic development and that this process would be threatened if religion, ethnicity, or caste dominated politics.[8]

Even more important, some Islamic countries like Iran [in the 1970s] and Turkey [in the 1980s] succeeded in creating a relatively strong

economic structure and made a relatively successful attempt at modernising a part of the state and society. However, they were unable to ideologically legitimate the newly introduced secular institutions, political participation and a basic level of economic welfare for their citizens. Political strategies such as secular nationalism [e.g. Iran, Turkey], and Arab socialism [e.g. Iraq, Syria, Algeria, and Egypt] were unable to create a balance between economic development and political participation of the rising modern urban based populations, particularly the urban-middle class which was a product of modernisation. More recently, the introduction of a 'Structural Adjustment Programme' of neo-liberalism [i.e. free markets and open economies] in the Islamic countries led to the deteriorated economic inequality rather than economic development. From the 1970s the unsuccessful project of the postcolonial secular state and the conflict between religious nationalism and secular nationalism were the subjects of greatest dissatisfaction in Third World politics in general and Islamic societies in particular.

When traditional cultures are confronted with exogenous pressure and endogenous authoritarian modernisation, they face a structural and consequently mental transformation, and thus become subject to deep internal conflict. It happened, first, in the mid-18th century Western Europe, and is now a global phenomenon. First, it is unclear whether the traditional culture can be kept in the context of further development. The return to tradition and the emphasis on a real or imaginary cultural heritage are obvious attempts at preserving identity while participating in technological progress. In the long-term there is no alternative to imitation and/or innovation. The complexity of policy, society, economy and culture spreads also outside of Europe and the Western sphere, and in order to avoid chronic conflicts [that is civil war], this new complexity must be matched by complex institutional arrangements and mentalities. East Asia, for example South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia and Chile in Latin America are well ahead in this respect, having undergone a profound socio-economic modernisation process. Other parts of the world, such as the great part of the Middle East and North-Africa, are in an extensive, what Senghaas calls 'chronic development crisis', that make political and cultural disarray almost inevitable.

When peoples or regions are pushed into marginal social and economic positions, they have no chance of upward mobility. If this situation is felt as frustration and the deprivation is registered as a collective one rather than an individual one, policy will be culturalized or culture politicized. That means, when a conflict emerges cultural factors

are generally not very significant at the beginning, but rather socio-economic factors. Cultural factors can only become independent later as a result of an escalation of the conflict, such as in the context of the rise of politicized religion.

Thus, all traditional [that is, pre-industrial] cultures face the difficulty of having to deal with an ever more pluralistic world. As a result, the obstinacy of the individual cultures comes into conflict with the increasing plurality of lifestyles and values. There are two ways of solving this conflict: back to the past or innovation. In the first case, the orthodoxy prevails. The second case will lead to renewal, by adapting the identity to meet the requirements of new circumstances and challenges. The variety and contradictory Islamic political ideas and praxis - from the late 19th century onwards – are result of the confrontation with these challenges of modernity.

3. Historical origin of Islam as political ideology and its varieties

From the end of the 19th century political Islamic thinkers and movements proclaimed an Islamic order as an alternative to European-based world capitalism and its corresponding civilisation. This was a response to the inability of the Islamic Empires [the Ottoman, Persian and Mughal Empires] to resist the European expansion, which gradually lost the material, institutional and mental basis for unity. Historical expansion of capitalism, and its related civilisation after the industrial revolution around the globe, created not only structural globalisation [e.g. modern political, economic and cultural institutions and the enlargement of the nation-state] but also social and international cultural fragmentation[9].

Intellectual and political counteractions to the historical episode described above created two main political ideologies and their related social forces: the modern / secular and the Islamic oriented social forces. Secular forces advocated 'constitutionalism', 'secularism', and 'nationalism' as three main elements for the development of strong nation states. For the Islamic forces an adaptation of Islam to the modern world was the only way to make these developments acceptable and to proclaim them in the Islamic world.

4. Typology of Islamic thinkers and movements

Since the late 19th century, Islam as political ideology manifested itself in various Islamic political discourses and ideologies [and their

related social forces] that developed as a response both to the global and national socio-political and economic relations.

Reformist Islam:

The first type of modern Islamic political ideology (so-called Salafism or Islamic reformism / modernism) and its related movements emerged gradually in the late 19th century. Its main ideologues were Seyyed Jamal al-Din Afghani (1838-97, Iran)[10] Mohammad Abduh (1849-1905, Egypt)[11], Ayatollah Muhammad Hussein Na'ini (1860-1936, Iran / Iraq)[12], and Seyyed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898, India).

These new types of politicised Islamic and social forces emerged

1- On the one hand as result of the 19th century attempts at modernisation and reform from above both in the Ottoman and Persian Empires to catch up with Europe.

2- On the other hand as result of direct confrontation and connection with the powerful European forces.

Internationally, this political ideological movement was a response to the direct confrontation with the European expansion from the mid-19th to the early 20th centuries embodied in Great Britain, into the Islamic lands. At the same time, it was the result of the structural crises, the failure of modernisation and reform and decline of the Islamic Empires from within.[13]

This upcoming new type of Islamic thinkers criticised internal rulers [the Sultan and Shah] as despotism, and also traditional religious leaders or ulama as fanaticism. They all were of the opinion that existing Islam like it was proclaimed by ulama, was not able to resolve the material and moral problems of Muslims. Instead they advocated independence and constitutionalism, and oscillated between Pan-Islamism and the nation-state as a political model against both the European expansion and colonisation, and the domestic weak empires. Ideologically, Islamic reformists or the early variant of politicised Islam aimed at making Islam compatible with Western scientific, economic, and political concepts in order to reinforce Islamic society against the West, and adapt Islam to the needs of modern social relations. This trend was centred in different geographical areas [Egypt, Turkey, India and Persia] and among different social groups and classes – especially the urban intelligentsia and the small modern middle classes. The Islamic reformists opposed the western materialism and secular culture but believed that only by imitating and naturalising both Western technique and thought could strong independent politics and society in the Islamic world

be achieved. They reinterpreted early Islamic injunctions so as to make them compatible with Western liberalism on matters such as the parliamentary system based on a constitution.[14]

Radical Islam:

The second type of Islamic political ideology [known as Islamism, Revivalism, Radical Islam, Fundamentalism and also Wahabism] with its great ideological varieties and its related social forces gradually developed in the *interbellum* and continued until its structural crisis in the late 1980s and 1990s. Its main ideological representatives were Hasan al-Banna (1906-49, Egypt)[15], Rashid Rida (1865-1935, Syria), Seyyed Abdullah al-Mawdudi (1903-79, India / Pakistan), Seyyed Qutb (1906-66, Egypt)[16], Ali Shari'ati (1933-75, Iran)[17], Mohammad Baqir Sadr (1935-1980, Iraq) and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902-89, Iran)[18]. Some major related organisations that emerged during this period are the *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun* (Muslim Brethren Organisation: 1928) ; *Jama'at-I Islami* in Pakistan (1941); *Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami* (Islamic Liberation Party 1953) in Lebanon ; Tanzim al-Jihad in Egypt (1979) *Mujahedin-e Khalq* in Iran 1960s, the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq of Ayatollah Mohamad Baqir Al Hakim (1939-2003) or the more recent transnational oriented organisation *al-Qaida* of Osama bin Laden. Islamism can be considered as a radical reaction to the intensification of the Western capitalism / civilisation expansion mainly after World War II and its socio-economic, political, and more importantly, cultural consequences in the Islamic world. Generally, despite a great ideological variety between these thinkers and related movements, these projects were a response to Westernised and modernised authoritarian regimes and their socio-economic and cultural modernisation programmes in the Islamic world. In contrast to the East Asian countries, modernisation processes in most Islamic countries have failed leading to a developmental crisis, that poses an obstacle for successful socio-economic development and preventing the appreciation of pluralization of value orientation. Rather, under these conditions developed a deep defensiveness against overdue cultural innovations-with the exception of a small circle of careerists and *nouveaux riches* - not only in the lower classes but also among the middle classes who tend to be much more socially mobile, and are therefore frustrated by the prevailing circumstances. The middle classes also belong to the social strata from which the Islamists recruit. In many Islamic countries this situation led

to the emergence of Islamic movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Such ideas and movements can by no means be reduced to a common denominator since they are characterised by different features: gaining political power by instrumentalizing religion, activating the religious community for reasons of solidarity, revitalizing one's own traditional values, struggling against the Western 'devil' or a mixture of these elements. These movements do not appreciate pluralism of values but rather understand it as the core problem, as an expression of cultural decadence and a repetition of pre-Islamic 'ignorance' and moral rottenness *(jahiliya)* – according to Seyyed Qutb. Alternative to the capitalist pluralistic social order this variant of political Islam and its related social forces (despite its varieties) calls for the creation of a non-secular Islamic state and societal order by means of a radical transformation (i.e. the use of violence and weapons).

By creating a complex Islamist political ideology and organisation, Islamism has been capable of competing with secular and Westernised trends and forces – especially through translating Islamic tradition and symbols into a popular language and thus securing the support of the wide urban-based social classes and groups (for example, in Iran, Egypt, Pakistan, Lebanon and Palestine). The Islamic tradition has occupied a centre stage in the Islamic countries that can not be denied by even the most secular politicians. Islamism and its concept of social order, despite its varieties, is based on a hostile attitude towards the globalisation of some Western based institutions like nation-states and more importantly trends towards the universalization of their modern normative structures[19]. Some Islamist world-views are not compatible with European concepts of social order, such as the ideas of Seyyed Qutb or the political ideology of al-Qaeda. Islamists target the secular state / society, because they despise its basis in popular sovereignty. Even nationalist ideologies like pan-Arabism, pan-Turkism or pan-Iranism, are perceived to be influenced by secular tendencies.

While Islamic radicalism is gradually decreasing in significance it has found a new breeding ground through the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida organisation. The aspects that provided the condition for a mobilising capacity of Islamist forces can be summarised as follows: the end of the Cold War, the decline of the Pax-Americana hegemonic world order in the early 1970s, the structural transformation of the International Political Economy or globalisation, and the crisis of modern authoritarian regimes and their modernisation programmes in most parts of the Islamic countries.

Liberal Islam:

The third type of modern Islamic political ideology gradually emerged from the late 1980s. Its main intellectual representatives are Mohammad Iqbal (1875-1938, India/Pakistan)[20], Mehdi Bazargan (1907-95, Iran), Abdolkarim Soroush (1945-, Iran)[21], S.M. Zafar (1930-, Pakistan), Rachid Ghannouchi (1941-, Tunisia), Muhammad Shahrour (1938-, Syria), Chandra Muzaffar (1947-, Malaysia), Mohamed Talbi (1921-, Tunisia), Yusuf Qaradawi (1929-, Egypt-Qatar), Mohamed Arkoun (1928-, Algeria-France), Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im (1946-, Sudan-US), Nurcholish Madjid (1939-, Indonesia).[22] One of the main characteristics of this current movement is its criticism of Islamism and Islamic radicalism, and more importantly its criticism [at least by some of its representatives] of Islam as political ideology. It has a tendency towards democracy, by means of defending civil society in general and human rights in particular and more importantly its support for secularism. Following Senghaas We emphasise that secularisation does not – as often assumed – necessarily have to be identified with the French experience of exaggerated laicism. Secularisation in the Islamic countries could take the German experience as an example, or rather the Scandinavian or the British one [in the latter case even a state church exists]. If already existing secular states are taken as empirical points of reference, then the pernicious image of the 'ungodly secular state' produced by Islamists disappears. States where the basic secular right of the freedom of religion prevails and a strict separation between state and religion does not exist could inspire modern solutions in the Islamic region. This, of course, entails taking note of the variability of existing secular states.

Internationally, these ideas and related movements came into being in the age of what is called globalisation. Besides its marginalising and polarising implications, globalisation also creates opportunities for democracy and democratisation in developing countries. This means the eruption of pluralism involving the re-emergence of historical forces manifesting themselves in different cultural expressions, such as liberal-religious movements, ethnic identities and linguistic differences. Nationally, this project is a response to the crisis of authoritarian regimes in the Islamic world [as part of the global crisis of authoritarian regimes and modernisation in Third World countries], and also the growth of civil society and its related modern social forces in these areas. It attempts to find an answer to the structural crisis [economic, political and more importantly cultural/ideological] of the Islamic state / society

configurations and movements [in particular, the experience of Islamic social order in Iran, and the Sudan and Afghanistan].

Conclusion

Cultures inevitably disintegrate some earlier, some later, but in all cases this disintegration is irreversible. Cultural debates – including conflict over democracy, human rights, a sense of political community and other values – will take place wherever it arises. 'The West' and 'the Rest of the world will not, as Huntington argues, be one of the main opponents. Thus, the starting point for an international cultural debate ought to be the differentiation processes that are already, taking place in traditional cultures all over the world. The true cultural differentiation processes, however, are the consequence of exogenous challenges.

Therefore, the level of modernisation and its consequences and the type of modernisation phase that has taken place, have to be taken into account when analysing political Islam.

Endnotes

1- Senghaas, Dieter, The Clash within Civilisations-Coming to terms with Cultural Conflicts, (London & New York: Routledge, 2002).

2- Giddens, A. The Consequence of Modernity, (London: Macmillan Publisher, 1990).

3- Wahhabism was founded by Saudi Abd al-Wahhab (1703-91). It takes the literal interpretation of the scriptures to an extreme and refuses any compromise with anything not strictly Islamic. Wahhabism developed in opposition to some other schools of Islam, but not against the West, with which it established links at the instigation of the Saudi Royal family. However, it remains obsessed with the influence of Western culture on Islamic culture. Osama bin Laden's supporters hate the Saudi monarchy. Religious schools (madrasas) in the north-western province of Pakistan and many Islamic institutes in Saudi Arabia or the Gulf, are responsible for spreading the message, producing preachers who open mosques in the West, or are called in by local communities

4- Huntington, Samuel, 'The clash of civilizations?', Foreign Affairs, vol. 72, no. 3, (Summer 1993): 22-49. Huntington, S.P., The Clash of Civilisations: Remaking of World order, (New York: Touchstone, 1996).

5- Senghaas, Dieter, The Clash within Civilisations-Coming to terms with Cultural Conflicts, (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), 3.

6- For the long-term modernisation from above and its consequences in Iran see Amineh, Mehdi Parvizi, Die globale kapitalistische Expansion und Iran-Eine Studie der iranischen politischen Oekonomie 1500-1980, (Hamburg, Muenster, Berlin, London: Lit Verlag, 1999), chs. 1, 5, 6,8, 9.

7- Gellner, Ernest, Postmodernism, Reason, and Religion, (London: Routledge, 1992).

8- Amineh (1999), op.cit., see also Amineh, Mehdi Parvizi (1999) Towards the Control of Oil Resources in the Caspian Region, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), ch. 1.

9- Based on Amineh, M. P., Globalisation, Geopolitics and Energy Security in Central Eurasia and the Caspian Region, (Den Haag: CIEP, 2003), 168-69.

10- For an interesting book about the thoughts of al-Afghani see Keddie, Nikki R., An Islamic Response to Imperialism-Political and religious Writings of Sayyid Jamal ad-Din 'al-Afghani', (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968).

11- About Abduh's thought see e.g. Abduh, M., Risalat al-Tawhid, (1897); Abduh, M., Sharh Kitab al-Basa'ir al-nasiriyya, tasnif al-Kadi Zayn al-Din, (1898); see also Kerr, M. H., Islamic Reform-The Political and Legal Theories of Muhammad 'Abduh and Rashid Rida, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

12- For Na'ini's thought see e.g. Na'ini, M. H., Tanbih al-umma wa-tanzih al-milla (The admonition and refinement of the people), (Najaf, 1909); see also Hairi, A.-H., Shi'ism and constitutionalism in Iran: a study of the role played by the Persian residents of Iraq in Iranian politics, (Leiden, 1977).

13- For studies on attempts at modernization in Iran under the Qajar Empire (1786-1906) see Amineh (1999), op.cit., ch. 4; in the Ottoman Empire see Issawi, Charles, An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa, (London: Methuen and Co., 1982)

14- On the Iranian Constitutional Revolution and the role of religious elements and the adpatation of the sha'ria to the parliamentary system see e.g. Browne, E., The Persian Revolution (1905-1909), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910).

15- See e.g. Al-Banna, H, 'Wihdatuna al-kamila', in Majallat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun, no. 23,22 dhi al-qu'da (1943), 3-4;. see also Mitchell, Richard P. (1969), The Society of the Muslim Brothers, (London): Oxford University Press.

16- For important works of Seyyed Qutb see Qutb, S., Ma'alim fi al-Tariq (Signposts on the Road), (Cairo: dar al-Shuruq, 1988); Qutb, S., Al-'Adalah al-Ijtima'iyyah fi al-Islam (Social Justice in Islam),(Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1980);.see also Binder, L., Islamic Liberalism-A critique of Development Ideologies, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

17- Shari'ati A., Mazhab alayhe mazhab (Religion against religion), (Tehran: Husayniyeh-e Irshad, n.d.); Shari'ati A., On Sociology of Islam, trans. By H. Algar, (Berkeley: Mirza Press, 1979).

18- Khomeini, R., Velayat-e Faqih: Hokumat-e Islami, (Tehran: Panzah-e Khordad, 1979); Khomeini, R., Islam and revolution, writings and declararations of Imam Khomeini, trs. and annot., by H. Algar, (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981).

19- Capitalist expansion as social relation or globalisation resulted most importantly in the emergence and spread of the nation state worldwide. Norms and values, however, are not included in this process as they relate to the cultural production of meaning. As Clifford Geertz in his work The Interpretation of Cultures [New York: Basic Books, 1973] rightly states the cultural production of meaning is always local. But, if norms and values spread beyond the local cultures in which they are rooted they could gain a universal character or become universalised. This means that the concepts of globalisation and universalisation refer to different domains: while globalisation has a structural and institutional connotation, universalisation has a normative character. The contemporary world structures have to deal with

processes of a simultaneous success in universalisation; there is a parallel development of structural globalisation and cultural fragmentation. Cultural revival manifests itself in political strategies that call for a return to allegedly authentic, indigenous, cultural roots. In the non-western world the nation state is severely affected by this disharmony: while it is globalised it lacks its necessary cultural basis. Islamists consider the nation state as an 'export from the West' and therefore question its legitimacy. Islamism therefore can be considered as the challenging Milestone on the Road towards a de-Westernisation in the world-politics of 'the total revolt against the West'.

20- Iqbal, Mohammad, The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, (Lahore, Oxford, 1930/1934), Oxford University Press, 1930/1934); Esposito, J.L., 'Muhammad Iqbal and the Islamic State', in: J.L. Esposito (ed.), Voices of Resurgent Islam, (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

21- Abdulkarim Soroush, "Mudara wa Mudiriyat-e Mumenan: Sukhani dar Nisbat-e Din wa Democrasi" [The Tolerance and Administration of the Faithful: A Remark on the Relation Between Religion and Democracy], Kiyan 4, no. 21 (1994); For an introductory essay to the ideas of Abdolkarim Soroush see John Cooper, "The Limits of the Sacred: The Epistemology of Abd al-Karim Soroush"," in John Cooper, Ronald Nettler and Mohamed Mahmoud (eds), Islam and Modernity: Muslim Intellectuals Respond, (London: I. B. Tauris, 1998), pp. 38-56.

22- A list of Islamic organizations devoted to discussion or promotion of liberal themes (with links to their sites) can be found at:
<http://www.unc.edu/~kurzman/LiberalIslamLinks.htm>.

Formation of Tolerant Thinking since theSovereignty of Kyrgyzstan

Ablabek A. Asankanov

Rector, Kyrgyz State Pedagogical University, Bishkek

After failure of the totalitarian system of the Soviet power new independent states have chosen democratic reforms. The corner stone of any democratic state is the rights and freedoms of a person, regardless of his/her ethnic nationality. A striking example of tolerance of our people is the fact that one of the greatest achievements in the public and political life of Kyrgyzstan after acquiring independence and sovereignty is the establishment of international harmony. The government does its best to prevent opposition for national reasons. The image of enemy as a representative of another ethnic group has been beaten out from people's mind. As Askar Akaev noted, "we perceived one indisputable truth: only national accordance, only every possible strengthening of ties of brotherhood will help us to reach the established goals and to protect ourselves from chaos. Therefore we should be focussed only on making that friendship, that blood brotherhood, that common family of people more stronger and on excluding demonstration of nationalism or national arrogance from life".

Tolerance is possible only in presence of differences between subjects (people, nations, religions, civilizations and other), entering into relations with each other. Since Kyrgyzstan is a poly-ethnical state in which representatives of 80 nations and peoples live, international harmony and stability in the country have become one the most striking demonstration of tolerance. The policy of the Republic's officials in the area of national relations which creates conditions for comprehensive development of culture, languages of all nations of Kyrgyzstan, does not allow an infringement of national feelings and actions aimed at the establishment of national excellence and superiority, and promotes national revival of the peoples living in Kyrgyzstan. The formation of tolerant thinking was largely expressed in the creation of national and cultural centers,

associations and their activity to revive national cultures of different ethnic groups.

In the beginning of the 1990s the Kyrgyz branch of the international fund of Slavic writing and Slavic cultures (the Slavic Fund) was created, expressing the interests of more than one million Eastern Slavic peoples. The following associations exist in Kyrgyzstan: association of Koreans "Chinson"; association of Tadjiks named after Rudaki; association of Turks "Asturk"; association of Azerbaijanians "Azeri"; council of Ukrains "Bereginya"; association of Germans "Folkstrat"; association of the Jewish culture "Menora"; association of Greeks "Filiya", etc. The Uzbek national centre "Orzu" expresses interests of more than half a million Uzbeks living in Kyrgyzstan. The main purpose and task of these national-cultural centers, associations, societies of people of Kyrgyzstan, united around of the Assembly People of Kyrgyzstan which have their charters, programs, regulations, councils and chairmen are to a promote consolidation of society, to strengthen friendship, interethnic consent and peace in Kyrgyzstan. They are also called to express and protect interests of the nations and people living in Kyrgyzstan, to render assistance in spiritual and cultural revival of people, development of language, traditions and customs.

Representatives of the national-cultural centers of Kyrgyzstan participate in the state legislative process, expressing the interests of all ethnic groups. They take an active part in elections to Jogorku Kenesh (Parliament), and many heads of national-cultural centers became deputies.

As we have already noted, much attention is paid to development of the national culture, folklore, language and traditions of the Kyrgyz people. In 1994 the House of Friendship was opened in Bishkek. The main objective of it is to advocate ideas of interethnic harmony, civil peace and unity of people of Kyrgyzstan. They put forward the motto: "Kyrgyzstan is Our Common House". Is it not a demonstration of tolerance?

The regional problem "South-North" has always existed in our Republic. As many people think, dissociation of the South and the North of Kyrgyzstan first of all constraints formation of a common market economy in the country. Therefore for solution of these and many other problems leaders of the Republic decided to focus all efforts to improve the road connecting the South with the North – highway "Bishkek-Osh», with the purpose to make economic and social interrelations of the population between these two large regions of Kyrgyzstan more active.

One of the demonstrations of tolerant consciousness is the opening of higher educational institutions in certain regions. Here we can name the

Talas, Naryn, and Batken universities. Complying with the request of the population of the South, and also with the purpose of equalization of cultural and scientific capacities of the South and the North, the Jalal-Abad university was opened in Jalal-Abad city according to a Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic. A number of scientific forums, round tables on assistance in solution of regional problems were also organized. The following problems of regionalism were the key issues of these events: even economic and social development of regions ; distribution of the state budget to regions depending to volumes of their contributions to the aggregate income of the country ; appropriate placement of productive forces in regions; amplification of democratic mass media; amplification and activation of communications of the South and the North; equal preparation of the managerial personnel from all regions; even social and economic, social and cultural development of regions and many other issues.

The characteristic demonstration of the tolerant consciousness was in formation of various national movements, parties, associations ("Ashar", "DDK", "Erkin Kyrgyzstan", "My country", "Asaba", the Communist party of Kyrgyzstan, "Alga Kyrgyzstan" and many other) which shows the real national and political situation in Kyrgyzstan. Directions and orientations of various social groups of Kyrgyzstan are focused in their programmes, objectives and tasks. Unlike neighbouring countries in Kyrgyzstan the parties with views opposite to those of the existing official power on various issues are active.

The existance of tolerance in the consciousness of the people of Kyrgyzstan can be noticed also in the relations between the Christians and Muslims. These relations are important since the overwhelming majority the peoples living on the territory of Kyrgyzstan are adherent of these two religions.

The attitude of the government of Kyrgyzstan to the Russian Orthodox Church was clearly formulated and proved when, in 1996, the Holy Patriarch Alexis II visited the diocese and Kirghizia. Under the Decree of President of the Kyrgyz Republic the territory of Bishkek Resurrection cathedral was expanded and well-equipped for the days of celebrations. The whole complex of church buildings is enclosed with new fencing with monumental gates. Undoubtedly, neither the diocese, nor the Bishkek congregation could carry out such great reconstruction works in such short term without help of the government. Because not only funds were needed, but also drastic measures were to be undertaken to "re-plan that city area". President has assured, that the government took into

account "the severe experience of believers" and has especially noted the outstanding contribution by the Orthodox Church in formation of the statehood based on values of freedom, interethnic and inter-confessional harmony, civil peace and creative work. In Kyrgyzstan there are many confessional trends, sects, churches, meeting-houses and branches of large religions. They peacefully coexist and do not prevent each other.

Thus, in Kyrgyzstan all conditions are available for the formation of a tolerant consciousness of the people living here. Tolerance is the main condition for economic, social, political and cultural development of our polyethnic Republic.

Dialogue of Cultures as a Means of Conflict Prevention in Central Asia

M. Farhad Atai

Researcher, Imam Sadeq University, School of Political Science and Islamic Studies, Teheran

The break-up of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th Century resulted in the emergence of numerous nation-states in the Middle East. A look at the region after half a century, one wonders if a better outcome could have been achieved. At the end of the 20th Century, another empire - Soviet Union - collapsed and broke up into independent nation-states. The emerging strong nationalistic tendencies in the Central Asian region - known in history for its tremendous intermingling of culture and peoples - is a cause for concern. The history of cultural interaction along with the Soviet legacy in managing culture can provide an invaluable tool in bringing peoples and governments together and reducing the risk of separation and conflict.

Since the nineth century, the break-up of empires has led to the creation of modern nation states. Not everywhere has this experience been entirely without difficulties. The break-up of the Ottoman Empire, that comprised most of what is today called the Middle East, may be sited as an example. One of the most powerful empires in human history, it lasted for seven centuries. This empire that ruled over North Africa, the Balkans, the Fertile Crescent, the Crimean peninsula, Asia Minor, the Caucasus, and the Arabian Peninsula at the height of its power, contained within its borders a tremendous variety of peoples from various religions, races, and ethnicities.1 A look at border disputes, armed conflicts, coup d'etats, and crises in the region since gaining of independence of the Middle Eastern states at the end of the Second World War, makes one wonder if a more harmonious and integrated region could have been resulted from the

break-up. Aside from the Arab-Israeli conflict that has had devastating effects on the region, there are still numerous other crises afflicting many of the countries of the region; crises of legitimacy, identity, and democracy.[2]

The notion of "modern nationalism" was one that emerged out of Europe a natural outcome of European history. This notion was in a way "imposed upon the Middle East and North Africa. Yet, the peoples of the region, with little historical experience living within nation states, have had a difficult time assimilating the idea into their socio-political life. The numerous socio-political crises that have afflicted the region, from Lebanon to Iraq, stand as a testimony to this claim.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in the latter part of the 20th century, the world witnessed the break-up of another empire and the emergence of independent nation states in Eurasia. This time, the idea of nation state is "imposed" on the peoples of Central Asia, not by an outside conqueror, but by an international system that is based on interaction of nation states as the only "legitimate" players in the field. The idea of nation states interacting on the international scene is well recognized and has been in operation for more than half a century. However, it is the regional and domestic implications of romantic nationalism that is a cause for concern. This is particularly true in Central Asia.

For centuries, Central Asia was one of the major centres of human civilization and a nexus for international trade. It boasts a fascinating civilization and a rich cultural heritage. Art and culture flourished in Central Asia in a process characterized by close interaction with the art and culture of the neighbouring peoples. Central Asia has been unique in its history of extensive intermingling and productive interaction among its cultures. This marvellous coexistence of various cultures has been the hallmark of the region since ancient tines. It has been in this region that both sedentary and nomadic lifestyles, various religions and ideologies, (from Islam to Shamanism) and numerous ethnicities (Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Tajik, Kazakh,…) and major civilizations and languages (Turkic, Persian, …) have lived together benefiting from each other, enriching the culture of the region as a whole. The Russian presence, both Tsarist and communist, brought elements of Western culture to the region, further enhancing its multicultural character.[3]

The trend in the region, however, of the past decade since gaining independence has been placing emphasis on differences between the nations and reiterating the uniqueness of each country. This is a trend strongly influenced by nationalist tendencies, rather than the shared historical experience and culture of these peoples. Boundaries marking the

various republics within the empire, which only served as administrative divisions under the Soviet system are fast becoming rigid national borders excluding others and inhibiting interaction and travel among people. Ironically, Europe that introduced nationalism to the world is moving toward integration and lowering of national boundaries. This process is further enhanced - both in Europe and the rest of the world - as a result of globalization. Thus the enthusiastic embracing of romantic nationalism by the central Asian region comes at a time when the rest of the world is moving in the other direction. Hence, the outcome of the trend that appears to gain momentum in the region remains questionable at best. It would indeed be regrettable if Central Asia abandoned its time tested and rich tradition of dialogue and intermingling among its cultures in favour of an exclusive national agenda. Aside from the predictable political consequences, the rich culture of the region is bound to suffer.

Incidentally, it is the very domain of cultural activities that can, while preserving the national identity of each republic, play a critical role in continuation and promotion of dialogue and interaction among the New Independent States, preventing these countries from drifting apart. History has shown that maintaining contact between peoples enhances understanding among governments and reduced causes for tension and conflict. In CIS today culture becomes relevant in a peculiar way. This has to do with the way culture was "managed" for seventy years by the State under the Soviet system. Never in the history of mankind had culture been planned, financed, and executed by the State in such a large scale.[4]

A unique outlook provided the basis for the development of a comprehensive system of artistic and cultural activities throughout the Soviet Union. An important feature of the system was its uniformity, with similar institutions in each republic and central control from Moscow. Within that system, art and culture ran across the Soviet republics benefiting every citizen of the empire. Regular tour of artistic groups and performing arts in the Soviet Union were organized. Close cooperation existed between conservatories and other schools throughout the region. Students from the whole region, and indeed the Soviet Union, were accepted to and graduated from art schools, and conservatories in the empire.

To be sure, art and culture had to be congruent with State ideology. But, it is not this aspect of management of culture under the Soviet system that that is of concern here. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the central control and the ideological content of culture are no longer relevant. What is of importance is the institutions of culture that have

remained in the republics as a legacy from the Soviet rule that can be used as a means of promotion and continuation of cultural exchange. Moscow's central control has vanished, but the system with its institutions continues to operate in the newly Independent States.[5] With varying degrees, the same philosophy underlies artistic and cultural activities in the Central Asian republics, albeit within national borders. Similar institutions, shared (Russian) language, the common background and training of those involved in art and culture provide a favourable environment for extensive cooperation and exchange between Central Asian countries. What is being suggested here is renewed cooperation of major institutions of art and culture – the Ministries of Culture, the Filarmonis, Radio and Television, Houses of Culture, and Conservatories as some sort of a guarantee for dialogue rather than separation under the force of political nationalism. (For a brief account of these institutions and the way they operate see below).

This suggestion is particularly cognizant of political rivalries and tensions increasingly emerging between the newly independent states that threaten the extensive artistic and cultural exchange in the region. It is proposed as a tool in reducing such possibility. Free from the sensitivities of politics, cultural exchange can be a formidable tool in bringing the peoples and governments of the region closer together. The collapse of the Soviet Union brought to an end the extensive cooperation and exchange in art and culture that existed under that empire. Rising nationalistic tendencies are fast separating the peoples of this region that have a wonderful history of cultural diversity and harmony. Before it is too late, efforts should be undertaken in order to re-link the institutions of art and culture in the Central Asian states.

A high level meeting of ministers of culture could initiate the process with signing of a memorandum of understanding that would in turn lead to specific protocols and contracts between cultural institutions. This would facilitate various cultural activities between the countries of Central Asia that can include the following:
- reciprocal tours of music and dance groups
- admitting of students from other republics in all areas dance, music, and theatre to such schools
- cooperation between houses of culture, the municipalities, the Filarmonis, and other major institutions involved in art and culture
- cooperation in archaeology and art history among universities and academies of science

As the same system is in place in the Caucasus, and indeed in the rest of the CIS countries, such an initiative could include the rest of the CIS at later stages. Moving beyond the region, neighbouring countries could benefit and in turn by participating in such a project. Since gaining of independence by the republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus, Turkey has emphasized its common language and cultural heritage with the Turkic peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Iran, which shares most of its history with the region could both benefit and contribute to this cultural dialogue. So would Afghanistan, India, and China.

Appendix

In order to better understand the way art and culture are managed in Central Asian republics, a brief description is provided below. It is based on the extensive study done by the author in the region on art and culture in Central Asia.

The Major Institutions of Art and Culture

Artistic and cultural activities take place in various institutions, the most important of which are the Filarmoni, the state radio and television, the houses of culture, the artists' and writers' associations, academies of science, public libraries, and museums. The ministry of culture and the executive committees in each town and village are responsible for the administration of such activities at the macro and micro levels, respectively.

Ministry of Culture

The ministry of culture is the most important institution involved in artistic and cultural activities. It is responsible for planning, budgeting, administration, and coordination of all such activities. Because of the absence of the private sector, the ministry is the main employer of artists. Since independence, certain activities in the private sector are being experienced in some republics. This is by no means the norm, however, and such activities will continue to be in state hand for a long time to come. There are amateur musicians, dancers, and artists in villages and small towns, but even their activities are facilitated and supported by the state. Before independence, ministries in each republic acted as branches of the ministry of culture of the Soviet Union. Most planning, budgeting and coordination was done in Moscow, but since then, these responsibilities have been taken over by the ministry of culture in each republic. Independence has stopped Moscow's support and reduced the level of coordination between the republics.

The ministry has various directorates general and departments charged with overseeing and administration of a wide range of activities. Typically the ministry of culture has

departments in charge of people's productions (handicrafts, and traditional arts produced in small towns and villages), museums and public libraries, amusement parks, orchestras, and dance groups.

State Filarmoni

The State Filarmoni is a unique institution found in all the independent republics. It houses various orchestras, music ensembles, and dance groups - both traditional and Western. It is the main centre for performing art. Typically, the Filarmoni is situated in a majestic building in the capital, and has facilities for rehearsal and performing of art.

State Radio and Television

The state radio and television occupied a critical position in the Soviet Union. It was an invaluable tool at the hands of the state in shaping public opinion and influencing people's culture. It remains an important institution in the newly independent states. In most republics the state radio and television has its own orchestras and dance groups, which occasionally perform live concerts. Because of the importance attached to this institution, the state radio and television has always been independent of the ministry of culture, being directly under the supreme council and receiving its budget from the military and communications establishments. The president of the state radio and television has had the status of a minister. With the rapid improvement in communications technology and the expansion of the global satellite network, the electronic media are assuming an even greater role in influencing culture.

Since independence, private stations have been granted licenses to operate in most of the republics

Academies of Sciences and State Universities

Academies carry out research in various fields whereas state universities are primarily responsible for education

Artists' and Writers' Association

Under the Soviet system, these associations were in effect part of the government, playing a critical role in regulating the activities and lives of the artistic and literary community. The associations' dual role as both advocate of the literary and the artistic community and as the state's censoring agency has been particularly interesting. In the post-Soviet era each independent republic's Association remains an important institution and is likely to remain so for a long time to come.

Houses of Culture

Houses of culture were the cornerstone of Soviet cultural policy. They were founded in every town and village as centers for social gathering and meeting, where state-sponsored activities would take place. Houses of culture vary in size and in terms of the facilities they offer. A house of culture has one or more auditoriums for amateur performers, meeting room(s), a vocational training center, and a library. In the villages, amateur actors and musicians can borrow costumes and musical instruments during their performance at the house.

Endnotes

1- See Lewis, Bernard; The Emergence of Modern Turkey, London Oxford New York, 1967. Also see Fisher, Sydney N., The Middle East; A History, New York.

2- See Modernization in the Middle East; the Ottoman Empire and its Afro-Asian Successors, Cyril E. Black and L. Carl. Brown, Eds, Princeton 1992

3- See Lapidus, Ira M. A History of Islamic Societies, Cambridge, 1989, pp. 414-437.

4- For an in-depth look at how art and culture was managed under the Soviet system, see "State-Managed Art and Culture; the Case of Central Asia under the Soviet Union", by the author in Culture, Society, and Politics in Central Asia and India, N. N. Vohra ed., Delhi 1999.

5- See "Post-Soviet Art and Culture in Central Asia" by the author in The Anthropology of East Europe Review (Special Issue: Out of the Ruins: Cultural Negotiations in the Soviet Aftermath), Vol. 16, No 2, Autumn, 1998.

Legal Aspects of Dialogue of Cultures

Altai A. Borubayev
Speaker of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic

Today the world, states and nations are becoming more and more interdependent and interrelated within the context of objective globalization processes. New realities of the human life, based on new radical technological revolution, called "information technologies", as well as those changes in the world arena, which occurred after the breakdown of the Soviet Union and the socialist system, force all of us to seek new, non-traditional solutions of the issue related to cooperation and interaction between states and nations, which is becoming more and more actual and acute every day. Here the matter is to preserve predictability and stability all over the world for the sake of further successful development of the human civilization.

The dichotomy, given in the title of our forum "Dialogue of cultures or conflict of civilizations" has an actual and world outlook and conceptual content. From this alternative, only the dialogue of cultures is acceptable for the mankind. A conflict of civilizations will lead to violence, domination of power, confrontation of civilizations and, eventually, dispersion and sputtering of human powers and capacities in front of the challenges of globalization. These are both environmental problems, poverty reduction, which is afflicting the major part of the world population and combating international terrorism and extremism, as well as many other things.

The concept of dialogue of civilizations, suggested to the international community in 1998, by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, represents an interaction of societies and nations with different cultural and historic modes and ways of life, as well as an active exchange of achievements of their cultures.

In fact, a dialogue of cultures and civilizations has been always in place, since the time they appeared. But only in the current epoch it has

become a self-contained aspect of international cooperation. And before that the dialogue of cultures was spontaneous, as a consequence and objective outcome of trade and military interaction and contacts between nations, especially in the Eurasian continent. A good example of penetrating trade relations and spontaneous cultural exchange can be the ancient Great Silk Road, the life of which was gradually fading down after the discovery of sea routes between the East and the West. The "Great Silk Road Diplomacy" doctrine, pushed forward by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic is aimed at reviving the Great Silk Road under new conditions and in a new quality. It has received broad international support. This doctrine is organically integrated into the concept of the dialogue of civilizations and, undoubtedly, it will become a considerable contribution in putting the latter in practice, especially within the space of the Eurasian continent.

Life of the human society has been always regulated by the social norms - moral and legal ones. Relations connected with dialogue of cultures and civilizations are not an exception. Relations between cultures and civilizations are realized through the system of inter-state links, determined or fortified by relevant legal regulations - interstate and international agreements and treaties, declarations and conventions. Development and extension of these links are extensively supported by positive activity of all international organizations. By the way, by their nature, international organizations also represent collective international cooperation, multiplied by scope and space characteristics of these organizations. It means, that a dialogue of cultures can be perceived as one of the most important aspects of interstate, international and interregional relations, which, based on objective historic conditions, is becoming a priority.

Until recent times, international relations were basically perceived as interstate contacts and relations. In other words, states as generally recognized social and political entities, as principal subjects of international relations and international law, have been playing a leading role in international affairs. Of course, I mean international organizations headed by the UN, founded by states. However, events of recent years have considerably changed this understanding and perception. Let's take, for example, international terrorism, which has been bothering and concerning all the states today. This is not a state entity, but a transnational phenomenon, which has its own reasons for appearance. Activity and behaviour of transnational financial and economic corporations also have unique supranational character and content. They contribute a lot in global

technological, economic, social and cultural processes, which lead to both positive and negative consequences. I can only add that activities of international civil (non-governmental) public organizations are becoming more active.

Thus, apart from a state and interstate entities, civil (non-governmental) national and international organizations are becoming active subjects of international relations international law. It does not mean that today states are becoming second priorities. On the contrary, the role of a state in sorting out inter-civilization relations has become mostly important. After all, contractual and legal basis for a dialogue of cultures and civilizations are created just by states in the form of bi-lateral and multi-lateral interstate and international documents, including documents of UN and UNESCO.

A new paradigm of understanding international and interstate political, economic, cultural and social contacts, proposed by the dialogue of civilizations concept, has a number of basic principles, which, in their turn, must be the basis of national, interstate and international legal acts, which then develop and regulate a dialogue of cultures and civilizations.

The "unity in diversity" principle

Its core is recognizing diversity, as well as unity of the human world. In a human being, as well as the whole nature, perspectives and vectors of development and progress are based on multiformity and invariability. However, diversity of civilizations does not cancel general human values, which make up an essence of human morality democratic rights and freedoms formulate on their basis. From this viewpoint the "clash and fight of civilizations" concept is strange to a human nature and only reflects the current situation, where the process of accelerating globalization is accompanied with prevailing Western cultural achievements and other civilizations' and cultures' opposing them.

The equal rights principle

In the dialogue of civilizations, states should operate on the basis of equality. One should not divide into strong and weak, advanced and the rest, ancient and young. Of course, all these parameters and elements exist in characteristics of different cultures and civilizations. However in a dialogue they must go outside. Here we should talk about asymmetric

equality, where different types of cultures and civilizations interact equally in spite of differences.

The mutual respect principle

This principle organically compliments the previous principle. Civilizations and cultures must see not enemies or competitors in each other, but kind and constructive partners. Now there is a great deal of talk about unipolarity, bi-polarity and multi-polarity of the modern world order, and they are considered as alternative ones. Recognition of the civilization diversity of the mankind does not leave a space for unipolarity, since two or more persons are required for a dialogue. In addition, preservation and development of a single whole are not possible without its balanced parts and without supporting their interrelations and inter-links.

The interdependence and interrelationship principle

There are no states or nations, which independently or in a separate group would be able to resolve global challenges faced by humankind today. Only constructive cooperation between all states and nations of the world can achieve a cardinal resolution of political, economic, cultural, environmental, humanitarian and social problems, which have gradually, from year to year, covered more new territories of the world and spheres of human activity, and which have become more and more urgent and acute.

The above-mentioned principles have been taken as guidelines in pursuing domestic and foreign policy in the Kyrgyz Republic. The constitutional structure of the country and its national legislation fortify democratic human rights and freedoms, preservation of ethnic and cultural diversity as basic norms. The "Kyrgyzstan is our common home" and "Kyrgyzstan is a country of human rights" national ideas are organically complimenting the constitutional and other legal norms. If the first idea became the policy of the policy of ethno-cultural diversity and unity of our society, the second idea is aiming all the powers of the state and the civil society at securing human rights and freedoms, including the right to ethno-cultural self-identification, rights to free use of cultural values, freedom for cultural creativity, etc.

The foreign policy of the Kyrgyz Republic is also aimed at a dialogue of cultures and civilizations. The "Great Silk Road Diplomacy" doctrine, mentioned above, bi-lateral and multi-lateral interstate agreements, concluded by the Kyrgyz Republic, are full of the cultural and

humanitarian cooperation idea. Foreign links of the Kyrgyz Republic within the Eurasian continent are characterized with several levels or circles. The first, closest circle is Central Asia, the next one is the CIS space, or the so-called Eurasia. At the continental level, the Kyrgyz Republic is cooperating not only with countries of Europe and Asia, but also the USA and Canada, which have been successfully cooperating and organically inserted in the post-war Europe.

Every circle, especially Central Asia and Eurasia, has its own specific characteristics for the Kyrgyz Republic and the people living here in the dialogue of cultures. Nations of Central Asia are close in social and cultural aspects; they belong to a common cultural and historic type. However, a very purposeful activity aimed at inventing a new social and cultural paradigm of interstate and international cooperation is required here. For the new independent states of our region solution of the border, water, transport, energy and environmental problems within the context of a dialogue of cultures on a mutually acceptable basis is especially important.

The CIS space has been historically characterized with multiformity of the ethnic groups living there, as well as diversity of their cultures. In this respect it is a sort of a mixture of cultural multiformity. The main basis for this unique phenomenon is, probably, a common Eurasian mentality of the nations and ethnic groups living in the i middle areas of the Eurasian continent. From ancient times their ancestors and predecessors were in close mutual relations in the Eurasian space and it affected their spiritual life, life style, social habits and values. Today building up a dialogue of cultures is essential for preserving and strengthening this positive mentality.

The Kyrgyz Republic has certain backlogs and big reserves with countries of different areas of our great continent. Together we all should realize them for the sake of our nations and states on a conceptual and thoroughly designed legal and contractual basis.

Here we should talk about the idea of setting up concrete contacts between the country and the biggest regional organizations - OSCE and OIC. Their constructive relations could be presented to the world as a dialogue between Islamic and Western civilizations, although the eastern countries are also members of OSCE.

In this matter a big role belongs to inter-parliamentary cooperation, which gives an opportunity to reconcile and compare our national legislation for the purposes of assuring contractual and legal basis for the dialogue of cultures and civilizations. Furthermore, inter-parliamentary relations and contacts promote strengthening the cultural dialogue, and they are elements of this dialogue.

Inter-faith Relationships and Religious Diversity

R.E. "Rusty" Butler

Vice-President, Utah Valley State College, United States of America

This paper will examine briefly the arguments for the continued expansion and adoption of religious diversity and promotion of ongoing inter-faith relations. Both intrinsic and pragmatic arguments will be addressed followed by a discussion of the American experiment and international law.

I have borrowed and quoted liberally from several experts in the field whom I recognize are far more learned than I. Indeed, this paper is a brief compendium of their thinking and writings, mixed with my own observations and research. Most notable are Professor W. Cole Durham, Jr., Professor Elizabeth Sewell, Professor J. Gordon Melton, Professor Malcolm D. Evans and Professor Tore Lindholm, all of whom I acknowledge and thank.

Brief History

World cultures, religious beliefs and practices, and all social life are constantly changing. Throughout world history, some rulers have made the assumption that they needed a common religious basis to establish a stable society. A notable exception was the Emperor Constantine who in 313 A.D. permitted Christians in the Roman Empire to worship as they may and accorded the same privilege to all other religions. His largess was soon to disappear as Christianity grew and denied this freedom to others, resulting in political enforcement of religious beliefs, political persecution of heresy and wars of religion, including violent crusades against "infidels."

For example, in 1095 A.D., Roman Catholic Pope Urban II urged the knights of Europe to stop fighting against each other and fight the "infidels" instead. He maliciously and ignorantly called the Turks "an accursed race, a race utterly alienated from God," saying that "killing these

godless monsters was an holy act: it was a Christian duty to 'exterminate this vile race from our lands'." Fortunately, this bitter hatred no longer exists in the Catholic Church. Today, it is found only among the most extreme fanatics and bigots in some world religions.

However, in the sixteenth century Europe began a rapid period of change as religious uniformity disappeared and numerous minority religions were born. Peace was secured on secular grounds between states dominated by particular denominations, i.e., Roman Catholics and Lutherans.

As the Ottomans gained territory in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a new religious tolerance emerged. Islam was an aggressive, universalist religion like Christianity which permitted considerable freedom of religion. They permitted the Christians to establish autonomous communities with the freedom of public worship. As European states intruded into the Ottoman world, the balance of power shifted, leading to conflicts that resulted in the 1878 Treaty of Berlin from which much of the contemporary structure of the Balkans and Eastern Europe sprang.

In seventeenth century Japan, the Shoguns forced the country into over two centuries of isolation by lashing out at Catholic clergy and adherents, and closing the country to all outside influences. The Shoguns' brutal measures ensured peace but at a price: the country was bypassed by economic and technological changes that swept through Europe and America.

Throughout most of human history, freedom of religion has been the exception, not the rule. As late as the mid-nineteenth century Roman Catholic Pope Gregory XVI denounced the concepts of freedom of conscience, freedom of the press and the separation of church and state. It was not until Pope John XXIII and Vatican II (1965) that the full range of modern human rights were proclaimed based on the doctrine of the sacred dignity of the person.

Intrinsic Arguments

Freedom of Conscience and Tolerance. The English philosopher John Locke (1632-1704 A.D.) in A Letter Concerning Toleration showed that political coercion cannot force a person to salvation. He believed that all men have a capacity for moral reason. "The care of souls cannot belong to the Civil Magistrate because his Power consists only in outward force; but true and saving religion consists in the

inward persuasion of the mind, without which nothing can be acceptable to God."

With an understanding of Locke, the author of the American Bill of Rights, James Madison wrote: "**The religion then of every man must be left to the conviction and conscience of every man**; and it is the right of every man to exercise it as these may dictate…. It is the duty of every man to render to the Creator such homage, and such only, as he believes to be acceptable to him." [Emphasis is mine.]

At an international gathering of Islamic jurists, participants argued that "Islam was the first to recognize basic human rights and almost 14 centuries ago it set up guarantees and safeguards that have only recently been incorporated in universal declarations of human rights" (Human Rights in Islam [Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1982]). They further stated that human rights and freedoms are not attributed to Nature but are considered gifts of God.

Dignity of the individual. There is a universal doctrine that accepts the equal inherent dignity and inalienable freedom of all human beings, irrespective of their religion or any other differences. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) of the United Nations has as a premise the inherent dignity and inviolable freedom of every human being. That is, every human being is born free and equal in dignity; and that human beings are presumed to be sufficiently reasonable and conscientious to observe a decent public order defined in terms of human rights [Professor Tore Lindholm]. Indeed, all major international human rights instruments affirm that human rights derive from the inherent dignity of human beings. The inevitable conclusion is that there are universally applicable entitlements that trump other political and moral interests [freedom of religion being one].

Professor Lindholm concludes that human rights derive from the "public global commitment to heed the inherent dignity of every human being but only by way of deliberation and negotiation with moral, religious, cultural, political, economic, diplomatic, and other inputs."

Equality of respect for beliefs. In the *Virginia Declaration of Rights* (1776) James Madison declared "that religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and therefore **all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience….**" [Emphasis is mine.] Sir William Blackstone stated in his Commentaries that "the law of nature…dictated by God himself…is binding…in all countries and at all times; no human laws are of any

validity if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their authority…from the original" (1765).

The nineteenth century American prophet and founder of the Mormon Church[1], Joseph Smith, drafted the following wording into the Nauvoo City charter, enacted by the Illinois State legislature: "Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Nauvoo, that the Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Latter-day Saints, Quakers, Episcopals, Universalists, Unitarians, Mohammedans, and all other religious sects and denominations whatever, shall have free toleration and equal privileges in this city; and should any person be guilty of ridiculing, and abusing or otherwise depreciating another in consequence of his religion…he shall…be considered a disturber of the public peace, and fined in any sum not exceeding five hundred dollars, or imprisoned not exceeding six months or both." Smith later stated his church's official position thusly: "We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may."

Pragmatic Arguments

Religious diversity is a powerful trend shaping the modern world. This diversity comes as the peoples of different countries, beliefs and cultures mix more freely through travel and communication. Our world has become interconnected through the Internet, fax machines, mobile telephones, satellites, television and other media. An event anywhere on the globe is swiftly reported through modern electronic means to everyone who has access to television, radio or the Internet. More people have greater and more instantaneous access to more information that at any time in human history. It is easy to research any topic or event, in depth, through these electronic means.

As a consequence, people have more access to information regarding religion, beliefs and culture. They also have more communications with fellow believers and religious adherents throughout the world and know how they are being treated or accepted in their country. I regularly communicate via e-mail with people of my own faith in Kyrgyzstan, Japan, Russia, Africa and Brazil.

Futurists tell us that this ability to communicate will be greatly enhanced as electronic communications improve and new technologies are developed. I have a son who is an executive with Intel Corporation who

has informed me that electronic devices are being developed by his company, in cooperation with other high tech firms, which will further revolutionize and facilitate the way Earth's inhabitants share information and communicate.[2]

Also, people continue to travel and migrate. These people-to-people contacts are being enhanced by relatively inexpensive airfares, the proliferation of new, competitive airlines and advancements in air-travel technologies.

As people travel they will share culture, observe different practices and befriend people with distinct backgrounds. For example, last July 2003 Utah's Governor led 300 youth (age 10-18 years of age) to Moscow, Russia to participate in the first Moscow-Utah Youth Games arranged by the Governor and Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov. These American youth had never been outside the United States. Suddenly, they found themselves immersed in a very unique world where they became acquainted with a heretofore unknown religion (Orthodoxy) and culture. They gained new friends and returned home with a fresh understanding and love for a very different culture. Last February 2004, Mayor Luzhkov led 300 Moscow youth of the same age to Salt Lake City. They too had never been outside their country. In Utah these young people were immersed in an alien culture, made new friends, learned about distinct religious beliefs (Mormonism), ate strange food and returned to Russia with a love and appreciation for the people and beliefs of a different region of the world.

Religious diversity is justified on pragmatic grounds because of the rapidly changing world of travel, communications and the near instantaneous exchange of ideas.

The American Experience

In most respects the American experiment known as the United States of America has been very successful. True, America has its share of problems and challenges, but for the most part its citizens have great freedom and the liberty to think, act and speak as they please.

The U.S. is a nation of immigrants from many nations and of many beliefs. Its success puts to rest the antiquated arguments that a country, to be successful, must be entirely homogeneous. The U.S. has no ministry of religion or committee of religious affairs at the federal, state or city levels. All people are guaranteed the right to practice whatever religion their conscience dictates without governmental interference.

George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and other Founding Fathers of the U.S., although deeply religious men, wanted to avoid state-religion ties that would put any man or woman on an unequal footing.

In their *Act for Establishing Religious Freedom* (1785), Thomas Jefferson and James Madison stated: "No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but…**all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion**, and…the same shall in no wise diminish, or affect their civil capacities." [Emphasis is mine.] They later stated that God had created the mind free, and that any attempt to influence it by temporal punishment or civil restrictions was an offence to God.

Although the Founding Fathers sought to avoid state ties to formal religion, they personally believed that religion and morality were necessary for the United States to survive and succeed. President George Washington in his famous Farewell Address of 1796 said: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, **religion and morality are indispensable supports . . . [the] firmest props of the duties of men and citizens**. ...Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, **if the sense of religious obligation deserts the oaths** which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us **with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion**. ...[R]eason and experience both **forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle**." [Emphasis is mine.]

Indeed, the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights to the U.S. Constitution reads, in part: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof…."

International Agreements

This is not just a Western principle or an American ideal. The Universal Declaration, along with the 1981 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief were adopted by the United National General Assembly, which currently represents 191 nations of the world. The 1948 Universal Declaration states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought,

conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance" (Article 18).

Similar standards are in:

- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Art. 18),which has been ratified by 109 countries,
- the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Art. 9),which has been ratified by 44 countries,
- the American Convention on Human Rights (Art. 12), which has been ratified by 23 countries,
- the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Art. 8), which has been ratified by 52 countries,
- and documents from the *Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Accord)*, which are binding on its 55 participating States.

Summary

Promoting inter-faith relations, mutual understanding among diverse cultures, religious diversity and protecting freedom of conscience is not only good politics, it is good public policy. And, as codified in international human rights law, it is almost universally accepted as legally and politically binding, as well as being a practical – moral and social – matter. The inherent dignity of all Earth's inhabitants offers a powerful principled basis to protect the freedom of individual conscience.

Professor Tore Lindholm concludes a chapter on the philosophical justifications of these arguments by quoting Sanskrit scriptures of the Hindu tradition:

Walk together
Talk together
All ye peoples of the world
Then
And only then
Shall ye have peace

To secure peace, understanding and friendship in this uncertain world, we must establish cooperation and dialogue between faiths,

religions, cultures and peoples. I saw it happen in harmony when millions of people from all over the world came to Salt Lake City for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. Indeed, we walked and talked together, and parted as friends, in peace and understanding.

Endnotes

1- Officially, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, often referred to as the L.D.S. Church or Mormon Church.

2- This includes global wireless voice/data communications where anyone, anywhere in the world can talk to, share data, collaborate together on multimedia tools, etc. to anyone, anywhere else in the world, or in large groups – wirelessly. In other words, geopolitical boundaries will become invisible; distance and local technology infrastructure will be irrelevant. For example, a teacher resting at a base camp on Mount Everest will be able to teach a geology class to his/her students located in many different countries, including in villages without electricity, without cell towers and without telephone lines. The teacher will be able to use a virtual chalkboard, electronic text book, notepad, etc. and will be able to view his/her students in real time where ever they may be.

At War With Ourselves: The Imperative Constant of National Cohesion Versus the Inevitable Dynamic of Global Cultural Interaction

Gregory R. Copley

President, International Strategic Studies Association, United States of America

Introduction: No clash of civilizations, but a clash between identity and capability

United States President George W. Bush on June 2, 2004, spoke of the current sense of unrest facing the world, and the conflict between the forces of terrorism and the forces of order, and noted:

This is the great challenge of our time, the storm in which we fly. History is once again witnessing a great clash. This is not a clash of civilizations. … This is not a clash of religions. … Instead, this is a clash of political visions.[1]

There is no doubt that President Bush was correct in stating that the watershed which the world now faces is not, and will not become, a "clash of civilizations". The world has reached a pivotal point in history, but it is not war between civilizations. And if there is a clash of political visions — and there is — it merely overlays something more fundamental and structural in human society. The global dynamic has changed: Mankind has developed its tools of communications, travel and interaction — as well as the tools which bring wealth, health and the potential for almost universal education — to the point where the most fundamental bearings of human societies — their geographic, cultural, historical, religious and linguistic points of reference — have become clouded, and on many occasions lost.

This dichotomy — this war between the growing global reality of seamless human interaction on the one hand, and the eternal, visceral

human necessity for a sense of societal identity on the other — will, unless addressed, lead to further global strategic unrest. This reality became part of the challenge undertaken by the Victory Study, a study of the meaning and concepts of victory, which was conducted from 2002 to 2004 by the International Strategic Studies Association (ISSA).[2]

What this dichotomy is, in essence, is that an aspect of all of humanity is at war with *another aspect* of all of humanity.

It is fundamental reality that if peoples lose their sense of identity and historic points of reference — like a sailor at sea losing sight of the horizon — then they lose much of their ability to act collectively for their own survival. Disorientation, and even the *threat* of identity loss as the precursor to disorientation, leads to panic and chaos. The challenge, then, is not how human society should halt or reverse the progress and tools of advancement we have created, but, rather, how these tools can be made to fit with the human requirement of group identity, and how societies can strengthen their underlying sense of identity and purpose so that they do not feel the need to lash out in order to protect their survival.

Nowhere has the sense of this critical balance between modern globalism and identity been more intuitively understood than in the Kyrgyz Republic. The whole Kyrgyz society today has become a laboratory — a laboratory for the world, in essence — for understanding the need for a conscious national identity while at the same time understanding that this visceral human need must function in harmony with parallel foreign cultures, and with modern technological and scientific realities.

The sophistication of the Kyrgyz approach clearly stemmed from the fact that the Kyrgyz society was led to modern statehood in 1991, after centuries of subordination within other societies, by a leadership comprised heavily of scientists and philosophers. It was at this point that the Kyrgyz people had to consciously realize and articulate the context of their new geographic horizons, their historical culture, their modern realities as a multi-cultural society, and their opportunities in a modern world to which they had, as a defined society, been exposed, essentially for the first time. And, as with the conscious creation of the essence of the United States of America in the late 18th Century — thought-through so comprehensively in its Constitution and Bill of Rights, both the subject of intense and protracted debate, and not merely as a matter of legal form — the Kyrgyz people have been fortunate to have such philosophers as Askar Akaev, whose magnificent study, Kyrgyz *Statehood and the National Epos "Manas"*[3], helped reaffirm their concepts of historic identity and rights as a society.

History has demonstrated that instability and conflict follow when belief foundations are challenged, when societal and contextual affiliations are removed, and when identity is erased or forgotten. This applies equally to individuals as to societies. The world is at just such a crossroads, as the lure of technology outpaces an understanding of how underlying human needs for identity and context can be satisfied within the new global environment. And the crossroad is equally as threatening to, for example, US society as it is to the smallest tribal groups in Africa: loss of a knowledge and sense of history and identification with the continuity of history disorients us all.

The success of human society has been in its ability to perpetuate itself and to grow, all the while sustaining its expanding numbers through organizational structures of increasing complexity, and through evolving adaptability and productivity in the supply of food, water and shelter. Of critical importance in this organizational process throughout recorded history has been the cohesion of the family, clan or tribe, nation, and, ultimately, the nation-state. This structured approach — essentially dictated by a natural evolutionary process — provided protection, cooperative achievement, and a continuity of experience and learning which built upon itself, generation-on-generation.

Ultimately, this structured accretion of the development of nations — punctuated and often delayed by periods of decline or suspended progress — led, in the second half of the 20th Century, to the point at which the technologies of communications, transportation, life-sciences and wealth creation (productivity) challenged or displaced what had become a clearly-defined structure of societies and geographic states.

The concept of society, which had evolved fairly constantly over some 10 millennia, was now challenged by a tantalizing and radical revolution embodied in the possibilities offered by those technologies which had originally been created to protect and preserve individual societies. Turning these tools to the service of human communication and global interaction at the end of the Cold War seemed to be a logical sharing of human wealth; indeed, it was to some degree inevitable.

In part, this sharing reflected a new-found sense of safety, as societies intermingled at an unprecedented rate and scale. But it also meant that new definitions of society would need to be created. Underlying this tectonic shift was the reality that basic human needs remained essentially unchanged: after food, water, shelter and a reproductive pool of partners, the next most basic need is for identity (fundamentally, an historic anchoring of individuals within a framework of belonging) and purpose, as well as context. It was this

human need — identity, purpose and context — which was now being swamped and overrun by the "tide in the affairs of men".

Defining the nation, its evolution as a concept, and the goals it embodies for human development and survival

The basic framework of the modern nation-state has gone unquestioned — but not unchallenged — since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. The collapse of the bipolar global power structure in 1990-91 freed the technologies once developed for national competitive purposes and defense. These technologies could now be used in (essentially) counter-nationalist communications, bringing societies into an integrated and often co-mingled status. This, however, created a reaction based on the resultant threat to identity: an urge return to some aspects of pre-Westphalian "natural" nationalism — geographically- and clan- or pseudo-clan-related nationalism — as well as the creation of a new globalism.

Inotherwords,technologies of computerization, telecommunications, and transportation, which had been developed in the forge of the Cold War to reinforce separation between strategic blocs, overnight reversed their roles to become the tools for global social integration.

This globally-pervasive, but far from uniform, transformation of realities — in which change or the threat of change is apparent to all, and which disquiets more people than it can immediately satisfy — generates reactionary movements which viscerally either attempt to return to a utopian view of the status quo ante, or which attempt to deny the validity of historic identity issues in an equally utopian move toward a future which it believes is unrelated to the past.

The early 21st Century may present the "eye of the hurricane": a brief period between historic eras during which the rôle of past human societal development can be evaluated in the light of opportunities available as a result of new and potential technologies in communications, human survival (healthcare, food production, etc.) and productivity.

It is clear that a viable future, and the avoidance of a "new Dark Age", can only be achieved by understanding human history, including conflict, and the central core of human identity as the essence of activating a sense of purpose and species survival. This understanding must be matched to an understanding of the societal architecture made possible — or foreseeably possible — by scientific and technological prospects and changing patterns of human communication.

The security of ignorance versus the insecurity of progress: absorbing changes wrought by technological evolution

The collapse of the global bipolar strategic framework, coupled with the lack of viability of a unipolar world society, has engendered a sense of uncertainty and fear in many societies. This has been coupled with a compounded sense of frustration in some societies as its people see modern transnational media portray the apparent stability, wealth and seemingly-unattainable benefits of other societies.

The frustration is not caused or compounded by differences in cultures, identity or civilizations, but rather by differences in the *levels of perceived societal security and confidence*. It is the sense of the inability of a society to progress, when seen in comparison with other societies, which provides the high- and low-pressure zones of global life. And, as with the weather, such barometric differences generate turbulence. Much of German society in the 1920s and 1930s felt this frustration; much of the Middle Eastern society felt it in the 1990s.

In such eventualities, as has occurred throughout history on more localized scales than we are seeing today, frustration generates reactionary responses from individuals and groups who feel threatened with being bypassed and trammeled by the victorious societies. Response mechanisms to this frustration include communal anger, anarchic behavior, terrorism and insurrection, and are designed to bolster or create the sense of identity and purpose necessary for the survival of the challenged society.[4]

Today, because the technologies of communications and wealth have become global, so, too, has the response.

Inevitably, this frustration, galvanized into cohesive action, is primarily manifested as anger, and has as its goal the destruction of the unattainable — and seemingly unjust — symbols of the alien threat. Far from achieving "justice" or improving the survivability and welfare of the frustrated societies, such anger and destruction tend to polarize communities, reducing still further the opportunity for mutually-achieved benefits.

Such schisms have been characterized, with dramatic and misleading oversimplification, as "clashes of civilizations". This characterization has led many to accept such confrontations at face value, rather than forcing a search for options to address underlying causes. At present, the options available to most societies are seen as either embracing "globalism" in a sense which denies many of the essential historic cultural/identity building blocks, or opposing "globalism" in such a way that a utopian fundamentalist society — usually one which never existed — is sought.

Modern means of communications, welfare and productivity are now, more than ever, available to aid those societies which reject "utopian fundamentalism" in easing the sense of frustration which perceived disparity engenders. Rejection of the tools of modern society cannot obscure for long the knowledge by an isolated society that it is under siege from the global mainstream. The rise of its frustration is inevitable and galvanizes these less-advantaged societies, whose leaders must then channel this fear, anger and frustration toward external targets. In order to make this channeling feasible, such leaders have no option but to curtail education, enquiry and dialogue. This action only serves to compound the comparative disadvantage of the society.

In looking at both the underlying social aspects of Kyrgyz society and at the technologies of communications, it is evident that Kyrgyz prosperity — and its strategic importance — historically depended on the fact that the country stood astride the Great Silk Road. This great highway is perhaps history's most significant communications link between cultures, essentially linking Western Europe with China and East Asia.

The Great Silk Road is today reviving in strategic importance. The artificial gates which the Cold War imposed across it have been thrown open, and new technology has made the overland link a critical element in the development of the Eurasian heartland, and in linking the Mediterranean Basin states, the South Asian states, and the states of Central and East Asia.

What is significant, in particular, is that the Great Silk Road embodies historic elements which reflect the various societal and identity needs of the people whose lands are crossed by this strategic artery. It reinvigorates trade and prosperity without the jarring consequences of some aspects of modern cultural communication. It is natural, then, that the Great Silk Road is seen as the vital — almost emotional — core of Eurasia's "dialogue of cultures". It also addresses the reality that instability and frustration is not answered by prosperity alone: it is the balance of wealth with identity confidence which is the challenge of the 21st Century. The past saw confident and secure peoples who were also economically impoverished, but yet were essentially successful societies. The Swazis and Zulus of the early 19th Century could have been caste in this light, for example.

Today, as prosperity levels continue to rise globally — albeit unevenly — the concern is the loss of confidence and identity in some societies.

The existence of the Great Silk Road couples with modern technology to begin to address the "barometric differences" in "societal

comfort levels". It works toward the ideal of ensuring that development in the region occurs — or ideally should be made to occur — across all the state boundaries, avoiding contrasting areas of prosperity and frustration. History has shown that authoritarian administrations can succeed for long periods in suppressing peoples across a vast territory, but if progress and hope penetrate one section of that vast area, then they must be available quickly to the entirety, or chaos and unrest will follow. We saw the example of this in the short rise and fall of the Soviet Union.

The Great Silk Road, then, as an historic and conceptual — as well as physical — entity, is one of the means by which the dialogue of cultures is absorbed, and the unevenness of regional development is addressed, by societies in Central Asia as they face the onslaught of global imagery and the variety of new distractions to the consolidation of their own identities.

The laboratories for human victory in the 21st century

The Victory Study contends that no state or society can give "victory" — that is, a guarantee of survival, prosperity and cultural and linguistic dominance or independence — to another society. Each society must achieve its own victory, and absorb it viscerally within that community. The conscious creation of the modern state and society of Kyrgyzstan, and a study of the historic development of Ethiopian society[6] — for more than a thousand years in the absence of most foreign influences — serve as significant case-studies for the world, and are of critical relevance to how the world copes with the current watershed.

Ethiopian society, the historic example of which we should be aware, developed with several major external punctuations: the introduction of Judaism by Menelik I, the son of Queen Makeda of Sabæ and King Solomon in around 800 BCE; the introduction of Christianity from Alexandria in the Fifth Century CE; and the Italian invasion of the Amhara Plateau in 1936. During the period following the introduction of Christianity, much of Abyssinian culture developed in the Amhara highlands and plateau in almost complete isolation from international influences. Traditions, culture and rituals, identity, language — literally every aspect of society — were reinforced or created out of naturally-evolving conditions, suited to the local environment. The sense of Amhara identity was profoundly strong, and virtually no Amhara ventured into the distant outside world. The Amhara gradually conquered their neighbours and brought their empire into a context which could be recognized as a nation-state.

But when the veil of Ethiopian society was pierced by the Italian invasion, and related aspects of World War II, and then by the Cold War and revolution, Ethiopian society began to be dispersed and challenged. An Ethiopian diaspora began and exists today, with as many as a million Ethiopians in North America alone. The sense of Ethiopian identity, purpose and value was shattered and has not yet been rebuilt. As a result, Ethiopia as a state is now weak, rudderless and vulnerable; chaos and regional conflict are close to the surface.

What is clear from all of the evidence available is that solutions are possible to the current challenges facing us. Dealing with the symptoms of terrorism, or attempting merely to address the massive issue of poverty, for example, in the absence of historic context and an understanding of cultural and societal identities, result, ultimately, only in tactical and transitory successes or failures. The living Kyrgyz laboratory of national development — matching identity with modern global integration — is of critical significance to the rest of the world, as is the case-history of the wanton destruction of another of the human world's greatest historic treasures: Ethiopian culture and society.

At the root of it all is the fact that the real war is one within ourselves. Our right hand holds high the tools which mankind has developed for his security and survival. Our left hand clasps to our heart our most valuable, innate tool: the sense of identity and contextual logic of our survival.

We need these two hands to clasp each other, not to tear us apart.

End Notes

1- Remarks by the President of the United States at the United States Air Force Academy Graduation Ceremony, Falcon Stadium, United States Air Force Academy, Colorado, USA. June 2, 2004.

2- The result of the ISSA Victory Study project was the 271pp manuscript, The Art of Victory: Fulfilling Mankind's Potential, which was produced in draft form for the ISSA Conference, Strategy2003: The Global Strategic Forum, in November 2003, in Washington, DC. A final version of the study is expected to be published in 2004.

3- Akaev, Askar, Dr, President of the Kyrgyz Republic: Kyrgyz Statehood and the National Epos "Manas". New York, 2003: Global Scholarly Publications.

4- See The Art of Victory, op cit., but also Hoffer, Eric: The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements. New York, 1951: Perennial Library, Harper & Row.

5- Mr Copley also authored a study of the evolution of Ethiopian structures of society and warfare and Ethiopian symbols, entitled Ethiopia Reaches Her Hand Unto God: Imperial Ethiopia's Unique Symbols, Structures and Rôle in the Modern World. (ISSA, 1998).

Basic Contours of the Global Normative Synthesis

Amitai Etzioni

Professor, Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies, Washington University, Washington D.C.

Out of discordant, often strident, conflicting voices that emanate from the East and the West, a new composition is slowly arising. The blended tune has a limited register, on many issues divergent voices will continue to be heard, and it is sure to be accorded divergent interpretations in various parts of the world and over time. Yet the new tune suffices to provide stronger support for global institution building than was available in recent decades. The metaphorical "voices" I refer to are expressions of basic normative positions, worldviews, and ideologies. They concern values that define what is considered legitimate,[1] a major foundation of social order, and good government.

My position articulated here greatly diverges from two major themes that underlie much

recent foreign policy thinking in the West; both claim to predict the direction in which the world

is moving, as well as to prescribe the ways it ought to progress.

One theme holds that the world is proceeding (and needs to be encouraged) to embrace several core values, as well as the institutions that embody them, all of which the West possesses: individual rights, democratic government, and free markets. This position has been advanced by Francis Fukuyama, Michael Mandelbaum, and Fareed Zakaria, among others.[2] It has been embraced by the Bush administration, whose 2002 strategic document states:

The great struggles of the twentieth century between liberty and totalitarianism ended with a decisive victory for the forces of freedom – and a single sustainable model for national success: freedom, democracy, and free enterprise. . . . People everywhere want to be able to speak freely; choose who will govern them; worship as they please; educate their children – male and female; own property; and enjoy the benefits of their

labor. These values of freedom are right and true for every person, in every society....[3]

Tony Blair, who based his New Labour party on the themes of community and responsibility, departed from these communitarian values when he addressed the global society. He stated: "Ours are not Western values, they are universal values of the human spirit. And anywhere, anytime ordinary people are given the chance to choose, the choice is the same: freedom, not tyranny; democracy, not dictatorship; the rule of law, not the rule of the secret police."[4]

The other theme holds that the world outside the West is largely governed by religious fundamentalism or other alien sets of values, which are incompatible with Western ones, and, hence, these antithetical civilizations are bound to clash. Samuel Huntington and Bernard Lewis are proponents of this view.[5] To provide but one quote from Huntington:

At a superficial level much of Western culture has indeed permeated the rest of the world. At a more basic level, however, Western concepts differ fundamentally from those prevalent in other civilizations. Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, quality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist or Orthodox cultures.[6]

Both viewpoints imply that non-Western nations have little to contribute to the global development of political and economic institutions or to the values that they embody.[7] Rights, liberty, and capitalism are, after all, Western contributions to the world. (In Thomas Friedman's succinct journalistic lingo, the West has the slick, modern Lexus; the East, old and dusty olive trees.)[8]

I beg to differ. There are significant lessons concerning both the development of domestic polities and economies, as well as international relations and the design of new global architectures, that the world can and should learn from non-Western cultures. This is especially true in matters concerning respect for authority, obligations to the common good, and the nurturing of communal bonds, although only if these values and the relevant institutions are greatly moderated.

Moreover, I will present evidence to suggest that the world actually is moving toward a new synthesis between the West's great respect for individual rights and choices and the East's respect for social obligations (in rather different ways, of course); between the West's preoccupation with autonomy and the East's preoccupation with social order; between Western legal and political egalitarianism and Eastern authoritarianism ;

between the West's rejection of grand ideologies, of utopianism, and the East's extensive normative characterization of "dos" and "don'ts"; between Western secularism and moral relativism and visions of the afterlife and transcendental sets of meanings, found in several Eastern belief systems including Hinduism, Confucianism, and select African traditions. The synthesizing process entails modifying the elements that go into it; it is not a mechanical combination of Eastern and Western elements, but rather it is akin to a chemical fusion. For reasons that will become evident, the emerging synthesis might be referred to as "soft communitarianism."

One can, of course, compare various belief systems on many other scales and come out with different results and groupings. To give but one example: If we grouped belief systems according to their level of parsimony or belief in monotheism, several Eastern religions would line up with the Western ones against some other Eastern ones. However, it is not my purpose to provide rich typologies or add more intercultural comparisons. I merely argue that, for several key issues at hand, the grouping of cultures into East and West suffices as a first approximation. I shall show that on some points, there are two camps. This generalization will be followed by highlighting the differences within each camps.

A Western exclusive?

Francis Fukuyama advanced the thesis that the whole world is in the process of embracing liberal democratic regimes and capitalism, a process he famously called the "end of history." He recognizes that many nations are still "in history," but since the collapse of the communist bloc, he sees a trend toward an increasing and worldwide dominance of individualism. (Because the values and institutions involved are all centered around the respect for individual dignity and liberty of the person – protected from the state – to make his or her own political and economic choices, I refer to these concepts jointly and as a form of shorthand as individualism.)

Fukuyama's thesis (and those of others who developed related lines of argument, such as Mandelbaum and Zakaria) is that the whole world is in the process of embracing Western values. These scholars tend to see these individualistic values as "universal" ones that non-Western societies were slow to recognize, but now are discovering as compelling.[9] ("The liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world; it is God's gift to humanity" is the way President George W. Bush voiced this idea.[10]) We also should note that reference is to a global trend of intranational developments, not to the development of some global society and

government. Thus, China and India are said to be gradually liberalizing and opening their markets ; the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and international nongovernmental agencies are not held to undergo such changes.

As I see it, the argument that individualism is gaining a growing worldwide following is valid, yet only half right. It is valid because, despite some setbacks (such as in Latin America), there is considerable and accumulating evidence that numerous nations gradually are inching – some even rushing – in this direction. It is only half true because the East, despite the fact that it is even more heterogeneous than the West, does bring several key values of its own to the global dialogue, and it lays moral claims on the West with even greater assurance of their universal validity than the West does with its claims on the rest of the world.

Before I proceed, I should reiterate that to speak about two normative approaches as if that were all there is, as many do, is of course merely a first approximation. Huntington lists nine civilizations; others have still longer lists. Recently much has been made about differences between European and American belief systems. A whole library of books just on the differences among various "Eastern" beliefs could be found. Nevertheless, there are significant commonalities among the various Western beliefs and among all the others. The fact that the West shares a commitment to rights, democracy, and capitalism – despite differences as to how raw various countries are willing to stomach capitalism – is common knowledge. These beliefs are cardinal to the West's view of itself and others. They are central to its public philosophy and what it seeks to bring to others.

Similarly, although less clearly, all non-Western belief systems, often referred to as the East, share some important commonalities. These commonalities may not encompass every single culture, but they do include most, including those of which many millions of people are a part. (Because, like many others, I use the term "East" to mean all that is not "West," I must find a place for Latin America. For the purposes of this analysis, it is where geographers put it, part of the Western Hemisphere.)

The normative positions championed by the East might be called "authoritarian communitarianism." While the Western position is centered around the individual, the focus of the Eastern cultures tend to be a strongly ordered community. In its strongest form, the East's core tenets are not individual rights, but social obligations (toward a very extensive set of shared common goods and various members of the community); not liberty, but submission to a higher purpose and

authority, whether religious or secular; not maximization of consumer goods, but service to one or more gods or to common goods articulated by a secular state.

These social order values are at the heart of Islam, at the core of several Asian philosophies and religions, and they play a central role in traditional Judaism. The preceding observation is so widely held and has been so often documented that I merely provide a few quotations to evoke the flavour of these belief systems. For instance Lee Kuan Yew, former prime minister of Singapore, states:

> *... [A]s a total system, I find parts of it [the United States] totally unacceptable: guns, drugs, violent crime, vagrancy, unbecoming behaviour in public – in sum the breakdown of civil society. The expansion of the right of the individual to behave or misbehave as he pleases has come at the expense of orderly society. In the East the main object is to have a well-ordered society so that everybody can have maximum enjoyment of his freedoms. This freedom can only exist in an ordered state and not in a natural state of contention and anarchy.11*

Similarly, Hau Pei-tsun, former prime minister of Taiwan, notes:

> *It is very important, I believe, for one to pursue success and to realize one's ideals, but it is even more important that individual successes are accumulated to make it the success of the nation as a whole, and the realization of individual ideals will result in the attainment of goals of the entire society. . . . Individuals in the society are like cells in a body. If the body is to be healthy, each cell must grow likewise. The aim of education is to make every citizen a healthy cell in the body of our society. . . . Everyone should know precisely one's place in the society, establish one's proper relationship with the society, then set up one's personal goals and begin working for them.12*

Being part of a community is central to Islamic teachings: "Every Muslim is expected to feel and to accept responsibility for those who are near to him, and even for others who are outside his immediate circle."[13] In the Jewish tradition, initially founded in Asia, and which has maintained some of its original communitarian elements, Rabbi Herbert Bronstein writes that the

interrelated cluster of terms (Torah, mitzvah, b'rit) implies a spiritual mindset that assumes an authority which transcends the individual ego and personal choice, fostering a sense of obligation to an "Other" beyond the individual self. Torah, mitzvah, and b'rit, therefore, imply not only a strong sense of obligation to God, but since God's covenant is with the community of Israel, a communal consciousness as well, a sense of we: which transcends the individual self.14

Thus, according to Jewish tradition, the poor are not entitled to welfare, and have no right to charity, but members of the community have a responsibility to attend to the poor.

These quotes provide the flavor of the main tenets found in the Eastern belief system.[15] Furthermore, from all these viewpoints, the West is anarchic, materialistic, hedonistic, and lascivious ;[16] its citizens are self-centered and woefully bereft of community and authority.[17] When these criticisms are leveled at the West, its representatives and spokespersons often react as defensively as do those in the East when their lack of respect for rights and liberty is challenged. The West has a point, to the extent that it responds, that Western society is not without a sense of responsibility, community, common good, and authority. But as sociologists such as Ferdinand Tonnies, Emile Durkheim, Robert Park, Robert Nisbet, Robert Bellah and his associates, Alan Ehrenhalt, and I have pointed out – backed up by more data presented recently by Robert Putnam and Fukuyama – the trend in the West has been to delegitimate authority, to weaken communal bonds, and to diminish a sense of obligation to the common good, in favour of individualism of both the expressive (psychological) and instrumental (economic) kind. *That is, what the East has in great excess, the West is lacking, and not merely the other way around.*

Because the United States has been leading the individualism parade (followed by other nations of Anglo-Saxon ancestry – the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia – and trailed by the rest of the West), its history is particularly relevant to the point at hand. Some historians have depicted the United States as a society centred around Lockean values, those of rights and liberty, and individualism.[18] Actually, it is now widely agreed that the United States had from its inception both a strong communitarian and an individualistic strand, a synthesis of republican virtues and liberal values.[19] However, because communal institutions and authority, as well as a sense of obligation to the society, were strong and well-entrenched (indeed, as the American society evolved, the nation was added as an imagined community

to the local and regional ones) during the first 190 years of the republic, the main focus of attention was on expanding the realm of individual rights, democratic governance, and market forces. This attention was reflected in developments such as allowing people without property to run for office; extending voting rights (and much later, a measure of social and economic rights), to women, minorities, and younger adults; expanding de jure and de facto rights of disabled persons, immigrants, and people of divergent sexual orientations; providing for the direct election of U.S. senators; curbing corruption in government; and deregulating markets. However, as has been often observed, over the last decades – roughly since the 1960s – the United States and increasingly Europe have developed what might be called a community deficit (or a social capital shortfall). The same holds for authority, as shown by a high level of distrust of leaders – from school teachers to elected officials, from generals to clergy.

Although the Western community deficit is a relatively new phenomena, the absence of robust cultural and institutional foundations for individual rights, democratic government, and free markets for individualism has been evident throughout much of the history of the East, despite numerous variations over time and in different societies. Just as American historians correctly hold that the United States was not bereft of community and authority, so students of the East argue that it was not bereft of attention to individual dignity. For instance, Amartya Sen argues that scholars have been theorizing about freedom for many centuries in many different parts of Asia.[20] Very few, however, deny that as a rule these individualistic elements were weak, and often very weak.

In its relatively benign form, what might be called the liberty deficit is still found in Japan. At least until recently, the deficit took the form of very strong informal social controls, which are also very encompassing in terms of the scope of individual behaviours covered. ("The nail that sticks out gets hammered down," a widely held Japanese saying, captures the essence of the communal pressures under discussion.) The Japanese often do not feel free to follow individual preferences, desires, or agendas because their lives are invested in heeding the prescriptions of their communities concerning responsibilities toward their parents, superiors, and the nation, among others. Those who violate these very elaborate, albeit informal, communal codes and traditional authoritarian normative claims are chastised and ostracized, the fear of which most times suffices to keep them in line.

A more common and less benign form of the authoritarian community, which is often found in the East, takes place when the

community is invested in a state and its normative claims and strongly enforces the state rather than relying mainly on social bonds and elders. This is particularly evident in Muslim-dominated countries, including Afghanistan under the Taliban and Iran under the Ayatollahs, and somewhat less extremely in other nations that heed the sharia, such as Saudi Arabia. Its secular version is found in nation-states that impose orders of their own, such as Singapore, Saddam's Iraq, and Asad's Syria, among others. Just as Western nations vary in the extent to which they suffer from a community deficit, eastern ones differ in the extent to which they are burdened by lack of liberty. For instance, the liberty deficit is less severe in Tunisia, Morocco, and Qatar than in Burma and Malaysia. Still, it is obviously pervasive in the East.

In short, both West and East contribute to a new normative synthesis that moves their respective societies, their polities, and, as we shall see, their economies toward a better design than either individualism or authoritarian communitarianism provides. By bringing their "surpluses" to the table, elements will grow softer as they are blended with those of the other camp. To use the term "better" immediately raises the question: What is considered good? Before I can further advance the thesis that the East has major contributions to make to the evolving global normative synthesis and assess the validity of those values the West is promulgating, hence I must first explicate what a good society is considered to be. The result provides a basis for communitarian international relations, a guide for the foreign policies of nations from all parts of the world. The vision of a good society ultimately has a role to play in narrowing the moral gap, a major step on the way to the establishment of human primacy. Progress on this front is best made with values that are shared rather than with those that clash or with one side claiming to have a monopoly on what is good.

Endnotes

1- Legitimacy, as it is commonly treated in standard sources, is defined as the "foundation of such governmental power as is exercised both with a consciousness on the government's part that it has a right to govern and with some recognition by the governed of that right." International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, ed. David L. Sills (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1968), 244. Robert Jackson shows that there are recognized international norms that have implications for determining legitimate conduct by states. See Robert Jackson, The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

2- See, for example, Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man (New York: Free Press, 1992); Michael Mandelbaum, The Ideas that Conquered the World: Peace, Democracy, and Free Markets in the Twenty-First Century (New York: Public Affairs, 2002); Fareed Zakaria, The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003).

3- George W. Bush, "Introduction," The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, September 2002, iv. Available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf. Accessed 10/28/02.

4- Blair quoted in George F. Will, ". . . Or Maybe Not at All," Washington Post, 17 August 2003, B7.

5- See Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996); and Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," Atlantic Monthly, September 1990, 47-60.

6- Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," Foreign Affairs 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 40.

7- For a good comparison of Huntington and Fukuyama, see Stanley Kurtz, "The Future of History," Policy Review, no. 113 (2002): 43-58.

8- Thomas L. Friedman, The Lexus and the Olive Tree (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux 1999).

9- There are some who argue that one can find within Asian cultural traditions values that are comparable to Western human rights. See, for example, Human Rights in Asian Cultures: Continuity and Change, ed. Jefferson R. Plantilla and Sebasti L. Raj, S.J. (Osaka: Hurights Osaka, 1997).

10- Bush quoted in William Kristol, "Morality in Foreign Policy," Weekly Standard, February 10, 2003, 7.

11- Fareed Zakaria, "Culture Is Destiny: A Conversation with Lee Kuan Yew," Foreign Affairs 73, no. 2 (1994): 111.

12- Hau Pei-tsun, Straight Talk (Taipai, Taiwan: Governmental Information Office, 1993), cited and quoted in Daniel A. Bell, East Meets West: Human Rights and Democracy in East Asia (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 149-150.

13- Suzanne Haneef, What Everyone Should Know About Islam and Muslims (Chicago: Kazi Publications/Library of Islam, 1996), 118.

14- Herbert Bronstein, "Mitzvah and Autonomy: The Oxymoron of Reform Judaism," Tikkun 14, no. 4 (1999): 41.

15- In addition to those listed, other sources depicting the main tenets of the Eastern belief system include Geir Helgesen, who found that nearly 90 percent of South Koreans agreed with the statement "a better future depends on the social morality in society" in the study Democracy and Authority in Korea (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 94; and T. R. Reid, Confucius Lives Next Door: What Living in the East Teaches Us About Living in the West (New York: Vintage, 2000).

16- See the "Letter to the American People," reportedly written by Osama bin Laden in November 2002 and published in English on the website of the London Observer. Available at: http://www.observer.co.uk/Print/0,3858,4552895,00.html. Accessed 4/25/03.

17- Daniel A. Bell writes: "the view that a U.S.-style political system would lead to social breakdown is widely shared in Asia, and this undermines American moral authority

in the region." See Daniel A. Bell, East Meets West, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 57.

18- Louis Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1995).

19- See, for instance, Bruce Ackerman, We the People (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1991); Bernard Bailyn, The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967); J. G. A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975); and Gordon Wood, The Creation of the American Republic 1776-1787 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969).

20- See Amartya Sen, "Human Rights and Asian Values," New Republic, July 14 and 21, 1997, 38-39.

A Vast Library

Jean François Gossiaux
Director of Studies, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, France

The proposal for an intercultural dialogue carries with it the representation of multiple and distinct cultures, apprehended as many singular entities existing alongside one another, that are unaware of themselves, who clash... or dialogue. The term culture itself deals concomitantly with notions of commonness, of political vocabulary and of scientific terminology. However, in each one of these three universes, the abundance of its use goes hand in hand with its indetermination. In the 1950s, over one hundred and sixty different definitions already existed (A. Kroeber and C Kluckhohn, *Culture, a Critical Review of Concept and Definitions*, Harvard University, Cambridge, 1952). A current meaning combines the concept of culture with that of ethnicity. Subsequent to the writings of ethnologists and other social observers, one and the other tend to be used in an undifferentiated way to designate the same human groups, identified the one with the other, by the same ethnonymic predicates. As an example out of the Eurasian context, *culture peule and ethnos peule* will have strictly the same extension.

However, the concept of ethnos group, or ethnic group, is as unspecified as that of culture. Ethnologists, amongst other specialists in the social sciences, have long remained without pondering the nature and the definition of what constitutes, etymologically, their object of study. For Western ethnology, turned towards "exotic" societies, the ethnos group appears as an immediate given. It was only one way of indicating and of circumscribing an object whose obviousness was connoted by distance and foreignness. For scientists of the Central and Eastern Europe, tenants of the Volkskunde, the people - in fact, the other name for ethnos group – constituted an essential reality (in all meanings of the term), transcendent and thus non debatable. Russians and, more generally, the Soviets, from the 1930s, had developed a properly anthropological reflection well while trying to theorize the concept of ethnos. But it is only in the 1950s that the ambition to compare the basic units of ethnological observation – a

programme made possible by the development of data processing – was placed on the agenda to derive a universal definition of these units known as "ethnics". In fact far from a universal definition, one is confronted with a plethora of different, if not incompatible proposals, each author tending naturally to advance as general definers the concrete features of the group constituting his privileged object of study. Evidence proves: it was impossible to define the *ethnos group or the ethnic group* in a substantial way, by a given number of characteristics such as language, religion, myths of origin, systems of relationship...

The question of ethnic groups is initially one of social organization, and to consider an ethnos group separately, like an entity in itself, has no relevance (Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, 1969). The aforementioned groups exist only compared with the others, and they are defined by comparing the one with the other taking into consideration an ensemble of differences and cultural similarities. However, what ethnologists (and other social sciences specialists) must consider is not just the sum of objective differences and similarities, rather those elements that the actors themselves find as significant. And this type of observation is different from one case to another; this reciprocal definition is valid only in a given situation - which explains the vanity of attempts at substantial and universal definitions evoked previously.

As with any other type of group of some importance, the ethnic groups cannot directly and universally be apprehended in the immediacy of current social reality. In fact, it is the relations that form the raw material needs for the experiment. Practically speaking, ethnic fact arises initially as a relationship that distinguishes the other from the similar. This rapport between identity/Otherness that is ethnicity characterizes itself however along a particular logic, an exclusive logic such as: "the friends of my friends are my friends, the enemies of my friends are my enemies". Such a logic corresponds in mathematics to what is referred to as a *relationship of equivalence*, which divides the unit concerned into disjoined subsets; these being, in fact, none other than the ethnic groups. Resultant, therefore, is the fact that ethnic membership is exclusive, that an individual can belong only to one group, with only one ethnos group.

This proposal radically invalidates current assimilation of culture to ethnos group (see above), because it is usually admitted that an individual can belong to two cultures. A culture is not an ethnos group, the limits of the one and other do not coincide. Certainly an intimate rapport exists between the two since, as we saw, the ethnic groups distinguish themselves the one from the other using cultural markers. But reference to culture is

more functional than essential, regardless of what the interested parties think (whom, moreover, are often-times perfectly and explicitly aware of the arbitrary nature of these symbols). The cultural marker – the presence or absence of this or that cultural feature – is simply the instrument which makes it possible to decline out the rapport of ethnicity, to recognize the similar and – especially – to discriminate the other. In no way it is it a question of putting sense in a relationship which one could qualify as *a relation of the type zero*, in the same way that Lévi-Strauss speaks about institutions of the zero type to indicate institutions "[without] any intrinsic property, if not to introduce prerequisites to the existence of the social system to which they relate, for which their presence, in itself deprived of significance, allows itself to be posed as totality" (Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, 1985, p.85). The ethnicity is a relation zero in this which it does not have of intrinsic significance, that its direction lies only in its existence. It does not have an other universal property only its formal logic, which constitutes the social system like a partition, which defines in a univocal way each individual as member of a group disjoins of all the other groups. It does not have a cultural base, and has nothing to do with an unspecified concept of cultural "identity ". If it uses elements of culture, it is only as reference mark of otherness, that discriminating symbols.

Culture, therefore, does not fall back on ethnos group; " intercultural dialogue " is something other than an interethnic dialogue. That being said, how does one give to understand, concretely, an intercultural dialogue? If one exceeds the metaphor of reified and personalized cultures conversing more or less pleasantly, this dialogue passes inevitably, as a last resort, through individuals. As already mentioned, an individual can belong to more than one culture. From such a point of view, these multiple memberships would naturally play a privileged role. But it is obvious that they cannot alone ensure dialogue, which essentially rests on "monocultural" individuals. Cultures, consequently, would speak through each other via representatives, institutional or not, authorized or not, qualified or not, of goodwill or not, but, in any event, locked up within their condition of individuality. Such a dialogue can only be difficult, as with all dialogues between individuals and social groups, tribes, ethnos groups, nations... – hence the need for instituting it, to give it form and institutions.

This assertion, wholly unsatisfactory if one believes so slightly in the spontaneous dimension of cultural reality, proceeds from the concept of *membership* to a culture, i.e. of the implicit representation of it as an ensemble of individuals. This representation rests on the logic of all or

nothing, according to which one would be of a culture or one would not. However, common experience goes against such a postulate. If one is of two cultures at the same time, it is seldom in a strictly equal way: forces of things and time makes it that one is, that one feels of a culture more or less than another. In the same way, one can not "be" of a culture and have a rapport of familiarity with it close to that of the feeling of membership.

Shouldn't one, put into question the postulate, and, consequently, the resulting "assertion"? Shouldn't one abandon the concept of cultural membership and apprehension of cultures as ensembles of individuals? Certain anthropological approaches tend to spin the metaphor of the culture as a book, from its conceptualization as a symbolic system, shares and jointly acted upon (C Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture*, 1983). Regardless of the scientific appreciation one carries for such theories, the merit of the image it that it breaks with the monolithic vision of cultural – and intercultural – facts. As opposed to representing culture as an aggregate of individuals who "belong to it", hence for which he is subjected, the individual becomes subject to his relation to it. A book is common, its knowledge is shared, but each can read it in his own way, and go on to read other books. Instead of membership, it is advisable to speak of cultural mastery. An individual will better master the culture for which he is most familiar, that which he will have "read" more often – and/or under best conditions – that which he will have "read" since birth. But nothing prohibits him – except the contingencies of existence – to acquire a more or less perfect mastery of one or more other cultures.

Consequently, the question of intercultural rapports needs to be raised in other terms. They are no longer only about individuals representing one's self for his culture, but they are played, or they can be played, within each personal understanding. The universe of cultures no longer seems to be an accumulation of disjointed entities, but rather like as a kind of library where one can theoretically pass, more or less easily, from one bookshelf to the next. "Dialogue among cultures" is nothing other than the movement between these bookshelves, the passage from one book to another. It exists only so long as individuals do not satisfy themselves – or are not forced to be satisfied – to always read the same book again and again; who have the possibility and the desire to begin another reading, even if in a hesitant way. Still it is necessary, so that the hesitation is not crippling, that this hypothetical reader has minimal mastery of the system of symbols composing the book that is in front of him.

The development of intercultural dialogue thus passes through the multiplication and the intercrossing of individual competences, by access of the greatest number to an increasingly large multicultural mastery. This can be carried out in an organized and institutional manner, at the State and supranational levels. The infrastructure exists for this. The quality of these mechanisms is only a question of political will. However this can also be undertaken in a spontaneous way under by the action of the movements in population, migration, exchanges and all that one hears under the terms universalization or globalization. It is certainly not forbidden to think that the results of globalization will, in the final analysis, be inversed; a culture tending to impose its hegemony by the effect of its own force – or by that of other types of force. (Everyone wanting to read the same book.)0 One can, in the same way, imagine immigrant communities, *diasporas*, constituting isolates within the so-called receiving societies. (Each reading only that book which he will have carried.) The optimistic assumption – that of an intercultural dialogue activated by globalization – supposes, notwithstanding the spontaneous dimension of the phenomenon, political good will. Or, at least, it supposes that States or international organizations do not follow, for justifiable reasons from their point of view (concerns of the law and order or fear towards economic freedom, for example) policies opposing plurality and openness.

Policy, therefore, is implicitly related to culture. States particularly see *Culture* as one of its privileged attributions through education, together with internal stability and defence, constituting, in modern times, one of their principal functions. Today we seems to be at an historical turning point, with what certain individuals refer to as the decline of the Nation-State in a certainly abusive way, but relevant in relation to the "rise to power" of concurrent forms of political organization of space. Undoubtedly States will, in the future, have to worry about *cultural affairs*, in the administrative sense of the term. But the State has a specific relationship with culture so long as it was a Nation-State, a rapport that is in decline, that this model calls inevitably into question. This is born when the development of industrial society revealed the need for "high culture" – the term is from Gellner – shared by all. Nationalism edified this high culture, or rather nationalisms built these high cultures, from supposed popular cultures, known as "national" (Gellner, *Nations* and *Nationalism*, 1983). The Nation-State model thus tends to melt political identity and cultural identity into the same mould of *national identity*. If one considers that nationalism, as commonly understood for Europe in particular (but

not only), is ethno-nationalism, i.e. the idea of nation generally proceeds from an ethnic representation, the one finds the current meaning, evoked at the beginning of our communication, which makes culture falls back on ethnicity.

The identifying rapport that the Nation-State maintains with culture thus has both an historical and structural rational, it is related to material and technical conditions that involved its emergence as a dominant model of political space. It concerns a particular case, certainly major, for which its transferability to the entire collectivity of organizations governing political spaces is not evident. Why would it be necessary that a local, regional, or, at the other end of the scale, supranational entity, be identified with a single and given culture? Admittedly, each human group, especially those that are spatially defined, tend to be equipped, or attempt to be equipped, with an identity, and to think like a community, to take Benedict Anderson's expression. One can even consider that all collectivities produce culture - if one retains the extensive acceptance of the term, which leads to speak, for example, of corporate or administrative culture. But it is only through a kind of ideological aberration, or to mechanically imitate the Nation-State model, that a spatial organization can claim to incarnate a culture, on an essentialist and naturalizing mode. A political space institutionally organized has undoubtedly vocation, precisely because it is political, to propose certain modes of social organization, to develop and represent a certain model of society. But society and culture are two different concepts, even if, obviously, they are not without linkages. Cultural identity is not reduced simply to advancing or claiming values. It can be used as justification or inspiration, but, in any event, it is situated at another level of reality than political proposals. Policy relates to action, management or the project. It belongs to another register and another temporality than the cultural one, even if it can be acted by it, and to act on it.

An illustration of potential misinterpretations susceptible to affect the rapport between political entities to culture is provided by the current debate on the widening of the European Union. This debate is focused on the question of borders – until where and until when can and must the Union be extend? A question that quickly moved towards the nature of Europe. Concretely, opposition crystallized around the candidature of Turkey to the Union. Hostility towards this is one based, in the first instance, on reasons of a geographical nature: Turkey cannot be under the political union of Europe, quite simply because it is in Asia. The fact that its principal city is located on the European continent is not taken into

account, just as is the apparently consensual participation of Turkey in European sporting competitions ignored. Immediately behind the authoritative argument of geography is that of its twin –history: Turkey cannot be under the political union of Europe because its history is not European. Participation for several centuries within the Ottoman Empire for the political sake of Europe and its historical influence on the Balkans – whose membership in Europe does not seem to pose any problem – are not differently retained.

One arrives finally at what constitutes the hard core of the debate: culture. Turkey could not be under the political union of Europe because it would not belong to European culture. The greatest indetermination, however, surrounds this: the slightest attempt at precision inevitably involves crumplings and crispations at the heart of the already-realised Union. And the shorning of culture by history only aggravates things, as demonstrated by the polemics surrounding the project for a large museum of Europe. (That part of the continent claiming Byzantine tradition then felt, wrongly or rightly, ignored of and thus excluded.) Cultural identity, that we have seen to constitute a kind of aberration in the logic of the supranational organization of space, thus proves counter-productive – except when supposing Malthusian ulterior motives. The Nation-State model is not transferable at will. Assimilation of the political entity to an essentialized and reified culture is undoubtedly effective as a means of exclusion, but it is not easily conceivable as a means of integration, outside of the framework of the nation, for which it should be recalled that it emerged from a long and hard historical process, although concerning populations of incommensurably less manpower.

Without entering into a debate on the relevance of a fast entry of Turkey in the European Union and on questions such as those of the conformity of its political system with the model preached by the Union, it is important to underline the potential contribution of this country to Europe and, symmetrically, the representative loss its exclusion would constitute. Through its history, on the one hand, by the importance of its emigration in various European regions, on the other, Turkey appears indeed as particularly likely to produce this multicultural competence which we evoke above and which represents for the community an invaluable resource from time immemorial, even more so at time of globalization. Its adhesion into "Europe" would not mean the negation of its Asian dimension: great supranational political entities must be apprehended in terms of spaces (open) and not in terms of territories

(closed and exclusive). On the contrary, it would help gel and provide cultural continuity to the whole of Eurasia.

Neither the great diversity of Eurasia, nor even the feeling of strangeness which can seize the traveler at the other end of the continent, constitutes dangers for which it would be advisable to precede with bouts of "dialogues" that are more or less agreed upon and more or less artificial. To again use the metaphor of culture as a book, Eurasia is a vast library whose richness can intimidate at first, but between the stacks of which the walk is pleasurable –   if no one seeks to appropriate the books: if political powers do not seek to appropriate cultures.

Intercultural Dialogue on Central Asian Integration Processes among Youth

Erkeaym Jorobekova
Head of the UNESCO Chair
"Democracy and Intercultural Dialogue in Multiethnic Societies", Kyrgyzstan

> *Youth has a right to have its voice to be heard when the policy in the field of culture is being implemented.*
>
> *(from documents of the "Youth Forum",*
> *organized by UNESCO on March 28-30, 1998)*

Since the 1990s the time of radical progresses started, bearing "awakening" and formation of ethnic self-consciousness in post-Soviet sovereign states. This is the beginning of their political independence and involvement into the world economy system in conditions of globalization and inevitable trends of regionalization. On the one hand - it is the time of challenge to traditional ideals, on the other hand – their apologia - at the same time it adumbrates searches of synthesis of traditional values and innovations in national cultures. All of these multi-vector processes are leading to reconsideration of life principles, including spiritual ones. It originates complexity and contradictions of a process of forming new phenomena of spiritual life in post-Soviet countries of Central Asia, at times slipping down to culture positions of the past or to its complete aversion. Traditional stereotypes of the view of life and at the same time adherence of certain part of youth to Western patterns of behavior and values impede a vision of new ways for more developed forms of culture and spiritual life of society.

Theoretics, studying problems of intercultural dialogue, faces challenges of clarification of such concept as "cultural heritage", "civilization", "culture", "traditional culture", "traditional society" and

jointly with practitioners to develop a programme of training specialists for management of processes of intercultural exchange.

It is possible to trace sources of historical development of ethnoses, while understanding under cultural heritage, material, natural and spiritual values, transmitted through traditions and increased by means of intercultural dialogue. Cultural tradition represents an element of spiritual heritage, promoting its preservation on the basis of succession. Intercultural dialogue is a way for studying cultural traditions and cultural heritage on the whole, cultural values exchange and cooperation between ethnoses. UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Masuura says, "Cultural dialogue creates peace". The importance of studying intercultural dialogue is obvious.

Besides, being guided by the theoretical cyclicity of youth and analyzing their value orientations, attitudes and views on intercultural relations and cooperation in Central Asia in conditions of integration, it is possible not only to characterize contemporary condition but also to forecast a character of forthcoming intercultural dialogue in this region, about in thirty years. Apart from that, youth represents not only a potential for the future of the region but comprises a considerable part of population. For example, in Uzbekistan about half of population its under 16 years old. That is why it is important to study opinions and values of youth regarding international dialogue in integration process of the region.

Also, it is important to take into consideration a methodological approach, according to which Central Asia is an integral part of Eurasia and its integrated region of joint economic, cultural development and at the same time – the only and natural geopolitical and geo-economic "bridge", a conductor of ideas and knowledge, cultural traditions between East and West. From ancient times Central Asia is a polyethnic, polycultural region with common history and values. Being at the junction of continents and super-civilizations, this region is characterized also as poly-confessional since unifies Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. Due to these factors Central Asia is considered to be an integrated region and a model of intercultural society where various religions and cultures live in harmony.

At the same time central Asia is a conflict zone with common problems, and the future of ethnical policy of the region depends on solving this problem. Relations between Central Asian countries on issues related to territories (disputable areas on borders), water consumption, customs regulations, visa regimes are subject for regulation. More or less these countries face common problems, such as: struggle against poverty, unemployment, threats from religious extremism, inter-ethnical issues.

Diverse level of economic, socio-cultural and democratic development as well as reforms implemented, secret struggle for regional leadership and competition in attraction of foreign investments in these countries aggravate the situation.

As for integration processes in this region, scholars and politicians have a lot of opinions about that, even opposite ones. Some recognize that there is a process of integration in the region and necessity to search mechanisms for its intensification and development. Some consider the integration as a worldwide tendency – a consequence of globalization, they recognize its objective character and inevitability. Others state that region countries have unrealized potential of integration. Also there is such opinion that the region is proceeding not integration but disintegration processes. (1, page 8, 19, 29, 185 etc)

The region's youth also has contradictory opinions. An analysis of positive and negative aspects of youth life style and values will promote developing appropriate policy for the purpose of satisfying the needs of this generation, and its upbringing in the spirit of tolerance and esteem of common cultural heritage.

Youth of the region more or less face such sore problems as the absence of access to education, unemployment, ill-being in the sphere of reproductive health, drug consumption or crime wave. Therefore studying their values not only would reflect on some social risks but also on strategies required for solving indicated problems within the region.

Polls of youth in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, only partly reflect existing problems. They can serve as a starting point for forthcoming surveys, directly targeted at value orientations of the youth and their assessment regarding condition of intercultural dialogue and integration in the region.

Youth considers extremism the biggest threat of the region (e.g it is opinion of 37,4% Kyrgyz youth). And only every tenth or eleventh respondent indicated such negative occurrences as drug addiction and drug business under security threat (10,4%), growth of unemployment (9,4%), corruption and corruption (9,1%). Uzbek youth also indicated the following main regional issues: security problems, war on Islamic extremism, terrorism threats and external threats in general. 83% of young Uzbek respondents consider that they face problems, related to supporting close contacts with other countries, including their relatives who resident there, when they cross borders. 70% of Tajik and Kyrgyz respondents link it with artificial obstacles, made by bodies of frontier

services 90,6 % and 69,4 % consequently - obstacles related to visa regimes.

67,0 % of Kyrgyz youth consider that Central Asia is not able independently to ensure security and stability within the region. In their view they rely on active backing from Russia 47,5 % respondents, United States - 2,4 %, Germany – 1,3 %, China – 0,3 %.

The young generation of Tajikistan (36,4 %) consider major disagreements develop among the region's countries; 11,1 %, feel it relates to the field of culture and education, while 7,3 % feel it relates to either border problems or economic problems; 4,5 % expressed the disagreements as political in nature and17,3 % expressed no opinion.

The surveys demonstrated that the main part of the region youth is not well informed about collaboration and partnership between Central Asian countries. However they admit necessity of a rapproachement of states for the solution of key problems.

From their point of view the level of integration of Central Asian countries is not high, in other word – efficiency of the integration process is insufficient. Most respondents have insufficient knowledge and information for assessing the potential capacities of the region countries. As mentioned above, most of the respondents see solution to regional problems only with the help of other countries.

Around 70-80 % of respondents of Kazakhstan just roughly know about Central Asian countries; 11 % of them have no information; 67,4 % of Tajikistan respondents are interested in receiving information about Central Asian countries. But only 16,8 % of youth has access to sufficient information content on current activities in the Central Asian states. Today, the main source of information for many people is mass media. About half of respondents use Russian mass media, and this is not surprising. Indeed even summarized figures of the Tajikistan state mass media is not competitive to compare with Russian ones: TV, radio, press – in total make up 41% of Russian mass media.

Thus, youth has great interest in developments of various spheres of Central Asia. However, accessibility, comprehensiveness and objectivity leave much to be desired. Efficiency of integration of the region states mainly depends on the extent of information available to the population of the Central Asian countries.

Youth has a choice of a prospect of Central Asia with stable development that allows uniting mutual efforts for strengthening effective cooperation of the region's countries, on the basis of intercultural dialogue. Researchers have the task to help youth to make a choice, developing "analysis of cultural

transformation of societies – to study alteration of value orientations, ideals of the young generation and their system of values…" (6, page 182).

End Notes:

1- Future of the Central Asian countries, Materials of the Regional Conference, Bishkek, 2001.
2- Kyrgyz-Uzbek dialogue: Materials of the round table. Bishkek, 2003
3- Intergovernmental conference on policy in the sphere of culture for the purpose of development: Final report, Stockholm, 1998
4- Fergana - valley of friendship and mutual consent: Materials of the International Conference, Bishkek, 1998.
5- Intercultural dialogue: new approaches and eternal truths. / Central Asia and world culture, Bishkek, 2001. # 1-2;
6- UNESCO Regional Strategy Project on Social and Public Sciences (SPS) for Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan). / Central Asia and world culture, Bishkek, 2003. # 1-2.

Education a Key Dimension of Dialogue for Sustainability and Living Together

Samuel Lee

Director, Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU)
Republic of Korea

I am very honoured to be invited to participate in this Dialogue. It is very appropriate that we meet in Central Asia, the crossroads of cultures and civilisations to affirm that dialogue "constitutes a fundamental challenge based on the unity of humankind and commonly shared values, the recognition of cultural diversity and the equal dignity of each civilisation and culture". This Dialogue in Bishkek re-affirms that modern pluralistic societies if they wish to ensure peace and to preserve the well-being of their citizens, cannot afford to pay the price of cultural monologue or cultural fundamentalism, based on binary opposition. Further that dialogue is based on shared values and principles and built on peace and cooperation. The role of international organizations such as UNESCO, are also critical in promoting and sustaining dialogue. Most importantly, this dialogue recognizes unequivocally that education has a central contribution to make to promote mutual understanding, tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. The role of education is not to focus on differences but on the ways in which diversity can enrich lives and on "learning to live together".

Asian cultures and philosophies have had a rich understanding of the importance of dialogue. Chinese philosophers like Lao Tsu and philosophical traditions like Taoism have rejected the absolute opposition of two poles, a dichotomizing of reality that is more common in western traditions of philosophical thought. Binary opposition, bi-polarity and dichotomization of reality can create conditions of permanent opposition, contestation and conflict. In the historical traditions of many Asian philosophical thinking, dialogue is a very important part of the building and contributing to a new society. Dialogue brings a new state of being,

from the opposition and polarities in any society, "the new" that is brought forth through dialogue is one of harmony in which all elements have to come a new understanding of each others values and each others values are present in the new reality but are also different and richer because of dialogue.

As Director of the Asia Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding, (APCEIU), an institution which works with teachers, teacher educators and educational institutions and whose mandate is to promote educational for international understanding (EIU), we see the role of education as very critical dimension for mutual learning, understanding and peace. APCEIU was established in Seoul in 2000, in accordance with a resolution of the UNESCO General Conference in 1999. The Centre is mandated to promote and develop education for international understanding toward a culture of peace in the Asia-Pacific region, where more than 60 percent of the world's population are living with the most diverse traditions, cultures and religions.

Education for International Understanding has become more and more important, because conflicts and violence among different ethnic groups, cultures and religions threaten world peace far more seriously now and since the end of cold war. Together with the intensified processes of globalization, countries and societies of our region have been suffering more and more from violent clashes caused by prejudices and misunderstandings of others' cultures and religions. Since its establishment, four years ago, APCEIU has tried to develop and implement EIU in both schools and in civil society through teacher training workshops, training of human rights and peace movement workers, publication of teaching modules and resource books. We have just completed work on a, 'Resource Book for Teachers on Education for International Understanding Toward a Culture of Peace', comprising 48 lessons, divided into six modules on six themes containing four lessons each, for both elementary and secondary level.

We have held in Suva, Fiji, in 2002 a very successful teachers training for 50 teachers from 12 Pacific island countries. We have conducted three teachers training workshops and the last one held for a whole month in July 2003, in Ichon, Republic of Korea had 38 teachers from 20 Asia –Pacific countries participating. The next one to be held very soon this year, June 21-July 10, will have 40 teachers from 20 countries in Asia-Pacific, including from Central Asian countries such Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. We have embarked on these initiatives because we believe that education for international understanding and dialogue through EIU must

be carried out not only within national, cultural and religious boundaries but should also be practised and promoted internationally, regionally and cross-culturally. We therefore see the strong need and necessity for regional, inter-regional, cross-cultural networking and building of solidarity among educators and researchers. Our Regional Teacher training workshops have become such a rich and vivid experience of cross-cultural living and learning for the participating teachers. This contributes immensely to their role as educators back in their national and cultural setting and their role as teachers taking on a qualitatively different and new dimension. We know this also from the feedback they send us, after they are back in their home country and share with APCEIU this new experience of theirs as educators and teachers.

From a similar perspective of promoting cross-cultural learning and understanding, APCEIU has also been actively involved in promoting dialogues at the regional level and research at the national level with regard to conflict resolution and prevention. APCEIU has been instrumental in organizing, an international symposium on, 'Peace Education in the Conflict Zones' and invited some 30 international leaders in Peace Education, involved in peace and reconciliation work in conflict zones in Northern Ireland, Israel-Palestine, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, the Moluccas region in Indonesia and Mindanao in the Philippines. We also organized an Inter-Religious Dialogue to look at the contributions of Asian religions, philosophies and cultures to examine how religions in Asia which unfortunately are at the centre of promoting conflict can instead true to their calling be contributors to peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution. In August 2003, in collaboration with the Peace Education Centre, Teachers College, Columbia University, New Yorkwe hosted the International Institute for Peace Education (IIPE). Over a hundred Peace Educators and workers in Peace movements from over thirty countries from different parts of the world, including some of the regions that are witnessing intense conflicts like Palestine, post-conflict countries such as Afghanistan and several parts of Asia participated in intense dialogue to find concrete ways especially through education, to achieve a more peaceful world. Since September 11, 2001, education for international understanding, peace education and dialogue among schools has become a necessity, especially in the Asia-pacific Region. It is not only Sept 11, but also the danger of nuclear war in the South Asian region, the continuing turmoil after US intervention in Iraq, the declaration of war against 'axis of evils', Iran and North Korea, all of which are located on our continent all make it imperative and urgent

that we engage in preventing escalation of existing conflicts, emergence of new conflicts and building peaceful societies through Peace Education.

APCEIU, being located in Seoul, Republic of Korea and coming myself from Korea a country which is still under the shadow of Cold war, I would also like to share in this dialogue our situation where we are struggling to overcome our division and military confrontation between North and South Korea. Ironically even though the Cold war has disappeared in Europe, we on the Korean peninsula find ourselves not only living in the shadow of a continuing Cold war but the dangerous threats of hot war and total destruction. In spite of the efforts to continue dialogue and cooperation to establish a peaceful resolution, the two Koreas are still far away from overcoming the adversarial relationship and images. Both sides are worried about security and survival and are afraid of being united in a manner that leads to either a communist dominated system or an absorption into an "imperial-capitalist" system.

It was the peace movement led by civil society of the 1980s that contributed to the demand for alternative ways of unification to that of government policy which was based more on the production of enemy images, demonisation of the other and antagonistic division and confrontation. The peace movement of the 1980s was launched given the frustration of people over the Kwangju massacre, military rule and the denial of democratic rights. The successes of the European movement, the progress in Disarmament talks such as SALT also provided a stimulus and contributed to the growth of the peace movement. A major force in the peace, reconciliation and unification movements of the 1980s in South Korea has been the intellectual community of students, writers, artists, university professors, religious groups and Christian churches as well as workers and trade union movements.

The government of Kim Dae Jung in 1998 introduced a rather progressive North Korea policy which is known as the "all-inclusive" or "sunshine policy", aiming at a peace settlement on the Korean peninsula. This policy has been successful in not only a summit meeting of North and South leaders but also mutual visits by separated families. However the real success of the peace policy will depend on whether peace education can change people's opinions and attitudes about North Korea and whether a new culture of peace, trust and reconciliation can be built among people on both sides. For this, I believe civil society attempts at reconciliation, through regular contacts and dialogue is a necessary pre-condition for governmental policy to succeed.

Behind the military threat and fear of war in Korea, there is a tremendous amount of hatred, antagonism and exaggerated adversarial imagery that has been embedded in the consciousness of people who for long have been subjected to ideological manipulation and indoctrination. For over half-century there has been no communication, information exchanges or personal contacts between people in the North and South. From kindergarten right up to the university level, children and students on both sides of the Korean divide have received education that propagates and instigates hatred and aggression towards the other side through a distorted and exaggerated picture and portrayal of the other as enemy. School textbooks on history, ethics, politics and philosophy are full of distorted, prejudiced, manipulated description of each and which have to be discarded if, dialogue, peace and reconciliation are to be achieved between the two Koreas.

In order to build a culture of peace and peaceful reconciliation and unification, a profound peace education that replaces the present education that sanctifies confrontation and violence is needed. Also urgently needed is the elimination of distorted enemy-imagery and ideological hatred and prejudices. In its place has to be peace education that teaches ways of conflict resolution, mutual understanding and reconciliation. Korean people have also lived too long a history and tradition of monistic culture, language and state and thus lack an understanding of other cultures, religions and ideologies. A new culture of peace and dialogue in Korea means changing the behavioural pattern and attitudes of the majority of people into a more tolerant, communicative and peaceable one. This can be brought about and promoted only through a broad peace education programme of the whole of civil society, such as schools, universities, religious institutions and mass media.

In the new millennium when humankind should move to more peaceable ways of living with each other, we see that conflicts based on ideological divisions, religion and hatred still haunt us and nation state systems stand in direct confrontation as on the Korean peninsula, threatening war and destruction. But it is not only these kind of old conflicts that threaten peace and the future of humankind, but also increasingly our own inability as a species to live peaceably with nature and thus causing very serious disruptions to ecosystems, locally, nationally and globally. At the global level, the most serious threat facing all of planet earth, sentient beings and humans alike is that of climate change. Global warming and climatic changes are affecting very seriously the livelihoods of very poor people such as farmers in different parts of the world, leading

to conflicts over natural resources which get converted into more intensified conflicts of an ethnic, cultural or religious nature. There is pressing need for global dialogue on mitigating and preventing the damages caused by global climatic change and which are a result of our contemporary civilisations styles of life and ways of living which are impacting negatively nature and natural ecosystems.

Other than this catastrophic threats facing planet earth and all humanity, North and South, East and West as a result of global warming many local and regional level imbalances in ecosystems is creating conditions for conflicts. Most common in many parts of Asia are conflicts over water, though in the case of many trans-border conflicts over sharing of river waters, workable systems of agreement of sharing the waters also exist in the region as in the Indus Water Commission between India and Pakistan and in the Mekong region among the Indo-China countries. But there are tensions over the sharing of the waters of the Ganges between India and Bangladesh. Conflicts over the sharing of resources, marine, mineral and oil resources of the oceans in a region endowed with many seas and oceans remain potential conflicts while the diminishing marine resources is leading to conflicts in many coastal areas between local fishing communities and that of the industrial fishing systems like trawler fishing. There are conflicts over the common resources of the coastal areas between communities living there and new demands on these resources in terms of the shipping and tourism and off shore oil industry. In North East Asia, there are accusations and counter-accusation regarding the sand and dust storms that affect the Korean peninsula for example.

In the light of the ecological threats facing us, the conflicts generated by unfair or unjust uses of ecological resources or damage that is caused to it, we are faced with the task of a mammoth task in terms of Education for a Sustainable living, for sustainability or as is broadly understood within the global learning community especially UNESCO, Education for Sustainable Development. In the current global context, as part of the dialogue of civilisations in which we recognize Education has a central role, we can also see an emerging synergy that is both needed and growing between Education for International Understanding (EIU) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). A new global citizenship, sensitive to and mindful of the threats to our planetary ecosystem is in urgent need of being built, through EIU and ESD. A sustainable and peaceful future is not possible unless all the necessary conditions for the survival of human and ecological life are secured like water, food, clean air, social peace, human rights, gender justice and unless all problems of

poverty, environmental degradation, wasteful consumption, population growth, health epidemics and illiteracy are solved. In many regions, especially in the Pacific so rich culturally in terms of indigenous groups and their traditions, conflicts of priority setting emerge, whether it be in relation to education in a foreign language or culture or recovery of indigenous cultures and both EIU and ESD have to confront and dialogue through the tasks of priority setting. Another important dimension to achieving sustainable futures is overcoming the limitations and negative impacts of materialistic development and finding alternatives to high consumption oriented western models of industrialisation and development. This requires that in developing our educational strategies and interventions we also draw from the rich ethical, spiritual and cultural traditions and teachings of the Asia-pacific region, such as the Maori and other indigenous traditions at one end of the region, to Buddhist, Taoism, Confucian in East and South East Asia, to the rich cultural and religious traditions of a culturally diverse regions such as South and Central Asia on the other end. These rich traditions need also to be revitalised and inspiration found in them so that they can contribute to a sustainable lifestyle and consumption behaviours.

Education has a major contribution to make to dialogue both for learning lo live together amongst people and cultures but also to living sustainably and in peace with nature and natural ecosystems. Our Institution APCEIU, located in the Asia-Pacific region is very happy to take the challenge and carry the task forward of dialogue through fundamental transformations brought through education al programmes. We look forward to build cooperative ties as an UNESCO institution, through UNESCO with other institutions and centres of excellence in the region and internationally take on the collective task of this huge challenge of dialogue among civilisations and cultures that is before us for a peaceful and sustainable future.

Cross-Cultural and Inter-religious Dialogue: Towards New Paradigms of Communication

Liubava M. Moreva

National Officer for Culture, UNESCO Moscow Office

"In what way can the objective undergo changes, under the effect of the ideal, so as to result in a complete correspondence to the latter?"

F.W.J. Schelling

The subject of this paper is incorporated into the research programme of the International Centre for Fundamental Studies in Contemporary Culture, which was initiated by the St. Petersburg Branch of the Russian Institute for Cultural Research several years ago. The topic of this programme is phrased in the following way: Toward New Paradigms of Communication: Philosophical and Psychological Aspects of the Dynamics of Mentality in Contemporary Culture.

The focal point of the programme is an in-depth examination of culture as a complex structure of communicative strategies, the changes and re-orientations of which intimately bare upon all aspects of human existence.

The major goals and aims of the programme - which come close to those of UNESCO - are the following: to focus attention on people's perception of values and meanings; to make a contribution to the dialogue of cultures and to the understanding of the complex dynamics of cultural processes; to foster active development of international cooperation in the sphere of interdisciplinary studies in the field of philosophy and in the humanities in general; and to initiate research in the sphere of the ethical aspects of human activity, humanity's freedom and responsibility in the

information society, and related directions. The programme aims to advance new methods of interaction between human sciences, such as history, epistemology, linguistics and psychology with philosophical reflections in order to promote an understanding of the complicated changes taking place in contemporary culture. It stresses the transdisciplinary investigation of the dynamics of mentality and processes of transformation in the human perception of the self and the world in the information society.

The strategic importance of intellectual research efforts, not only for the understanding and description of the ongoing processes of contemporary culture, but also for accurate forecasting of the possible consequences in the future, will dramatically increase in the course of the historical transformations of values and orientations that humankind is presently facing.

Today, human beings deal with serious shifts in the paradigmatic system of co-ordinates in respect to their values and orientation. With all the flexibility of this system, a certain caution is needed to preserve its vital power based upon the principal differentiation between the modes of 'ascending' and 'descending'. Any indifference to this distinction, any insensitivity to it, any forms of ethical and ontological aloofness, lead a person to a crisis of identity, to a total lose of the meaning of his/her own existence, to existential devastation.

It seems doubtless that the problem of revealing creative and harmonizing potentials of contemporary culture becomes actual now against the background of increasing cultural and ecological crisis inhibiting numerous meaningful prospects of man and society development.

The problems of national and cultural spiritual identity cannot be properly and fully formulated without considering the role being played by religion in the self-determination of regional, national and ethnic communities and also in personal making and development including the specific hierarchy of basic values and definite horizons of personal freedom and responsibility.

New information technology and communications, the development of science, education and travel are slowly breaking down barriers of suspicion, fear and lack of understanding between nations. Whether we like it or not, we find out ourselves in the world, where we need to appreciate another modes of mentalities, faiths and practices that differs from our own. The process of globalization forces to acknowledge the parallels and similarities in humanity's cultural development, while respecting the diversity of different cultural traditions.

This raises the question how we are to understand the relationship between world religions. Does our knowledge simply accentuate the differences and possible ongoing discord between the world's faiths? Are there many different paths to one truth or salvation? Beneath the relative cultural variations, is there a fundamental unity? These questions have been much debated of late. But now they are sharply urgent. The questions and the responses involve the most serious social and political consequences. At the centre of this debate are the questions of how to understand the relationship between the world religions.

Religious factionalism has historically been so fiercely competitive, so fraught with overt animosity, trauma, and distrust, it is difficult for religious leaders to establish a new tone. Habitual competitors do not ordinarily accept the need for power sharing until situations force them to do so, and their reluctance generally stems from a feared loss of power and identity. To conduct successful interreligious dialogue religious leaders must have the courage and confidence to accept the vulnerability of openness, and they must be wise enough to avoid the sacrifice of identity.

What kind of responsibility do religious leaders bear? Religious leaders - priests, bishops, curates, ministers, popes, pastors, sheiks, reverends, rabbis and shamans - all are vested with the power and the responsibility to safe-guard and protect the souls of individuals and the soul of community. They are not alone in this responsibility, for political leaders, psychologists, social workers, and community activists also work to alleviate tensions and pressures and maintain balance in the complex dynamic system of the human psyche or soul. However, religious leaders are alone in their power to intercede with spiritual entities on behalf of the collective body, and they alone bear ultimate responsibility for the health and well-being of a community dynamic as it relates to these spiritual entities and their actions in the realm of human behavior. No businessman or politician, not even a military leader in charge of the mightiest army on earth, can do what a religious leader can.

These processes of cultural and civilization dynamics in modern world clearly show the growing importance and relevance of studies of spiritual practices and spiritual traditions. All old religious traditions and traditions of spiritual practice are now going through pervasive changes and difficulties in their existence, not difficulties of decline and dying, but rather difficulties of growth. This new critical stage of history we are entering now enormously excites the interest to these phenomena, more and more understood as being of growing importance for mankind.

Also the contacts between traditions are growing and the questions of interactions between different cultural and religious traditions get being revised. I would like to emphasize here a part of this vast field of problems, a fundamentally important one in my opinion. To deal with interaction phenomena, we need first to identify and determine the entities in interaction. Who are the parties of interaction, the interacting subjects? - Each such participant of interaction in our case should be named a spiritual tradition. The term sounds conventional; it is freely used both in special literature and in common discourse and seems clear and understandable for all without arousing any difficulties or deliberation. But with all antiquity of spiritual traditions, it was only recently learned that even the phenomenon of tradition as such may be and should be a subject of different - scientific, culturological, philosophical, theological - studies. It turned out that there was not performed, philosophically speaking, a reflection, was not elaborated a scientific concept of spiritual tradition. The questions, however, on how spiritual traditions originate and live and what functions have cannot be positively answered without the said concept; it is equally impossible to study out how these traditions contact and interact and which forms of dialogue can they enter into.

Spiritual tradition originates as a kind of live ambience where a special sort of human experience is reproduced, kept and transferred, the experience that requires very special conditions and prerequisites to for reproduction and transduction. This kind of anthropological experience is by many parameters separated from the whole human experience. It plays the role of deep-lying and generative layer of experience, on which basis all consequent layers arouse and finally live on.

In the terms of philosophy, such generating experience must be the experience of primary orientation of man in being; it is mystic experience by nature. The use of the notion of mystic experience in modern science requires, however, preparation work. The sphere of mystic played in European culture a complex and still not enough studied role, the understanding of which was strongly contaminated with many vulgarizing, distorting meanings and semantic layers at that. But if to make re-analyzing both the notions and the facts, and to form a correct concept of mystic experience, we will see that this experience's determining feature is just that it requires certain unique conditions and prerequisites for obtaining, reproducing and conveying. It transpires that creation of a live spiritual ambience is the main prerequisite of obtaining mystic experience. And spiritual tradition is just such an ambience, in which becomes possible

identical reproduction and transduction of mystic experience as a special experience of human existential orientation.

Many important corollaries ensue from such a treatment of spiritual tradition. Orientation of man in being imports establishment of relations with anthropological limit, that is with the limit of human existence horizon characterized by certain fundamental predicates, firstly by that of finitude. Therefore the problem of analysis of the experience, in which man discovers and assays the Limit, self-determines towards it. One of first and most important findings of the analysis is trans-individuality of the experience. Individual experience related to existential limit includes some phenomena that man is unable to interpret adequately without resorting to other's experience. It transpires that such phenomena and processes have no counterparts in common everyday experience of man, in all empirical strategies of human existence; for organization and interpretation of them inapplicable are the methods and approaches developed within old positivist scientific discourse based on naturalist concepts of experience. Here experience notoriously does not follow the rules and criteria of positivist organon of scientific thought; we are out of the sphere of scientific experiment, in which verification and interpretation of experience were based upon the postulate of identical reproducibility. In the meantime, verification of experience, availability of strict and commonly accepted rules of interpretation are here maybe even more needed: man insistently needs to know the right way to the limits of his mode of being, to self-superiority and transforming into Other Existence - and such are the aims of mystic experience. In other words, there must be special discipline and system, special methods and criteria of spiritual experience. And such discipline and system certainly cannot be created by an individual. Creation of an organon of spiritual and mystic experience, unique experience that man is tied in with existential limit of his existence, is the problem of spiritual tradition.

Thus, within spiritual traditions the method is developed of leading a human being toward the aim lying beyond the limits of actual being, meta-anthropological aim. This is a unique function. The history shows that spiritual tradition takes hundreds of years for creation and results in powerful stream of spiritual and cultural development.

Contemporaneous conceptualization and creation of philosophical concept of spiritual tradition is only beginning. Appearance of such concept immediately opens prospects of further fundamental anthropological researches. Possible (and somewhat being actually developed) research directions are multitudinous.

Certainly an important field is comparative studies, for which availability of general concepts and definitions creates strict methodological basis and allows overcoming common arbitrariness of criteria and row empiricism. On parity with this concrete direction there appear very promising possibilities of wider conceptual generalizations. We interpret spiritual tradition and corresponding spiritual practice as a unique methodology to lead man to his Limit. But then we can ask a series of basic questions: What is that Anthropological Limit, the notion of which appears in description of mystic experience virtually on intuitive level? Is it possible to form a correct concept of the Anthropological Limit and what will be this Limit's outline?

By entering such topics we are forced also to derive a general notion of anthropological strategy; studying of these new notions leads us not to ancient, but to very actual phenomena that play key roles in critical anthropological processes of our days. Here open the ways that start from the concepts of spiritual practice and spiritual tradition and lead us by the logic of consequent scientific generalization both to eternal and to current key anthropological problems - and promise future creation of a contemporaneous integral model of human being.

Our subject problem of communicability of cultural and religious traditions can be dealt with quite differently in relation of at least three primary kinds of religious consciousness or religious discourse.

There is the discourse of dogmatics. There is the discourse of sacrality, ritualized religiousness. And there is the discourse of practice, direct experience. These are fundamental dimensions of religious aspect. In each of these three aspects, the problem of communicability is treated quite differently, has different ways of progression and solution, and gets different answers.

Certainly all spiritual traditions belong to the most internal, intimate, incommunicable. This is what we have to state when starting any discussion thereon. This sphere includes all the most incommunicable, intimate, internal we can name and indicate in man; the most unpronounceable even for oneself within oneself.

Let us make clear, first of all, what the specific and even unique character of Spiritual Practice consists in. I am following here the approach elaborated by Sergey Horuziy, a well-known Russian religious thinker and scholar. Spiritual Practices belong to the category of so called Practices of the Self {les pratiques de soi, the term introduced by Michel Foucault). In these practices the man performs deliberate changes, transformations of himself, i.e. a certain self-transformation. Evidently, this self-transformation

guided by man's consciousness is a goal-positing and goal-directed, teleological process, principal features of which are determined by (a) the final goal of a given practice and (b) the complex of means used for attaining the goal. The complex of means depends upon the final goal, but is not completely determined by it. Specific character of Spiritual Practice is caused, in the first place, by its goal: usually called a "higher spiritual state", this goal does not belong to the horizon of man's being-there (being-presence, Dasein); never and in no way can it be achieved and realized as a certain given thing in this horizon. Thus the very notion of goal needs a generalization in this case and as a variant of such generalization we say that Spiritual Practice is directed to a trans-goal or telos. The telos of Spiritual Practice is man's entry in, union with, drawing into a certain mode of being, ontological horizon different from man's being-there. Evidently, such union represents a transcension of the present man's nature and actual ontological transformation: it implies the change of the ontological status of man and conversion into a certain meta-anthropological reality. A practice directed to such "goal" is not just anthropological practice, but meta-anthropological strategy. As for the aspect of means, the most important feature of Spiritual Practice is its holistic character: the self-transformation performed in this practice implies global transformation of a human being on all levels of its organization, intellectual, psychic and somatic. As a closer definition, we can say now that Spiritual Practice is a holistic practice of the Self oriented to a meta-anthropological telos. In other terms, the transcending and meta-anthropological nature of the telos means that Spiritual Practice belongs to the sphere of mystical experience, while the fact that part of it is formed by practices of somatic autotransformation implies its ascetic character; and one can be said as a result that Spiritual Practice is mystico-ascetic practice.

Man's self-transformation obviously cannot be an "actual ontological transformation" and "conversion into meta-anthropological reality": in any his activity, a man just realizes his nature, and his status in being and he cannot change them. Such changes, if thinkable at all, have some outer acting factor as their necessary condition and "outer" should be meant here in the strongest, ontological sense. Consequently, Spiritual Practice has essential ontological premises. As a rule, the ontological premises of Spiritual Practice are embodied in its belonging to a definite religion of salvation. While integrated into a large body of such religion, Spiritual Practice does not merge with it, however. It preserves some clear distinctions within it and usually it conceives itself as a kind of the quintessence of the religion in question, its most rigorous and purest

expression. The telos of the practice is usually formed on the basis of the corresponding mythologem of salvation, representing a sui generis translation or transcription of this mythologem into the discourse of practice. Such a translation means a crucially important rethinking, reinterpretation of the mythologem: while in its usual function it was related to sacral rites and constituted a mystery cult, in the context of the practice it takes an individualized character. Not instead of the canonical interpretation, but in addition to it, it becomes introduced and integrated into the discourse of individual activity and constitutes an anthropological and meta-anthropological strategy realized in the experience of an individual adept of the practice.

Another basic feature of Spiritual Practice is its energetic character, its connection with man's energies. The self-transformation realized in the practice is performed not over man's substantial composition, but over his energies; and it is this fact that explains why the phenomenon of Spiritual Practice remained not studied and not understood properly in the European thought till recent times.

Thus we proceed gradually to the clear conceptual picture of Spiritual Practice. The practice presents itself as a systematic attempt at the anthropological alternative: it is not just an impulse to the transcendent, a momentary act of ecstasy, like the experience of the ecstatic mysticism, but a complete anthropological strategy oriented to a different mode of being, to the transcension of the present man's nature, and due to this it is alternative to all usual strategies of human existence, because in these strategies a man strives only for the unfolding and realization of this nature. This unique character of the strategy reveals itself, first of all, in those of its features, in which the constitutive role of the meta-anthropological telos is reflected. This role is realized in the form of the action of a certain energy which the man experiences as one not belonging to the man, but having its source out of the horizon of being-there. The action of this energy of the "Source-Beyond-There" generates a certain specific mechanism of interaction of the inner and outer energies which will be considered in detail below. This action is constitutive for all the practice: as it has been discovered experientially, it initiates and supports a special stepwise process of the transformation of man's energetic image, a kind of a ladder, which term appears already in the title of the first systematic treatise on the hesychast practice, "The Ladder of Paradise" by St. John Climacus (7 a). Each step of this process is a stage of the spiritual assent identified in the practice with a certain characteristic configuration of all man's energies or type of the energetic image. Although the number,

properties and concrete contents of the steps can be given differently not only by different practices, but even by different descriptions of the same practice, it must be said that the general structure of the Spiritual Ladder is presented in all spiritual traditions with surprising coincidence. This gives us good reasons to affirm that there exists an universal anthropological "paradigm of Spiritual Practice".

As a result, the whole anthropological process of Spiritual Practice is presented as the generation of an ascenting to the telos hierarchy of dynamical structures or "energetic forms" which emerge in a strict order and form an indissoluble unity. As ascertained also by the experience, another specific feature of inner life in Spiritual Practice is that this dynamics realizes not the change of separate static forms or stable states, but the change of energetic forms that are definite regimes or modes of activity. The principal distinction of such forms is that any of them cannot be realized separately, out of the process; they only exist inseparably and in a definite succession (although the breaking-up of the process due to external factors is possible at any step, of course). This is the synergetic type of dynamics discovered and well-studied in physics. It explains, in particular, often heard statements that mystical experience is utterly unique and totally inexpressible: indeed, the configurations of man's energies arising in the spiritual ascent are not reproducible in usual empirical experience of non-alternative anthropological strategies.

The more pragmaticized becomes the social concept of reason, the more human being loses the transcendent basis of his life. Reason, when understood and used as a mere tool of technologically effective solutions, as a functional calculating system for "data" collection, processing, storage and best use, leads to a specific transformation of the very modus of humanity. At this "threshold" point of possible transformations a new measure is required of responsibility of philosophic reason, enlightened with scientific experience and illuminated with faith experience.

About a hundred years ago the American philosopher and psychologist W. James, who was a pioneer of the researches into the problems of mystical experience, published his famous book "Varieties of Religious Experience". Now, after a century of researches in this field, our knowledge of the problems of mystical experience has enormously changed in its quantitative as well as qualitative dimensions, so it has become possible to speak not only about the variety but also about the unity of mystical experience.

For many years in religious studies throughout the world the leading positions were occupied with the phenomenological approach toward the

investigation of the religious experience. This paradigm demanded that religious experience be described, classified and analyzed in its different appearances, or manifestations but it was not interested in questions of a philosophical nature (such as the epistemological value of the mystical experience or the ontological status of corresponding states of consciousness). Such philosophical modes of research became possible only in the course of the rapid development of different branches of deep, humanistic and transpersonal psychology.

Analyzing the nature of the mystical nature it is useful to rely on the authority of W. James who suggested a theory of universal, or pure experience as a kind of "prime matter" or primeval substance (metaphorically, of course) of all existence.

Certainly, transpersonal experience has a lot of varieties but it is possible to divide it into two principal levels, that is, a) an archetypal level which becomes open to self consciousness in symbolical images as different visions, epiphanies, omens, etc., and b) transpersonal experience in the strict sense of the word which expresses itself in the experience of the unity with the ontological ground of the world and in a special knowledge-gnosis, transcendent above the subject-object dichotomy. Here I will examine this type of the mystical experience only.

This ultimate type of the transpersonal experience can be divided into two levels, too: a) the level which is one and the same in all the religious traditions of one type, and b) the level of the expression and description of this experience which is different in all traditions according to the terms and concepts immanent to the doctrine represented by this or that adept. It is also obvious that the doctrines in their turn are determined by the frames of the cultures which produced them. Therefore the cultural parameters can be seen as the determinants of the doctrinal expression and formatting of the basic original experience. Besides this, the doctrine can fulfill (and as a rule fulfills) the function to stimulate the "psycho-practice" of an adept. Thus, we have here a chain: doctrine - transpersonal experience - doctrinal description of this experience. Thus, the similar states of consciousness can be described in a number of different ways because such descriptions are in a great degree (if not completely) determined by the context of the culture.

In reality, the connection between experience and its description has a much more complicated, sophisticated nature and is of a "dialectical" character. The mystical experience itself is not in any case a result of the belief in these or those doctrines and tenets. Mystical experience in its turn is able to be a matrix or genetic principle for the

formation of religious doctrines or religious and philosophical systems and teachings which are simply the rationalization of such an experience. As a rule, socio-cultural determination is related to the forms and modes of expression, description or interpretation of an experience but not to the experience as such. This subtlety nevertheless is often omitted by the researchers of mysticism.

Transpersonal experience per se is not a religion at all if by religion we understand a system of doctrines, beliefs, cults, rituals and church institutions. In any case, mystical/transpersonal experience and religion are different units but even not always correlate as part and whole. In the history of religions transpersonal insights often played the role of a genetic impulse but later interpretations as a rule were amalgamated with the traditional dogmatic statements, doctrinal speculations, forms of ritual practices and church institutions. This process of "routinization of experience" (analogous to the Weberian "routinization of charisma") in reality objectified this experience, alienating and reinterpreting it. In different traditions the evaluation of the transpersonal experience has not been the same. In the religions of the East it was a climax, the highest point of religious practice, and the "psychopractitioners" (yogis, Buddhist and Taoist monks and priests, etc.) were the representatives of corresponding traditions par excellence. In the dogmatic religions of the Mediterranean region the religious authorities in some cases were suspicious to mystical insights being afraid that a "mystic" would estimate his experience higher than the church dogmas or even would try to interpret Church teachings and dogmas in terms of the horizons of individual mystic experiences.

It is clear that the problem of the correlation between transpersonal experience and religion is extremely complex which demands detailed and systematic researches.

Transpersonal psychologists recognize that the transition from a dissociated state of being and consciousness to a unified state of being and consciousness is effected through a "regression in the service of transcendence". This is essentially a religious principle. Religion stems from religare, which means to link or bind back together. Religion is similar in meaning to yoga, which means union or yoke. In theory and in practice, the dissociation of human consciousness - that state which, according to Christian tradition, began with the fall from grace - is healed by returning to the original unified state. Comparative religion scholar Mircea Eliade notes this regression has "a therapeutic purpose. Made symbolically contemporary with the Creation of the World, the (being) is

immersed in the primordial fullness of life; he is penetrated by the gigantic forces that, in illo tempore, made the Creation possible." These gigantic forces have recently moved humanity as a whole to invest energy in the archetypal conflict of opposites and the archetypal return to origin.

According to Eliade, the archetypal return to origin typically engages an entire community in a "collective going back." The world community is currently engaged in a collective "regression in the service of transcendence", but the spiritual nature of this process is not yet widely recognized. However, humanity is conscious of the tribulation and testing associated with this process. Humankind is being "tested" with respect to fundamental moral and ethical principles surrounding such vital issues as the right-to-life, free choice or free will, human rights, gender bias, ethnic and religious diversity, marriage and death rituals, and environmental concerns. Tribulation is a Latinate word which means to afflict under pressure. People in the world today frequently complain of living and working under pressure, and they are manifesting the neurotic stress and anxiety symptoms which result from being under constant, extreme pressure. These symptoms are very troubling, and this "soul sickness" requires that religious leaders from all walks, persuasions, and conventions set aside their differences and pool their wisdom, for religious leaders alone have sufficient insight into the process and the experience to guide humanity as a whole through this recreation of the origin mythos.

Depth psychologists see a compensatory relationship between the unconscious and conscious realms. This is evident in the collective psyche. Fundamentalist forms of religious understanding have become more sharply defined and rigorously held as scientific understandings of the origin of life, the origin of the universe, and the source of light or consciousness have become steadily more fundamental and basic. There is a direct link here, and this compensatory relationship must be taken into account if humankind is to survive the dangerous crossing to a unified state of being and consciousness. Interreligious dialogue is desperately needed, but religious and scientific leaders must also turn their thoughts toward the intersection between the material and the spiritual realms, for only thus will the forms of human understanding and consciousness become truly unified.

Importance of philosophic analysis of culture and dialogue consists in that it can reveal essentiality and sufficiency of the properties, relations and conditions studied by different disciplines, and then integrate the results from different sources into theoretical model of culture as a whole. Culturology (= philosophy, history and theory of culture) turns up a large

and growing field of scientific knowledge that deals both with being, functioning and evolution of culture as a whole and its concrete forms.

Ultimate breaking between knowledge and values, science and morality, utility and beauty is recognized as a great menace to culture, to mankind, even to the very existence of life on earth; this stimulates both theoretical and practical search for the ways of managing these breaks by use of these same dialogical means: human kind did not invent any other in all its history.

Today the industry of death is hidden under a certain cultivation of the production of "rubbish" - ready made, casual cheap commercial standards of life, love and death. The intense replacement of deep existential states with their signs, turns man into simply a case or envelope, the carrier of artificially inserted bits of information which transform man into an individual variable in the algorithmical system of social existence. Occasional breakdowns in this system are relieved as often as necessary by psychoanalytic, psychedelic or other means. The common result is a feeling of growing internal emptiness.

Today one can hear the following in modern philosophy:

The total simulacrization of culture and life, the impossibility of distinguishing authentic from inauthentic, existential devastation - all these are more or less evident symptoms of the failure awaiting us. We carefully maintain signs of culture, intensify communication, and with this we are losing more and more of the sense of our own existence. To revive past values is to revive old illusions. Behind us there are no anticipations which have not already been realized.

The paradox of the "final situation" in which modern man apparently finds himself, requires of him certain "fatalistic strategies". The peculiarity of the situation about which we are speaking is that man is essentially pushed out of the space of life into the zone of signs. In this zone the saturation of information makes the reality of an event absolutely indistinguishable from its virtual reality. Here the virtual reality of the mass media makes equally significant/insignificant any of its messages.

One of my hypotheses is that, notwithstanding everything mentioned above, the tendency to a new productive and searching synthesis has become vitally important in contemporary culture. Conceiving, explaining and interpreting the intentions of the human mind - getting behind the looking glass of postmodern discourse - is

exhausting. The most intense activation of the sense-making ability of the human being is needed to restore the lost balance between "the absurd versus the meaningful" - to prevent the human being from perishing in the post-mortal state of one's own absence.

The necessity of a productive mental synthesis and sense-making activity emerges in the growing interaction between religion, philosophy, science and art. Having noted that "we still don't have an epistemology, which would match the highest spiritual being" Nicolai Berdyaev (1874-1948) highlighted the deep dependence of epistemology on the spiritual growth of man. Accepting the immanence of cognition in being and the possibility of the creative growth of man (to the highest states of spirituality) not only presupposes a return to ontological roots of thought, but fills thought with a striving to the transcendent, that is, feeds it with an energy of infinite self-deepening and openness.

Philosophical thought was supposed not only to overcome "the low forms of communication"; it appeared to be not only a right, but a duty of everybody to strive to transform and perfect one's being, the task of individuality to "creative increasing life". Here establishing the personality as the foundation of any being presupposed first of all the discovery of individuality in its freedom to affirm its striving to universalism. This is the aim of philosophy "not creating a system, but as a creative cognitive act in the world".[1]

In our historical consciousness we need to leave behind the abstract idea of humanity. The idea of humanity becomes concrete in real history, in its integrity. Karl Jaspers once remarked that the real measure of our humanity comes when we stand helpless before a catastrophe which destroys all our defensive thinking habits. From these sources comes the demand of communication in its unlimited sense. They give us a feeling of kinship. They indicate to us the aim that allows our will to communicate.

The word of the artist, the word of the philosopher and the religious thinker or scientist meet on the boundary of the utmost responsibility of humanity (of its own individuality, the peculiarity of human being) before the universe. This is the encounter of thought and word in the spiritual space of deep feelings experienced by the person who is aware of his unity with the infinity of the world. It is here that the possibility of the "gnosis of life plenitude" is acquired; the possibility of that inner principle of cognition, imbued with the energy of man's spiritual growth wherein we observe not the opposition of the inner and outer world but their reciprocal relation. This is how the necessity of the spiritually growing gnosis declares

itself: the movement of thought in the space of life plenitude where man as "an emotional-practical-comprehending being" is included into the ethical-meaning continuum of the ontology of communication. Here thought is directed at the horizon of free creative human self-formation in the world; here the individuation of thought and word represents, in effect, the principal universalization of meaning generated in the space of interactive discourse.

An elementary condition of the possibility of any dialogue as a meta-form of communication and life is the human ability to hear and understand "another one" even if comprehending only the very general meaning. The main point here is to be able to respond to the heard and to understand with your whole entity, your word and deed supporting the energy of generating distinct sense.

It is easy for a hermeneutically experienced thinker to find an important inaccuracy in the above: it is proved that we can hear and understand in the "other one" first of all our own tensions of meaning. The invisible network of historical, national, socio-cultural, individual psychological, universal metaphysical and other prejudices determine our response in such a quasi-dialogue, so transforming it into the "limitless place" of solipsistic monologues fraught with total incomprehensibility.

It probably would not be an offence of truth to suppose that primordial cultural syncretism originated under aegis of the religious principle.

Only the European Enlightenment decided to break the umbilical cord between religion and culture, which brought secular scientific, philosophic and cultural complexes. Contradictions between Athens and Jerusalem, revelation and reason, faith and knowledge were immanent to Christian culture from its very beginning, synthetic by nature, because its parents were as different as Biblical Judaism on the one hand and Hellenism on the other hand. These contradictions burst at the dawn of New Age and gave light to secular civilization, which seemed having buried the values of traditional societies. But at the sunset of just closed century the limits and limitations of secular values began to be seen more and more sharply. Postmodernist philosophers theoretically deconstructed the "modern" holies by bringing into challenge their eternal and timeless value. The growth of traditionalist feelings in the whole world, including the very cradle of modernism - Europe (the brightest example is R. Guenon, who ended his life as a Sufi in Cairo) also showed that something is wrong in secular and rationalist paradise of the New European civilization. Growing influence of traditional confessions, especially of

Islam that gave a series of fundamentalist movements, and to some degree Roman Catholicism have demonstrated the vitality of religious way of thinking. Deep crisis of secular culture is also witnessed by westward expansion of oriental doctrines, which successfully replace spiritual vacuum both after degenerated secularized Christianity and after one-sided rationalism of Enlightenment. These are challenges of today we scholars cannot ignore.

The mission of religion scientists in our stressful time is not to be an outside person or a priest of the idols of scientific impartiality and objectiveness, often meaning simply indifference. Our moral debt is to be ready for dialogue: between religion and science, bearers of traditional and secular values, between cultures and civilizations, even between eras. For all this diversity is human. It is in and through man. And let the human glories in all the variety of manifestations - cultural, civilizational, confessional, Unity in diversity and diversity in unity.

Cultural dynamics is only possible in interactions, collisions, and mutual influence of different cultures. And the more the differences and distinct cultures exist within a country or eventually on the globe, the more vital is corresponding society. Therefore also on the scale of country it is necessary to cultivate, support and nurse any socially acceptable subcultures. And on the scale of continents one should aim to maintain the cultures of all nations, big and small, to let them interact and influence each other without assimilation.

The major challenge of globalization is avalanche growth of intercultural communication channels beyond the control of national governments. This generates the problem of national identity. In modern world most conflicts within national boundaries arouse from the necessity to secure cultural autonomy (or independence) of so-called minor peoples. They do not want to melt down in dominating European nations. They feel themselves different and are ready to accept economical difficulties (often lying on the surface of such conflicts instead of true cultural reasons) for this. Yes we are very different and this is interesting for others. At the same time we do not leave our tendencies to get cultural domination over others, to subdue (absorb, assimilate) so-called minor cultures to national cultures. We need a new national cultural policy now at the start of the 21st century. It should be developed by joint efforts, as no one knows final truth. And it is very important to not forget the lessons of history. No one knows the secret of right behavior in this completely new situation. But we can discuss the criteria of such right behavior (reasonable cultural policy).

It is beyond any doubt that dialogue is the very flesh of our existence, the flesh of existence of cultures as such. Plato wrote many texts that we call Dialogues. There are often no dialogues at all, only one figure's monologue, while another one simply replies "Yes, yes, of course, it is divine as you said, and how it may be different"; the point is, however, that the speaker all the same speaks to himself: he reasons, not lessons. Such a kind of dialogue is also characteristic of intercultural and inter-confessional relations. Even recent destruction of the Buddhist monuments in Afghanistan paradoxically was a dialogue, too. A Buddhist acquainted to my acquaintance commented so: "Nice, we have got emptiness in place of these statues and now have more opportunities for internal meditation of Buddha's nature". But dialogue is dialogue and it forces us to enter a special space, construction of special rules of behavior, convention on game rules, and convention on the rules of dialogue itself.

Comparative studies can help in establishing conditions for inter-ecclesial, interconfessional, interreligious and finally intercultural dialogues. But it is only possible under condition that we reject any kind of theoretical jingoism, be it an idea of unique and unified any national culture or an idea of uniform nature of man (in fact, European nature). And in such a case we will underline the value of colloquist - he is different. After all, let us remember when the science of religion began: early in the 19th century and partly as a sort of reply of European culture to enormous volume of information about Brahmanism, Chinese religions, different primitive believes... The European met the completely different and tried to apperceive it. Comparative studies are maybe the highest approach to the problem of apperceiving different cultures. But comparative studies should be no other thing than comparative studies, not yet another attempt to build a "philosophy of history of religion".

External dialogue is only starter that initiates independent functioning and development of an individuality, initiates his/her active attitude towards the world and God. Here shows up also compensatory nature of any technology. The latter appears with a gap between current imperative aims and available means. Technology helps to compensate the defect in the means.

True dialogue has emphatically creative intention. It is known that creative activity is always dialogical. But the reverse is true, too: not only creation is dialogue, but also dialogue is always creation: readiness to break away from stereotype, to fling into improvisation, etc. Paradoxically, dialogue is a heuristic technique directed to conquering of all the

techniques, including itself. Creativity always implies a sort of externalization, materialization, substantiation.

Creativity of dialogue is not towards creation of things, but towards creation of relations: creation of love and friendship is the leading-motif of ontology of dialogue. Improvisation, fundamental non-mechanisticity are characteristics of a live dialogue. And contrary, systematic presentation is always strictly monological and represent a degenerated, straightened monologue, in which the thinker brings out his ratiocinations without welcoming (rather even unregarding) any opinions not included into his system of notions.

The sources of energy of dialogue are in that collective cognition in dialogue, it is not only something utilitarian, useful for man, but also his moral debt. Having created the world, God revealed Himself to us in this world and now He cannot be cognized outside this world. Dialogue with God is mediated by the dialogue with the world. Like a rhapsode, man has some fragments of the poem, from which he is trying to compile an integral text; there through dialogue gets essential not only in horizontal relations between men, but also in vertical relations with God.

Contemporaneity in all its aspects always presents the biggest difficulties for its scholarly examination; but at the beginning of the XXI century the state of society, man, and culture proves to be so "kaleidoscopic", controversial and multi-faceted, that those who attempt to study it often end up with totally opposing opinions. In many instances this can be explained by the fact that the forces that gave rise to the industrial revolution and its corresponding societal order were exhausted by the end of the XX century.

At the same time, it becomes more and more clear that at the stage of post-modernism, even with its subtle and, in its own way, productive cult of fragmentation, marginality, secularisation and post-mortality, the development of culture can not be fulfilled at this stage; that the seeds of any future civilisation, of any type of culture of the XXI century, however barely discernible at the moment, should start to grow. One can obviously speak about the magnetic power of the future as a certain attractor, defining the direction of cultural development. To define what this attractor is, one has to consider the actual situation within the XX century culture. The postmodernist paradigm bares the imprint of a transitory stage, and as such is by a large extent determined by the intensive search for the possible overcoming of the present difficulties and confrontations, schisms and antagonisms of humankind.

The search for the ways of overcoming of the controversies between nature and society, between the natural and the social, is going on within each human being. The split between the "elite" and the mass culture is being overcome in many different ways, e.g. by the "lifting" of the latter and the popularisation of the former. The same process is going on in the sphere of gender culture and relationships (in the feminist movement), as well as in the mentality of modern man, where the one-sided, monologic rigorism and dogmatism, and the fanatic self-assuredness of possessing the only truth, is giving place to the dialogue as the optimal form of human interaction.

The understanding of an inner unity of culture and dialogue assists in the assertion of ontological resistance of modern culture to all kinds of violence, revealing its creative, harmonizing potentials.

We do need the time and space, and new horizons for real communicating silence.

"For where among people openness is established, even not in words, the sacred word of dialogue is pronounced" (M. Buber, Dialogue).

1 Berdyaev N.A. Meaning of Creativity, Moscow, 1916, p.47

Globalization and Interfaith Dialogue

Mehdi Sanai

Professor of Politics, Islamic Republic of Iran

Globalization is a kind of conceptualisation for the trend of developments the world has witnessed since the mid-twentieth century and in which the role of states and nation as well as the domestic laws are diminished and instead the role of international law and trends are beefed up. This conceptualisation of the current international developments, called globalization, which has been accelerated over the past two decades, has drawn the attention of a number of thinkers and scholars who have forwarded various theories in this regard.

This trend has influenced the domestic politics, local economies and indigenous cultures. An arena that has been influenced by globalization is the intersection of divine religions with globalization. The present article is an attempt to study the relationship between globalization and religions and consequently the relations of globalization with the interfaith dialogue.[1]

The main question of the present article is: What is the place of interfaith dialogue in the era of globalization?

As an introduction, in the first place the subject of globalization should be discussed. The concept is rather new. For the first time in 1961 an authentic dictionary, the Webster, gave some definitions about globalism or globalization, but the application of this concept was limited until the end of the twentieth century.

Globalization is normally used in three arenas: Sometimes it refers to economic globalization with an international open market and international economic structures. The main manifestation of the economic globalization is seen in the World Trade Organization (WTO) whose rules and regulations encroach upon national, local economies. The second arena is the globalization of the information revolution that has already taken place as a result of which, and due to the application of

information technology and Internet, the distances have shrunk and the world has been converted into a global village. The third arena is cultural globalization as a result of which a global culture with common outlooks, values, and ideals has been created, manifesting itself in the form of common art, music and clothes. This common culture in many areas has gone beyond the national cultures as well as the religions.[2]

Scholars have diverse viewpoints about globalization. Some of them consider it a process; that is, the process of globalization has already been planned by the Westerners, particularly the United States, to dominate the world. Others maintain that globalization is a process which has taken shape with the passage of time. They refer to the globalization of capital in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and consider the present process the continuation of the previous trends. Still, others consider it a process and a project at the same time, arguing that we have to pay attention to both its advantages and disadvantages. On the basis of this viewpoint, globalism is a process, while globalization is a project.[3]

Making a distinction between globalizations and globalism would facilitate the analysis of current developments. In globalism, it is the willingness, determination and wish of the nations that is relevant. It is a trend that is accepted by the nations who adjust themselves with it. But in globalization there is a kind of force and intimidation. It is the very same project that has faced the opposition of the nations in many countries of the world -in many cases massive demonstrations have been stages against it.

As a matter of fact, it is not really easy to make a clear-cut distinction between the globalization and globalism. Relying on modern tools, this trend is rapidly expanding worldwide.[4]

With regard to the interaction of the religions with globalism, one cannot talk of outright opposition of the religions with globalism. In fact, theoretically globalism is not in contravention with religion. On the other hand attention should be paid to the fact that inclination towards globalism has somehow been envisaged in almost all the divine religion. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all have been trying to establish a global government and a united ummah (state).

The establishment of a global society and culture has been among the objectives and missions of these religions, indicating that the establishment of a global society or a global village is not theoretically rejected by these religions.[5]

Islam has pointed to globalism in its teachings and the Shias too believe in the formation of a global government by Mahdi (May Allah Expedite His Reappearance).

Interestingly, some of the Quranic teachings indicate that the borders, differences, and nations do not have originality in the Islamic international law. On the basis of this notion, the peoples of the world originally constituted a united ummah and society and will ultimately move towards this direction again. The Quran states: "Oh mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other..." (49: 13)

Another Quranic verse states: "And We wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders and make them heirs." (28: 5)

Still another Quranic verse states: "God has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religions -the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state) after the fear in which (they lived), to one of security and peace ..."(24:55)

Also another Quranic verse states: "Before this We wrote in the Psalms, after the Message (given to Moses): 'My servants, the righteous, shall inherit the earth.'" (21: 105)

These verses indicate that Islam believes in a global society and God will ultimately delegate the global government to his righteous bondman. Interestingly, the Quran refers to the believers and righteous servants of God in general; it does not merely mention the Muslims. Hence, belief in the Unity of God and commitment to do righteous deed is the foundation of the divine global government. The last Quranic verse mentioned above indicates that this has been part of the mission of all the divine prophets, including Moses and David. The late Tabarsi, an exegete of the Quran, maintains that the word Psalms here refers to the divine book in general.

The above argument indicates that globalism and the establishment of a global society has been among the objectives of the prophets, but at the same time the targeted society of the prophets is a religious society in which divine values, spirituality, religious canons, justice and equity will be sovereign.

It seems that with regard to interaction between religion and globalization, one should make some distinctions between the layers of the process of globalism and project of globalization. As far as globalism refers to modernism and reflects the philosophical principles of the modernist era, its relations with religion can be discussed from various angles. In elaboration of the principles of globalism, if we come across the principles

of modernism, that is, humanism, rationalism, liberalism, and democracy, we have reached the point where the conflict between tradition and modernity from the outlook of religion begins. Hence we cannot make general statements about it. [6]

The issues of tradition and modernity have been among the hot topics of discussions in the recent centuries, particularly by the Muslim thinkers who have expressed diverse opinions about modernity and modernism. What is certain is that majority of the Muslim thinkers have not stood against modernity and maintain that it is compatible with Islam. However, modernism, as a package, has not been acknowledged by them. The Muslim thinkers search for the roots of most of the objectives of modernism in religion and wherever there is a contradiction between religious values and modernism, they forego the latter.[7]

The same mentality exists among the followers of other religions as well, leading to the formation of modernist, fundamentalist and moderate currents among the followers of other religions in their interaction with modernism.

Another layer of globalism – probably better to be called globalization – which is in the form of a project is a kind of culture-building and export of culture to other parts of the world, which is carried out in the form cultural invasion. The theoreticians of globalization argue that in order to forward the process of globalization, in the first place a universal public culture should be created -a universal culture with its attractions which paves the way for other elements of globalization and introduction of new economic, political, social and military models.

This layer of globalization enjoys some civilizational aspects as well and indeed is a part of the project of the New World Order in which instead of reliance on rationalism emphasis is laid on negligence of civilizations, religions and cultures.[8]

This layer of globalization leaves the reins of the cultures of the nations in the ruthless hands of capitalism with modem technology. Naturally the divine religions resist this aspect of globalization. In fact the global opposition to globalization is directed to this aspect of globalization.

It seems that Fukuyama and Huntington are the two theoreticians whose ideas focus on the said aspect of globalization which has steered the protests of the nations, cultures and religions.[9]

Based on what has been said above, we may infer that globalization is not a simple concept; rather it is a very complicated one with various angles. Therefore one cannot talk .of absolute opposition or agreement of the religions with this concept.

Contrary to what prima facie seems to happen, during the globalization era, the role of religions does not diminish, rather, attention to religions is increased in other forms. On the other hand, the process of globalization provides the religions with numerous facilities to carry out their propagation. Fortunately the representatives of various religions and their scholars have utilized the vast economic means and information technology to spread their divine mission and propagate their religious principles.

At the same time the process of globalization has underlined the necessity and increased the possibility of interfaith dialogue. New technologies have provided more means for visits and exchange of views among the leaders and followers of the divine religions. The number of religious sessions held during the past few decades is not at all comparable with that held earlier.

Besides the spread of the culture of tolerance, which is based on religious culture, understanding among the religions is now more possible and the grounds have been prepared for the religious scholars to discuss the commonalities and differences among themselves.

Hence, in my opinion, during the globalization era, besides dialogue about theological (apologetic) issues, which existed in the past as well, two new arenas are now open to discussion among the leaders of divine religions, necessitating more contacts and more dialogues. These two areas are the common concern of all the divine religions.

The first arena is the issue of tradition and modernity or religion and modernism. All the religions are somehow entangled with the issue of modernity - a trend that over the past few centuries has questioned the domain of sovereignty of religion and forced the believers to revise the religious concepts. We also said that none of the divine religions has taken an absolute stance vis-a-vis modernity rather they have been trying to study its compatibility of incompatibility with religion. The divine religions can share their experiences and exchange their findings and solutions in this regard. This can be materialized in the form of interfaith dialogue.

The conflict between tradition and modernism has been one of the major concerns of the Muslim thinkers over the past two decades. In Iran too such religious (Muslim) reformists as Seyed Jamal ul Din Assadabadi, Morteza Motahari, Mahdi Bazargan, Ali Shariati, Seyed Mahmoud Taleqani, and others have endeavoured in this regard and wrote a number of books and articles on this topic. Imam Khomeini is probably the greatest contemporary Muslim reformist who offered a solution to the conflict

between tradition and modernism in the form of a religious government model and materialized it in the form o-f the Islamic Republic of Iran in which manifestations of religion and modernism intermingle. Without any doubt, the experiences of the Muslim scholars and ulema are very useful for each other.

Another arena for interfaith dialogue during the globalization era is dialogue about reacting to that aspect of the trend of globalization that is in the form of a project, aggressively invading the religious cultures and values of other nations. The divine religions through coordinating their policies can put a brake on the pace of the adverse influence of the process of globalization on religious cultures and values.

One of the most urgent steps to be taken under the present international conditions is probably dialogue among the leaders of various religions. In fact, when it comes to the confrontation with the modern innovations of the world, there are two approaches: One group of scholars and religious leaders have pinned absolute hopes on modernity and globalization and overlook the role of religion in establishment of peace and international understanding. The second group are the radical ones who from a religious standpoint express all-out opposition to this trend altogether and push the society towards violence. The violence and terrorism of the past few years and also the unilateral, self-style confrontation of the United States with this phenomenon both have unfortunately been coated with a religious colour.

The silence of true leaders of religions paves the way for unilateral, radical actions and ideas. Hence, interfaith dialogue deems to be necessary at this stage to return to religion and revive its role in establishment of international peace and global understanding. Only dialogue can block the way to unbridled, unabashed globalization on the one hand and religious radicalism on the other.

Unfortunately, globalization and modernity are spreading in a manner today that reminds us of the second principle of thermodynamics. On the basis of this principle a closed system that is fed by itself, will inevitably destroy and annihilate itself. This principle is confirmed by all active systems around us.

Regretfully, the modem secular society to a great extent reminds us of a closed system. By relying on a positivistic approach, this system has pinned all its hopes on scientific methods to solve all the problems of mankind. How can we really leave the fate of man to this system, which may stop functioning any time? Under the circumstances when drug and liquor addiction has permeated the world, at a time when the youngsters

of the developed world open fire at their classmates in the daylight, at a time when the rate of divorce has touched the figure of 80 percent in the developed world and the foundation of the institution of family is crumbling, and when the United States and Russia, two important countries of the world, have each more than two million prisoners, we need dialogue among religious leaders more than any other time.

It seems that a major chunk of these problems stem from the fact that the modem secular societies are void of spirituality. The modem society must realize that without spirituality and religion it is not possible to achieve such sacred objectives as freedom, peace and justice.10 Unfortunately, the very fact that the modem society has given up spirituality, has caused the primary objectives to sink into the oblivion.[11]

In today's world, about 40 countries in 25 regions of the world are engaged in conflict or are crisis-ridden; about 174 million under-five children in the developing world face malnutrition; 230 million children are retarded and there are 25,000 annual cases of murder in the United States, the standard-bearer of modernity.

Under the circumstances when some of the advocates of modernity blame religion for international conflicts and the terrorists, frustrated by the unleashed globalization, resort to the arm, the religious leaders can help restore international peace and security as well as understanding and peaceful coexistence through spread of tolerance which exists in the religious teachings. Hence inter-religious and intra- religious dialogues are the dire needs of the day.

These dialogues will on the one hand help bring about transparency about the relations between religions and globalization and on the other underline the role of religion in the establishment of peace, prevention of tension, and solution of conflicts.

Endnotes

1-   Sawahata, a commitment to globalization to promote interfaith Dialogue. Yasutomo Website of interreligious relations homepage.

2-   Immanuel Wallerstein, Politics and Culture in the Modem World System, Tr. By Pirouz Izadi, (Tehran, Nashr Nei, 1998).

3-   Shirudi, Morteza, Theoretical Bases of Globalization, Internet Site, Thought Club.

4-   Farhang, Maziar, Culture in the Era of Globalization, Iran (Tehran) April 22, 2004.

5-   Christian communities response to globalization, interreligious dialogue, Website.

6-   The Mahdaviah Discourse (Lectures, first and second), Qom (Bustan Book), 2002.

7-   Leganhausen, Mohammad, Islam and Religious Pluralism, Tr. By Narjes Javandel, (Qom, Taha) 2000, PP. 8-19

8-   Enayat Hamid, Trend of Political Thought in Islam, (Tehran, Amir Kabir Publishers), 1982.

9-   Samuel Huntington, Clash of Civilization and Reconstruction of World Order, Tr. By Mohammad Ali Rafii (Tehran, Cultural Publications Office), 1999.

10-   Immanuel Wallerstein, the Modem World System, New York, academic, 1574

11   Francis Fukuyama, End of History and Man, Tr. By Aireza Tayeb, Foreign Policy (Tehran) No.2, 1993.

On the Universality of Human Rights and Cultural Relativism

Rein M llerson

Regional Advisor, Central Asia, Office of the Hight Commissioner for Human Rights

Practically all UN human rights documents, directly or implicitly, proceed from the assumption of the universality of human rights, their indivisibility and equal importance. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 sets as a goal to secure "universal and effective recognition and observance of all rights and freedoms enshrined in the Declaration". The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted on 25 June 1993 by the World Conference on Human Rights, referring to the UN Charter and other UN instruments relating to human rights, reiterates that "the universal nature of these rights and freedoms is beyond question", and that "human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthright of all human beings".

However, the implementation of these rights and freedoms varies greatly from society to society. Although there may be no human rights paradise in the world there are quite a few human rights "hells" where none of the rights and freedoms solemnly proclaimed in UN documents are applied in practice.

Often the obvious cultural diversity of the world is given, if not as an excuse or justification, then at least as an explanation of the absence or violation of human rights in some societies. It is asserted that human rights are a Western concept that does not fit well with societies based on different values and traditions. Such voices come most often from the non-western world, but interestingly enough, similar views are held by a number of people in the West as well.

In 1947 the "Statement on Human Rights" published on behalf of the executive board of the American Anthropological Association and submitted to the UN Commission on Human Rights emphasised the Western cultural bias of the draft UN Declaration on Human Rights:

It will not be convincing to the Indonesian, the African, the Indian, the Chinese, if it lies on the same plane as like documents of an earlier

period. The rights of man in the Twentieth Century cannot be circumscribed by the standards of any single culture or be dictated by the aspirations of any single people.

Not long ago Bilahari Kausikan, a senior Singaporian diplomat, similarly questioned the values behind international human rights standards: "But what institutions and which values? The individualistic ethos of the West or the communitarian traditions of Asia? The consensus-seeking approach of East and South-East Asia or the adversarial institutions of the West?"

Do differences of values and traditions really constitute an obstacle to the universality of human rights? If so, then to what extent? And are these traditions and values as different as they are sometimes asserted to be?

Obviously, there are no simple answers to these questions. Yes, there are different cultures which have different values. But, at the same time, there is more similarity in different cultures that a perfunctory glance would disclose. As Michael Walzer writes: "every human society is universal because it is human, particular because it is a society". One of the most important and difficult questions in the domain of international promotion and protection of human rights is the question of the relative influence of the factors which are common to various societies, on the one hand, and factors which are different, on the other hand. To answer this question, one must examine the particularities of each culture, and the impact that its history, traditions, religion, and economic development have on the perception and acceptance of international human rights standards.

Although the idea of human rights as such emerged in the West, there were early precursors of human rights in different concepts of human dignity which can be traced both in Eastern and Western thought as far back as 2000 years BC. As Arthur Henry Robertson and John Merrills wrote: "The idea of individual worth can be found in the work of sages, philosophers, prophets and poets from different countries and many faiths in all continents, including India, China, Japan, Persia, Russia, Turkey, Egypt, Israel, several countries of black Africa and pre-Columbian civilisations of South America". In this chapter, I will try to show that cultural, religious, or other traditions are not insurmountable obstacles for a universal acceptance of basic human rights and their implementation. This objective must be prefaced with the notion that cultures and values can change and with this flexibility comes the possibility for a universal approach.

Culture is capable of changing, although these changes occur more slowly than changes in economic and political structures of society. Francis Fukuyama notes that "we see evidence of cultural change all around us. Catholicism, for example, has often been held to be hostile to both capitalism and democracy ... yet there has been a 'Protestantization' of Catholic culture that makes differences between Protestant and Catholic societies much less pronounced than in times past".

Moreover, societies themselves change. As Eric Hobsbawm observes, "in the 1980s, socialist Bulgaria and non-socialist Ecuador had more in common than either had with the Bulgaria or Ecuador of 1939". A similar comment could be made about many states. For example, previously human rights were an unfamiliar concept in most Asian societies. Today, the peoples of Asian states are taking human rights more and more seriously.

Contemporary human rights standards are not immutable values, inherent only to Western countries. This can be illustrated by the fact that Western countries themselves, and others as well, came to the acceptance of these values through a long historic process. David Selbourne traces back the historic widening of claims-to-rights in liberal democratic civic orders:

> *From claims made by seventeenth-century property owners to the concomitant political rights to which they believed themselves entitled by virtue of their ownership; to claims made by non-property-owners in the nineteenth century to a variety of civic rights which should owe nothing to wealth or position; to claims made by all citizens (and even non-citizens) in the twentieth century to rights of protection from the consequences of misfortune, including the consequences of unemployment, old age, homelessness, and sickness.*

It is also asserted that some religions that, for example Christianity and Judaism, contain more human rights roots than others, especially Islam.

Although international human rights standards protect the freedom of religion, and different religions or individual clergymen have quite often contributed to the protection of human rights, there is no religion which has always been conducive to human rights or which has not have any pernicious effect on human freedoms and dignity. The Spanish inquisition was, probably, the most violent example in Europe of how a religion can be

used for inhumane purposes. Torquemada as the Grand Inquisitor, torturer of Moores, Jews, Protestants and others who were called heretics was a fruit of Christianity.

Even in a liberal church such as the Church of England the decision to allow the ordination of women, which from a human rights point of view is quite natural, was adopted in 1993 far from unanimously and has alienated many followers of that Church. Therefore, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., quite rightly observes:

> *As an historian, I confess to a certain amusement when I hear the Judeo-Christian tradition praised as the source of our concern for human rights. In fact, the great religious ages were notable for their indifference to human rights in the contemporary sense. They were notorious not only for acquiescence in poverty, inequality, exploitation and oppression but for enthusiastic justifications of slavery, persecution, abandonment of small children, torture and genocide. Religion enshrined and vindicated hierarchy, authority and inequality....*

One may not be surprised with a finding, made by Adamantia Pollis, that in Orthodox theology "woman is considered morally inferior" or that her "inexorable conclusion ... is that individual human rights cannot be derived from Orthodox theology". What should be more surprising, is the underlying idea that human rights may be derived at all from a particular religion. Fred Halliday is right that "no derivation from any religion is ultimately possible". Will Durant's comparison of two branches of Christianity in the Age of Faith is rather different from that of Adamantia Pollis: "While Western Europe was shrouded in darkness, misery and ignorance of the ninth and tenth centuries ... the Greek Church drew strength and pride from the revived wealth and power of the Byzantine state ... To the Greeks of this age the Germans, Franks, and Anglo-Saxons of the contemporary West seemed crude barbarians, an illiterate and violent laity led by a worldly and corrupt episcopate".

Therefore, while it is hardly possible to anchor contemporary human rights in any particular religion, practically all religions contain premises upon which human rights ideas and practices can be built. There are traditions, including religious ones, in all nations which can be supportive of the acceptance of human rights ideas.

It seems that sometimes it is rather the format, wording or details of international human rights standards than their substance which sounds

Western. For example, Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights contains detailed rules of fair trial. The terminology of the Article is certainly western, but the logic of these rules is rather simple and universal: to guarantee, as far as possible, that no innocent person is behind bars, or worse still, executed, and that there is no unnecessary suffering for those who may have committed crimes.

Jack Donnelly correctly observes that while human rights - inalienable entitlements of individuals held in relation to state and society - have not been a part of most cultural traditions, or even of the western tradition, until quite recently, there is a striking similarity in many of the basic values of most cultures that today we seek to protect through human rights. This is particularly true when these values are expressed in relatively general terms: "Life, social order, protection from arbitrary rule, prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment, the guarantee of a place in the life of the community, and access to an equitable share of the means of subsistence are central moral aspirations in nearly all cultures".

In June 1995, The Independent published a table which showed the attitude of different religions (the Church of England, the Catholic Church, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism) as well as today's secular consensus to issues such as blasphemy, non-observance of religious events, murder, adultery, theft, lying, pre-marital sex, homosexual practices, divorce, masturbation, suicide and cruelty to animals. The attitudes were categorised in terms of "sin", "wrong", "harmful", "permitted", "not a sin", "not harmful", "accepted", "not mentioned". Some of these practices (murder, lying, adultery, theft) were considered either as a sin, wrong or harmful by all religions and were condemned by secular morals. Others (e.g., pre-marital sex, homosexual practices, suicide, blasphemy) were considered wrong by all or most religions. Generally, the overlap in attitude between religions was considerable. And it is also necessary to mention that even if some practices are not considered as wrong or sinful, especially by today's secular morals, they are often tolerated rather than encouraged or considered completely normal by the majority of people in different societies.

These comparisons prove that there is much more in common in different societies than cultural relativists usually assume.

At the same time, one can hardly deny that there are cultural differences and historical or religious traditions which may make the implementation of at least some human rights problematic in certain countries. The equality of men and women and the freedom to choose or change one's religion are obvious examples of rights which are difficult to

realize in some, particularly Muslim, societies. Nor are historical traditions always supportive of the acceptance of the basic assumption of democracy - the one person, one vote principle.

Therefore, it would be wrong to ignore cultural or religious traditions when speaking of human rights in a particular country and these differences should be kept in mind by individual states and international organizations when trying to promote human rights. We must equally admit that not all human rights, even those which are enshrined in various UN instruments, are universally accepted by or even equally important for every society. There may be periods in a given society when certain rights become particularly important either because they are manifestly violated (like the right to life or the freedom from torture in Uruguay or Argentina under the military dictatorships) or because at a certain level of societal development and implementation of basic rights people start to pay more attention to other rights and freedoms.

In societies where people are arbitrarily killed, like in Rwanda or Bosnia, it may not be an issue of priority whether accused and convicted persons are kept together or separately in places of detention, or whether victims of ethnic cleansing have the right to leave any country, including their own, respected. In such a case, the right of refugees to return to the places where they were evicted from becomes most important. Even the importance of this right is conditioned by the observance of the right to life and the right to liberty and security of person if the refugees return.

It may well be that difficulties rooted in the cultural or religious traditions of some societies inhibit full and immediate implementation of international human rights standards. Furthermore, for some countries a significant time period would be needed before full compliance with human rights standards could be achieved. Deeply rooted traditions, even when they are inexcusable from the point of view of international human rights standards, cannot be eradicated overnight. India, for example, has not yet succeeded in completely ridding itself of such vestiges of the past as the "dowry death" (where a wife is killed because of the insufficiency of her dowry) or sati (where a widow is expected and even encouraged to commit suicide after the death of her husband). The latest figures on crimes against women in India show that nearly 6000 women were killed in 1993 for failing to produce sufficient dowry. However, the government is certainly undertaking legislative and administrative measures aimed at overcoming these practices.

What is important, rather than the immediate insertion of the whole range of human rights into an unprepared soil which sometimes may lead

to social unrest, is a gradual effort by governments to implement universal human rights standards.

The arguments of those who deny the very possibility of the existence of universal human rights in the multi-cultural world overstate their case. I would agree, for example, with the Foreign Minister of Singapore, Wong Kan Seng, who in his statement at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna said that "universal recognition of the ideal of human rights can be harmful if universalism is used to deny or mask the reality of diversity".

But is it? Does the recognition of the universality of human rights really mean that it is necessary to reject the obvious cultural diversity of the world? The Foreign Minister, as an example, stated that "Singaporeans, and people in many other parts of the world do not agree, for instance, that pornography is an acceptable manifestation of free expression or that a homosexual relationship is just a matter of lifestyle choice". The problem with Mr Seng's example is that he compares the values of his own society not with universal human rights standards, but with values of some other societies. Neither the freedom to distribute pornography nor equality between homosexuals and heterosexuals in all domains are universal human rights norms. The 1923 Convention for the Suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications and Protocol to amend the said Convention of 1947 are still in force, despite falling to desuetude. Indeed, there are many controversial issues such as the death penalty, euthanasia, abortion, pornography, homosexuality, etc, which touch upon deeply rooted moral and religious sentiments and are considered differently in various societies. Although these issues may be closely related to human rights, there are no universal standards guaranteeing or prohibiting such acts.

The most important human rights and the gross and massive violations of them are not culturally conditioned. Genocide, other mass killings, torture (except, probably some forms of cruel punishment which may amount to torture), arbitrary arrests, and racial discrimination belong in this category. The experience of such culturally different countries as Nazi Germany, Democratic Kampuchea, Bosnia, and Rwanda shows that there is no specific genocidal culture in the world. To put it another way, acts of genocide can be committed by people whose culture, traditions or religion differ widely. Most nations have had institutions such as slavery, serfdom, legalized social inequality, like the caste system in India or social stratification in Medieval Europe (which was a kind of social apartheid). The precise forms which such social structures have taken have been

different and dependent, inter alia, on cultural factors. However, their substance has been culturally irrelevant.

Moreover, universal human rights standards are not rigid rules whose interpretation and application cannot be adapted to different cultural traditions. Although this is not always possible, there are many cases in which apparent contradictions can be reconciled. International human rights standards are rarely as detailed as domestic laws on the subject. Often they are framework norms which leave room for states to adjust their implementation to the peculiarities of their domestic legal systems.

There is often room for what, in the context of the European human rights system, is called the "margin of appreciation". At the universal level this margin is even bigger. For example, Article 25 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides for free, regular elections by universal and equal suffrage and by secret ballot, and stipulates that everybody should have the right to participate in the conduct of public affairs and to have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in the country. However, states may have different electoral systems (majoritarian or proportional); they may even have unelected heads of state like monarchs. The margin of appreciation in issues concerning rights of ethnic and religious minorities is especially great. The reason for this is because similarities between individuals in different societies and their basic needs and interests are significantly greater than similarities between minorities and their needs in different countries. Some of such minorities are small, while others comprise millions; some are dispersed, while others live compactly and so forth. Even in the same country different minorities do not have similar needs and claims. For example, the problems of Gypsies and Hungarians in Slovakia differ substantially. For these reasons, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages contains a special undertaking which provides that each state, at the time of ratification of the Charter, undertakes to apply a minimum of thirty-five paragraphs or sub-paragraphs chosen from among the provisions of Part III of the Charter. This means that states can, in principle, accommodate their own interests and capabilities as well as the interests and demands of minorities, though in practice it may not be so easy to accomplish.

Most international human rights instruments also contain clauses of permissible derogations which try to balance different interests. For instance, several articles of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights contain a clause which provides that no restrictions may be placed on the exercise of the rights contained in the Covenant "other than

those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others". Although these clauses are open to abuse and, therefore, should not be easily resorted to, they show that there is often quite a large "margin of appreciation" for states to take care of interests of public health and morals (which really can differ significantly from society to society), national security and the rights and freedoms of others. Moreover, in exceptional cases of public emergency which threaten the life of the nation it is possible to suspend temporarily the application of certain rights. Article 4 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which provides for derogations in cases of public emergency also stipulates that under no circumstances can governments suspend the right to life; freedom from torture, slavery, servitude and imprisonment on the ground of inability to fulfil contractual obligations; the right to be recognized as a person before the law; and the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. States must not also pass criminal laws with retroactive effect (except laws which may be beneficial for the accused).

There are two recent intergovernmental documents, one regional and the other of universal character, which try to strike a balance between universality of human rights on the one hand, and differences in cultural and historical traditions in their implementation on the other. One of them is tilted more towards cultural relativity, the other emphasizes more the universality of human rights. The Bangkok Inter-Governmental Declaration on Human Rights adopted in Spring 1993 at the regional conference of official representatives of countries of Asia and the Pacific region (one of the preparatory conferences for the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna) recognizes "that while human rights are universal in nature, they must be considered in the context of a dynamic and evolving process of international norm-setting, bearing in mind the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds" (emphasis added). A somewhat different version of the relationship between the idea of universality and cultural relativity has found its expression in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights in Summer 1993. After stressing that "all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated", the Declaration admits that "while the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be born in

mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms".

These statements, by their words, do not really differ much. It seems that the emphasis is only placed in a slightly different way: the Vienna document emphasises more the universality of human rights, whilst the Bangkok declaration stresses the necessity to take into account also national and regional particularities. But in order to understand the meaning of this slight difference in emphasis one has to know what is behind these seemingly innocuous and, when taken in abstracto, even quite correct wordings. Behind such statements and policies which emphasise the necessity to bear in mind national or regional particularities and historical, cultural or religious traditions when dealing with human rights are often attempts to justify human rights violations caused by political, economic or other interests. Jack Donnelly aptly observes that "while recognizing the legitimate claims of self-determination and cultural relativism, we must be alert to cynical manipulations of a dying, lost, or even mythical past". Cultural and historical traditions of practically all societies tend to support inequality between men and women and discriminate on the basis of race, religion or ethnicity. Does this mean that we should respect such traditions? Does this mean, for example, that Western societies, which had traditions which discriminated against certain categories of persons, are now free to discriminate against Muslims or immigrants?

It is also necessary to clarify what is meant by saying that despite the universality of human rights, they must be considered in the context of dynamic and evolving norm-setting and that regional and national particularities have to be born in mind in the implementation of universal human rights standards.

The Bangkok NGO Declaration on Human Rights adopted by 110 NGOs in the Asia and Pacific region on 27 March 1993, just a few days before the adoption of the above-mentioned inter-governmental Declaration confirmed that it is not just cultural differences in societies which give rise to human rights violations in their countries; such violations largely take place as a result of the specific political interests of the ruling circles in some of these states. The Declaration further stressed that "cultural practices which derogate from universally accepted human rights, including women's rights, must not be tolerated". It should be noted that this concern is not on this occasion being voiced by western NGOs. Similarly, Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace Prize winner of 1991 from

Myanmar writes that "when democracy and human rights are said to run counter to non-Western culture, such culture is usually defined narrowly and presented as monolithic. In fact, the values that democracy and human rights seek to promote can be found in many cultures".

It is necessary for experts and human rights activists from all over the world to become engaged in frank and open dialogue in order to clarify whether it is necessary, for example, to limit political or civil rights in order to promote economic and social ones, and to what extent genuine concerns for political stability or stability of inter-ethnic relations require restriction of certain rights such as the freedom of the press and the like. Serious and concerted efforts are needed in order to separate those deviations in the implementation of international human rights standards which may be genuinely caused by cultural, historical or religious peculiarities and which are generally supported by society, from abusive references by elites to these peculiarities in order to justify repressions caused by their interest in power. Such a "dialogue between cultures can seldom if ever be conducted as a dialogue between governments - if only because some governments just do not like human rights and other governments can't make them".

There are still some traditional practices occurring in the world today which can never be reconciled with universal human right norms. For example, death for apostasy in some Islamic countries or the caste system and sati in India. These practices, however, are no longer widely accepted even in Muslim or Hindu societies. Thus they are not only condemned from the point of view of other value systems and universal human right standards, but they do not find wide support in their own culture. Ann Elizabeth Mayer comes to the conclusion that "the common forms of oppression by Middle Eastern regimes are not just objectionable by Western standards but are perceived by people within these societies, especially the members of the educated elite, to be impermissibly harsh in their impact on society and culture".

Roger Scruton may take a view which is too absolute by observing that "in argument about moral problems, relativism is the first refuge of the scoundrel". However, it is true that for many scoundrels relativism is a convenient excuse for the rejection of human rights allegedly as an alien phenomenon. The rejection of cultural relativism in arguments about human rights does not mean that cultural traditions do not matter at all in the human rights discourse or that all human rights can be applied immediately in every society. When motivated by the ideal of human rights one must maintain a realistic approach in the implementation of international human rights standards in culturally different societies.

International human rights norms, by gradually helping to eradicate inhuman practices, do not undermine the cultural foundations of the Asian or African societies in which such practices still occur, or impoverish them. In the same way, they did not undermine and impoverish the cultural foundations of Western societies when these societies rid themselves of the court of inquisition, death by hanging or guillotining or imprisonment for inability to fulfil contractual obligations. On the contrary, the introduction of human rights ideas and practices, often adjusted to local conditions, helps to make them more humane. The acceptance of universality of human rights certainly does not mean that the reality of cultural diversity is to be rejected.

Human rights and individualism versus communitarianism

Another aspect of the arguments of cultural relativists is the suggestion that since human rights stem from and are inherently linked with individualism, are virtually an extension of individualism, they are not applicable in societies with different, that is to say - communitarian, traditions. However, it seems that references to communal or collectivist traditions to justify human rights violations often also miss the point. In addition, such references can be, and sometimes are, simply used to mask systematic violations of human rights in the interests of ruling elites. Donnelly has noted that "communitarian rhetoric too often cloaks the depredations of corrupt and often Westernized or deracinated elites".

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the collapse of communism it has become clear practically for everybody even in former socialist countries that references to supreme interests of the collective, be it a state, society or party, were simply used to keep in power the communist elite or the new class, as Milovan Djilas called it. Such a policy in the USSR, though probably helping to mobilize the population for the initial industrialization (an industrialization which coincidentally was achieved at quite inhumane costs) eventually led to the stagnation of society and the collapse of the whole economic, political and social system. Collectivist ideas were manipulated by the leaders in order to subordinate everybody to the interests of the communist party.

However, it is even more important to stress that not all collectivist or communitarian ideologies are inherently hostile to human rights. Respect for the rights of individuals does not necessarily mean that one needs to neglect families (even the most extended ones), larger communities or society as a whole. Nor does it even call for disrespect

toward authorities (especially if respect toward them is deserved). In fact, unbridled individualism may be as unfavourable a soil for the promotion of human rights as excessive communitarianism.

Although individualism as a philosophical doctrine and human rights are linked in their genesis this does not mean that the Western person is inherently individualist or that the Western society has always been and will necessarily remain individualistic. Both individualism and human rights ideas were aimed at liberating human beings from oppression by the state and church and at getting rid of feudal hierarchies which not only kept individuals in shackles but also stifled the development of society as a whole. Yash Ghai writes: "The `communitarian` argument suffers from at least two weaknesses. First, it overstates the `individualism` of Western societies and traditions of thought. Even within Western liberalism there are strands of analysis which assert claims of community (e.g. Rousseau); and second, most Western human rights instruments allow limitations on and derogations from human rights in the public interest, or for reasons of state. Western courts regularly engage in the task of balancing the respective interests of the individual and the community".

Currently, in the West we hear more and more criticism about excesses of individualism, abuse of rights and the erosion of communitarian bonds. Amitai Etzioni and the communitarian movement in the United States have called for the restoration of a civil society and have criticized "a major aspect of contemporary American civic culture: a strong sense of entitlement - that is, a demand that the community provide more services and strongly uphold rights - coupled with a rather weak sense of obligation to the local and national community". The former US Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Raymond Seitz, speaking of the US and the UK, said recently: "If a democracy becomes only a matter of asserting rights — merely an excuse for licence — then society can rapidly become a mêlée of self-indulgence".

There is a serious call in the West to think more about duties of citizens. David Selbourne, in his book entitled "The Principle of Duty" writes:

> *For it is only on the basis of a reciprocity of obligation, in accord with the ethic of the civic bond and the principle of duty, that "commodious and peaceable living" is possible in the civic order; that civic disaggregation can be arrested without recourse to draconian measures; and that life, health, and true liberty of the individual can be preserved.*

In this regard, it is interesting to note that in November 1994 the Council of Europe convened a meeting of experts on the topic of "Citizens' Responsibilities". Different views were expressed during the meeting and the majority of experts rightly rejected the idea of any legally binding or even declaratory document emanating from the Council which would call for the implementation of citizens duties. However, the meeting concluded also that "modern democracies cannot survive unless their citizens assume active responsibility in their day to day lives, and in terms of participation". Some experts called for drafting a reference document emanating from the Committee of Ministers which would highlight the values of morality, responsibility and participation.

Speaking of a future Bill of Rights for the United Kingdom at the end of 1995, Jack Shaw, the Shadow Home Secretary made a strong point about dangers of the "me-first society", of over-emphasis on rights to the near exclusion of duties and responsibilities. He concluded by saying that we "need to break out of the language of dutiless rights, and begin insisting upon mutual responsibility. Rights and duties go hand in hand". The recent report of the Commission on Global Governance also stresses that "rights need to be joined with responsibilities" and that "the tendency to emphasize rights while forgetting responsibilities has deleterious consequences".

However, the concern in the West with excessive individualism by no means supports the views of those who endorse communitarian ideas in countries where the absence of rights and freedoms of the individual and not excessive individualism is the problem. Reminders that without duties and responsibilities the civic bonds of society could be damaged to such an extent that there may be a threat of a kind of authoritarianism which would restore these bonds are not especially relevant for societies where individual rights are absent. Etzioni writes: "The people of China, Eastern Europe, and Japan for that matter may well need to move in the opposite direction: to make more room for self-expression, to slash excessive government control, and to roll back severely enforced codes that suppress creativity and impinge on individual rights".

In short: societies need what they lack, and different societies lack different things. Human beings, however, need rights and liberties to protect them from the state, which has a tendency to encroach upon individuals' freedoms. Also, human beings need protection from society or its sometimes rather intrusive sub-structures (trade unions, local councils or neighbourhood watch). Similarly, they need healthy and cohesive

societies and good governments. Without these stable institutions there would be an anarchy-easily-turned-into-dictatorship situation. Hamish McRae, who writes that it is difficult not to feel that both North America and Western Europe "have put themselves at an economic disadvantage by their quest for individual freedom", concludes: "Maybe the real message is that all modern industrial societies have to find a way of striking a balance between individualism and social control, and that somehow the democratic process has to maintain that balance, making the costs and benefits clear".

Therefore, the argument put forward by some authors and politicians that Asian or African values based on communitarian ideas are incompatible with individual human rights is simply false. The West has had its own communitarian phases of development and communitarian ideas and practices can be still found in some sectors of Western society. Francis Fukuyama rightly observes that "the countries of medieval and early modern Europe were in many respects highly communitarian societies, with a large number of overlapping sources of communal authority - princely, ecclesiastical, seigniorial, and local - constraining the behaviour of individuals". And currently many people in the West are thinking of how to put some limits on individualism, which while being necessary for human liberation and economic development may become excessive and indeed constitute a threat for both liberty and economic development. Therefore, it may even be the case that the realization of some so-called Asian communitarian values would be conducive to the development of human dignity and rights in Western societies. Asian as well as other developing societies, participating in the process of the promotion of human rights, are not only on the receiving end. Their experience and ideas on human rights and human dignity, like their ideas and practices in the domain of economics, will inevitably enrich the whole human rights discourse. For example, in the domain of the promotion of human rights often non-confrontational, non-adversarial approaches which are based on what in UN parlance is called constructive dialogue, are in many cases preferable to adversarial or accusatory approaches to the promotion of human rights. Often it is more fruitful for the human rights cause in a particular country not to accuse the government of human rights violations, but rather to try to become engaged in a dialogue and use different incentives in order to achieve progress on human rights. Here, like in some other areas, the experience of Asian societies may be useful.

Human rights and levels of societal development

Besides some cultural practices which may influence the perception and implementation of human rights, there is another factor which is sometimes confused with the cultural or historical traditions of a given society and which, in my view, provides a more realistic explanation of different human rights situations around the world. This factor is the level of its societal development, including its economic, social, political and cultural aspects.

The concept of human rights is not an immutable or ahistorical concept which always existed somewhere only waiting to be discovered by some advanced thinkers. The West, where the idea of human rights and its practical implementation emerged, arrived at this concept and such practices through a long historical development. In ancient Greece, both Aristotle and Demosthenes expressed the view that torture was the surest method for obtaining evidence. In Western countries women were discriminated against (and in some of they them still are) and in many European countries heretics were burnt. In Spain the inquisition was abolished only in 1834, and in 1925 in Tennessee, US, a school teacher was condemned by a local court for teaching Darwin's theory of the origin of the species. In Denmark in 1770 King Christian VII's personal physician and minister, Struensee, introduced the freedom of speech by an Order of the Cabinet. However, without any tradition supporting this declared freedom, the Order caused chaos and a smear campaign against Struensee himself (alleging his intimate relations with the Queen). After Struensee was executed in 1773, the freedom of speech, not yet ready to be the order of the day in Denmark or anywhere else, did not last very long.

It took Christians 1800 years to come to the conclusion that slavery was not a natural situation for some human beings.

As to the punishment of crimes, Western European countries have moved from such cruel forms of execution as hanging or guillotining to the complete abolition of death penalty at peace time. How people are executed (hanged, stoned, or guillotined) or tortured may, to a great extent, depend on the specific culture. Whether people are executed or tortured at all depends more on the stage or level of societal development.

In traditional societies (be they in the East or the West) the individual could realise his or her human dignity only according to his or her position in society. The very notion of the autonomy of the individual was absent. Most non-Western cultural and political traditions, like the pre-modern West, lacked not only the practice of human rights but also the very concept. It was the emergence of the modern state and market

economy which called for liberal concepts of human rights and respective practices. The emergence of the market economy made individuals autonomous not only vis-à-vis each other as owners, vendors or buyers, but also vis-à-vis society. This means that a degree of autonomy of the individual vis-à-vis the state was also needed. But the state has always had and still has a propensity to encroach upon the autonomy of the individual, especially in the absence of guarantees of such autonomy in the form of human rights and freedoms. Therefore, a modern state and human rights, as entitlements of the individual vis-a-vis the state, are mutually conditioned.

Today, in practically all societies, modern states have emerged with certain attributes - police, army, secret services, bureaucracy, etc. For the purposes of our analysis, it is not especially important whether some countries have accepted these attributes from Western societies or have developed them on their own. What matters is whether, having introduced institutions which have the tendency, in the absence of proper guarantees in the form of human rights, to suppress not only the individual freedoms but also to subordinate the whole society to the state apparatus, leaders of these states are free to leave human rights aside?

Rhoda Howard uses a different reference point. She writes that "a comparison of human rights in Africa in the 1980s with human rights in the Western world at similar stages of national consolidation and economic development [i.e. a couple of hundred years ago] is, then, much more appropriate than a comparison of Africa with contemporary Western societies".

Although this argument is generally correct, there is one rather serious problem. Contemporary African societies, even if their levels of economic development and other societal characteristics are comparable to those of European ones some hundreds of years ago, are not isolated from contemporary European, American or Asian societies and are influenced by them in a variety of ways. Although the per capita GDP of some African countries may be comparable to that of medieval England, their human rights situation cannot simply be judged by a yardstick of the seventeenth century Europe. And though not all of the standards applied by the European Court of Human Rights may easily be applicable in today's Africa, the Africans themselves would hardly be content with the seventeenth or even nineteenth century European human rights yardsticks.

Humankind, while remaining heterogeneous not only culturally, but also (and this is even more important from the point of view of the promotion of human rights) as to the level of societal development

(including economic, social, political and cultural aspects of development) in different countries, is becoming at the same time closer and closer.

Although the world has always been diverse, it has never been so close. Today, post-industrial and feudal societies not only co-exist on the same planet, they closely interact and influence each other. This inevitably creates strain: on the one hand, there is a trend towards greater homogeneity (especially in the economic and technological spheres) and interpenetration of different cultures but, on the other hand, we face the continuing, and in some cases even widening, hiatus between the levels of development of different societies. The interpenetration of cultures also leads, as a counter-reaction, to an even stronger search for cultural identity and resistance to what is perceived as alien cultural challenges.

This situation is a major challenge for many societies and for human rights as well. Eric Hobsbawm writes that "perhaps the most striking characteristic of the end of the twentieth century is the tension between this accelerating globalization and the inability of both public institutions and the collective behaviour of human beings to come to terms with it".

Closeness and interpenetration of societies create a pull towards universalization of human rights whilst the developmental gap and emphasis on historical and cultural traditions is an obstacle for the acceptance of this universality. At the same time, today the world has become too small and interdependent to expect that only missile technology, computer hardware and software or narcotic drugs can transgress state boundaries. The Soviet leadership tried hard to close its society from outside influence: not only human rights, but also computers and photo-copying machines (as potential tools for the distribution of "alien" ideas, including those of human rights and fundamental freedoms) were considered dangerous for the regime and were kept out of the reach of ordinary Soviet citizens. This inevitably led to the stagnation of the Soviet society. If in a closed society it is possible to produce more steel than anybody else, it is impossible to compete in a world where success depends not so much on how many millions of tons of steel is produced by a country but on the knowledge and information held by its citizens.

The Soviet authorities could restrict distribution of foreign publications but they were only partly successful in jamming Western radio-stations. BBC, the Voice of America, Radio Liberty and Free Europe carried news to millions of listeners in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. It has been rightly observed that electronic media had contributed to the fall of the communist power in the Soviet Union. Currently it is the Internet which is raising fears throughout the Middle East and Asia that

their closed societies may be opened up to heretical ideas which threaten their governing cliques. The Sunday Times, speaking of Saudi Arabia, observes that "the Internet creates a poignant dilemma for the oil-rich kingdom. On the one hand it vaunts its capitalist and high-technology credentials, vital in the modern marketplace. At the same time the country is desperate to restrict access to the interloper from cyberspace with its seditiously irreverent ethos". The same problem is haunting other Arab autocracies, Iran and China.

Ideas and practices such as human rights, a market economy or the Internet, being Western discoveries which came at a certain level of development of Western societies, touch all societies including those which have not yet come to these ideas, let alone practices, on their own. They may affect these societies like a medicine: while curing and making some of them healthier and stronger, other societies, and especially their leaders may be rather allergic to human rights, market economy or Internet injections. As we have already discussed at the end of Chapter 2, rapid introduction of human rights into such societies may sometimes make them rather ill and certain forces, whose power base is threatened by ideas and practices of modernity, including human rights, may become even more active and influential. Ideas of human rights, as we discussed above, have always been and still are subversive ideas in societies which are not based on them.

In the contemporary world we have not so much a clash of civilizations as a clash of epochs and this clash is taking place not only between different societies but within many of them as well. Human rights and democracy are playing an important part in these clashes which often revolve around these notions. At the same time, the idea of human rights is used and abused as a tool in these conflicts.

I believe that human rights in the contemporary world are conditioned by three types of factors: anthropological, societal and international. These factors are not immutable in time or space. Whilst societal factors, that is, factors pertaining to the characteristics of a given society, have exercised the strongest influence on the content of rights and freedoms of members of society, international factors are of more recent origin, but their influence is rapidly growing. Some rights, like the right to life, freedom from torture and the right to found a family may be called of an anthropological nature because they are closely related to the physical needs of human beings, even though they (similar to other rights) can exist only in society. For instance, Robinson Crusoe could have had neither rights nor obligations before the appearance of Man Friday.

It seems that the natural law approach to human rights asserting that all human rights are birth-rights of every human being which are immutable in time and place is simply wrong. The Virginian Bill of Rights was authored by George Mason, a slave-owner, who did not find that slavery contradicted what the Bill found self-evident - that all men were endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights. This understanding of "all men" by progressive thinkers of the eighteenth century would be considered today an example of extreme bigotry. Therefore, it is not possible to assert that there is such a thing as immutable human nature from which to draw rights and freedoms corresponding to that nature. Richard Rorty is right that "since no useful work seems to be done by insisting on a purportedly ahistorical human nature, there probably is no such nature, or at least, nothing in that nature that is relevant to our moral choices". Human rights, as Philip Windsor writes, should be seen not in terms of "being" but in terms of "becoming".

Usually this "becoming" is driven by endogenous factors though exogenous forces are becoming more and more important. Rorty emphasizes two factors which play an important role in the spread and development of human rights: security and sympathy. He writes:

> *Foundationalists [Plato, Aquinas, Kant] think of these people [bad people who do not respect human rights] as deprived of truth, moral knowledge. But it would be better - more specific, more suggestive of possible remedies - to think of them as deprived of two more concrete things: security and sympathy. By "security" I mean conditions of life sufficiently risk-free as to make one's difference from others unessential to one's self-respect, one's sense of worth. These conditions have been enjoyed by Americans and Europeans - the people who dreamed up the human rights culture - much more than they have been enjoyed by anyone else. By "sympathy" I mean the sort of reaction that the Athenians had more of after seeing Aeschylus' The Persians than before, the sort that white Americans had more of after reading Uncle Tom's Cabin than before, the sort that we have more of after watching TV programmes about the genocide in Bosnia.*

Rorty's view - that security and sympathy usually go together - makes sense. The tougher things are, the more you have to be afraid of, the more dangerous your situation, the less you can afford the time and effort to

think of what things might be like for people with whom you do not immediately identify. Sentimental education only works on people who can relax long enough to listen. As Paul Abramson and Ronald Inglehart have shown, higher levels of economic development bring a shift from "materialist" to "post-materialist" values - that is, less concern with economic and physical security and more with freedom, self-expression and quality of life.

And it is not surprising that for Rorty, and probably millions of other men and women, Harriet Blecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin is a more important contribution to moral philosophy than Kant's categorical imperative.

Growing interdependence of the world as a whole and the transparency of most societies mean that international factors, not only through purposeful efforts of individual states, international organizations and human rights NGOs, but also through inter-penetration of cultures, ideas and knowledge, are influencing the perception of human rights concepts as well as the practices in different societies. It seems that no government is able to stop this process indefinitely. The Economist comments that "the Saudi royal family - and lesser rulers in the area - have already watched with alarm as their south-eastern neighbours in Yemen played with democracy. As education spreads, oil revenues shrink and Islamic fundamentalists become bolder, they have enough to make them nervous without anyone else trying the same game". Michael Freeman is right when he says that "the human rights culture is no longer Western. It is no longer a matter of agreement among state élites. It is a global politico-cultural movement".

However, this spread of human rights does not and should not lead to the cultural uniformity of the world. Neither does this mean that all societies develop and change in the same manner or that they inevitably pass through similar stages of development. It means that there are some things which human societies need because they are human, while remaining different as societies.

One of the rational points amongst the ideas of realists' approach to international relations seems to be that states, out of necessity, have to become more and more similar to each other in different (not in all) respects, taking over those characteristics and features which make some societies more successful than others. Kenneth Waltz writes that "one has to be impressed with the functional similarity of states and, now more than ever before, with the similar lines their development follows. From the rich to the poor states, from the old to the new ones, nearly all of them take a

larger hand in matters of economic regulation, of eduction, health, and housing, of culture and arts, and so on almost endlessly".

Societies which self-isolate (e.g., Albania until recently) or obstinately try to retain traditional ways of life which inhibit development or attempt to go back to basics (e.g., Iran, Sudan) are doomed to fail in the eternal worldwide competition. Therefore, as Fred Halliday writes, "as a result of international pressures, states are compelled more and more to conform to each other in their internal arrangements". That is why Halliday, in studying international relations, rightly pays considerable attention to what happens within states and societies, and examines the interaction of international activity with domestic legitimacy and stability.

Human rights as a historical and evolving phenomenon have become an important part of the concept of development. In some rapidly developing parts of the world (for example, in Asian countries such as South Korea, Taiwan or Thailand), positive changes in the field of human rights are coming about not so much because the West or international bodies which are "infected" with Western views on human rights, are pressing for changes, but because domestic constituencies developing alongside the economic growth are starting to demand not only the bread and butter and more of it; they are also demanding a say in the distribution of the bread and butter. Francis Fukuyama writes that it is, of course, possible for a capitalist economy to coexist with an authoritarian system, as in the PRC today or as previously existed in Germany, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Spain. But, as he points out, "in the long run, the industrialization process itself necessitates a more highly educated population and more complex division of labour, both of which tend to be supportive of democratic political institutions". William Brands makes a strong point, reiterating that "the key factor in the political evolution of Asian countries will be the efforts of the people in the countries themselves rather than the actions or non-actions of the United States or other external powers". While this may be true, external efforts may not be altogether superfluous.

One of the factors negatively affecting human rights is extreme poverty. It is not often recognized in the West that in certain cases poverty may really be the most important cause of the absence of human rights. A poor democratic country with high degree of observance of human rights is simply an oxymoron. Yash Ghai is right that "poverty is a great cause of the denial of human rights. The international system refuses to accept this reality - for largely political reasons". However, the recognition that poverty destroys human dignity does not of course mean that all rich countries

(there are some rich under-developed societies, like oil-rich Arab states) are democratic and human rights friendly. Neither does it refute the thesis that some poor countries are poor, at least to some extent, because of their corrupt authoritarian regimes, and accordingly due to the lack of democracy and human rights.

As mentioned previously, human rights are conditioned by three types of factors (anthropological, societal and international). In addition to that, it seems that the spread of human rights is conditioned by two different pairs of factors. The first pair is internal and external factors. As I have just shown, though internal factors may be predominant, it would be wrong to ignore the influence exerted on human rights by external factors in our interdependent world. The second pair consists of ideas of human rights and democracy on the one hand, and economic, social and political conditions, on the other. These conditions either facilitate acceptance and development of human rights ideas in society or inhibit this process.

Although economic, social and political conditions, as we have tried to show, exert great influence on the human rights situation in a country, and human rights are even one of the indicators of the development of society, it is necessary to admit that ideas about human rights are also very important. They can become a material force when held and supported by millions.

However, it is not enough to have ideas. As has been mentioned, there were precursors to human rights in different faiths and philosophies. Wherever there were oppressed human beings, there often were also ideologues who, instead of dreaming of changing places with the oppressors, dreamed of getting rid of the very oppression. But ideas need material conditions for their development and realization.

Ideas and dreams about liberty, freedom and human dignity indeed could be found in different cultures. But what the West had earlier than anybody else was the market economy and the modern state, which not only gave a push for the development of these ideas but also created the conditions for and even necessitated the realization of ideas of human rights and freedoms. Ideas, struggle for rights and freedoms plus material conditions in the form of the market economy and the modern state were necessary and sufficient preconditions for the emergence of human rights.

Therefore, I tend to agree with Robert Bartley, that "the dominant flow of historical forces in the 21st century could well be this: economic development leads to demands for democracy and individual (or family) autonomy; instant worldwide communications reduce the power of

oppressive governments; the spread of democratic states diminishes the potential for conflict".

All what was said above seems to indicate that the receptiveness of different societies to international human rights standards is less conditioned by cultural peculiarities of a given society than by a level of its social, economic and political development.

Towards Mutual Enrichment ofCivilizations and Cultures through Dialogue

Vladimir Petrovsky

Chairman of the Association "Comprehensive Dialogue Among Civilizations", Switzerland

The conference in Kyrgyzstan on the theme "Eurasia in the 21st Century-Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilization" which pulls collective wisdom from the whole Eurasian land-massive, offers both a vision and mobilized concept for deliberation and actions at the global, regional and sub-regional levels. Indeed, Eurasia through its whole history, has been a meeting place of different civilizations and cultures.

If we look in historical perspective, the major lesson we can clearly draw from the past experience is that in the process of their interaction civilizations and cultures not only clashed, but also learnt from each other. It is true not only with regard to Eurasia, but to all the continents, regions and sub-regions on our planet. Concept of the "clash of civilizations" is too simplistic, because it does not take into account a shared understanding by all civilizations and cultures of our being and purpose in life on our planet.

This paper wil concentrate on what must done and how that dialogue of civilizations and cultures should become the only way of their interaction in the 21st century. With this purpose in mind I intend to concentrate on three issues: the major common goals of the global community, what kind of the dialogue is required today, andeducation in common human values and human-oriented approach to the global agenda.

The major common goals of the global community

The issue what must be done has been the major issue in the ideologically divided world in the 20th century. Though the signatories both of the Covenant of the League of Nations and the Charter of the United Nations agreed that the world needs peace, security, stability, development and protection of basic human rights, these same signatories

have been strongly divided on the meaning of these concepts. Peace was interpreted by some as negative – just the absence of conflicts and mere peaceful coexistence, by others as positive – stability and friendly relations between neighbouring countries.

Security was treated in military terms and was generally understood as the security of the state and the preservation of its territorial integrity and sovereignty against military attacks.

On the international level there was a lot of discussion on the meaning of collective, common and cooperative security.

Stability was interpreted by some just simply preserving the status quo, by others it was de facto rejected, because stability has been considered as incompatible with the right for national liberation movements and revolution.

Development was the subject of endless discussions towards which goal it should be oriented – social or economic.

Though all paid the lip service to democracy, but its real meaning as the participatory democracy on constitutional law has never been discussed.

As for human rights, there was continuous debate what kind of human rights – civil or social – economic – should be protected by international community.

At the dawn of the 21st century, for the first time in history there is no more debates on the meaning of the major goals of the global community.

I have been fortunate to participate in all the UN summits in 1960, 1995 and 2000. At the last Summit I was particularly struck by the remarkable convergence of views by all world leaders on the challenges that face us, on the programme of actions to respond the challenges of globalism and on the urgency of the call to action in comprehensive manner, to maintain peace and security, to provide stability, sustainable development and protect the human rights. All the world leaders agree that no individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from globalization. Global issues must be managed in a way that ensures an even distribution of costs. Those who benefit the least are entitled to assistance from those who benefit the most.

To build a democratic and equitable international order, the leaders of the world have committed themselves to freeing our fellow men and women from the three major scourges:

1- Abject and dehumanising poverty to which more than 1 billion individuals are currently confined;

2-   Violence in all forms: civil conflicts and terrorist activities;

3-   Danger of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities. This looks like the strategic triad for future actions.

World leaders have unanimously agreed that in order to achieve their goals, they have a collective responsibility to uphold the principle of human dignity, as the major guideline in their approach to all the issues on the global agenda.

This guideline is essential in order to move beyond declaratory statements and concentrate all energies on raising awareness and strengthening measures to implement these goals, on which the world leaders have agreed.

The terrorist attack in New York has brought the universal determination that terrorism, as a new global phenomenon, must be met by the global united response from all states. This response should include not only demonstration of solidarity with victims, but also actions to bring to justice those responsible, as well as those who aid, support or harbour them.

Prevention of terrorism is a major concern today. There is general understanding that only concerted vigilance and cooperation among states with constant systematic exchange of information offer any real hope of denying terrorists their opportunity.

As we can see, for the first time in history of international relations there is a clear convergence of views on the key objectives for the future.

The war in Iraq has undermined to a certain extent international consensus behind the vision for peace and security.

While some see terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and criminal networks as the biggest threats to security (the so-called "hard threats"), most see civil wars, diseases such as AIDS, poverty and environmental degradation as the key problems, although "soft threats" by comparison.

Under these new conditions, the major issue today is how to deal with the hard threats without neglecting all the others. After all, they are closely linked.

The question – what must be done – which was the major one in the previous century does not prevail anymore on the global agenda.

Comprehensive dialogue is the major instrument of interaction of civilizations and cultures

As the saying goes, "Knowing is half the battle." Identifying the problems we face at the beginning of the new century brings us half way along the road to resolving them. Nevertheless, we must not stop here. We

must continue to seek the answer to the question: how do we accomplish this?

There is only one response to the challenges of globalization and the prevention a clash of civilizations, and that is dialogue, direct or indirect, accompanied by practical deeds.

Rise of civilizational consciousness after the end of the Cold War facilitates the dialogue.

The question arises: what kind of dialogue?

My answer is that dialogue should be comprehensive in volume and constructive in substance. Dialogue should encompass all fields in the whole system of coordinates of interaction. Vertically, it should take place at global, transcontinental, regional, local and family levels. Horizontally, between civilizations and cultures, between politicians, diplomats, religious leaders, within the business community and in civil society.

I would particularly like to stress the importance of dialogue in all aspects, between civilizations and, as part of it, dialogue among cultures.

Culture or civilization is a complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a human being as a member of society.

Historically, the term "civilization" is charged with stereotypes and false notions. The supposed civilization of some has often been contrasted with supposed barbarism of others. This has often led to a ranking of civilizations r and antagonism between the "dominant" and the "dominated" ones. This has, in turn, been the source of long-standing resentment throughout history and has often led to numerous conflicts and bloody wars.

We must combat this archaic vision wherein civilization may be seen as synonymous with exclusion.

Only comprehensive dialogue can ever allow such ancient sleights to be aired, addressed, resolved and finally laid to rest, to the common benefit of all.

Critical appreciation of the past should emphasize how civilizations have learnt from cultural experience of each other.

Let me refer to my own experience. In my capacity as the Director-General of the UN Office in Geneva, (UNOG), I have initiated civilizational dialogue in I992 by providing in UNOG an open and inclusive forum for cultural engagement. The UN Year for Dialogue among Civilizations in 200I inspired us to broaden the scope of activities. Art forums, concerts, film festivals, theatre performances and exhibitions were supplemented by a series of lectures, conferences and discussions in order to reach beyond the cultural sphere and engage the intellectual community.

The exceptional variety of events compelled us to reflect upon the remarkable richness and complexities of civilizations. They impressed upon us the intrinsic dynamism of cultural expression. Civilizations are not unitary and static concepts. They consist of many layers and carry different meaning for different people and for different generations. Crucially, the many events highlighted how cultures have been transformed and re-interpreted through external contacts. Civilizations have mutually inspired and stimulated each other. They have grown and been enriched through interaction since the time that 8t. Augustine visited North Africa.

Our activities have demonstrated that the dialogue among civilizations is no mere catch-phrase or trite political slogan. It is an invitation for us all mentally to leap over our ancient cultural dividers and to understand better not only one another's world view, but also our irreplaceable respective contributions to our common cultural heritage.

In the age of globalization, which makes our world interdependent, the life at the local level, everyday life remains the essence, the vital aspect of the global community.

We need to dream and act.

Let me recall the words of the Russian writer Fyodor Dostoyevsky: "The Golden Age is the most improbable dream which has ever existed; but people gave their lives and all their force for it; prophets died or were killed for it; and the peoples do not want to live or die without it." It is natural that the dream is pursued in the whole concept of the dialogue.

Looking into the future, the dialogue should take into account the new political landscape. Crossing at a rapid pace national borders and reducing distances economically and technologically, globalization brings changes in the civilizational paradigm. Nowadays we are facing the emergence of a new global society.

It has become customary to compare our planet with a global village. I would prefer to use a different analogy. The possibility of travel to other planets gives us a chance to look at ourselves not as inhabitants of a global village, but rather as passengers on a spaceship called Planet Earth. It does not matter in which class we travel in the spaceship-first, business or tourist. All of us are interested in a safe flight of our spaceship within the Galaxy.

In order to be able to pilot our spaceship in a safe way, we need to change the pattern of our behaviour at all levels – in public and private sectors as well as in civil society – and to develop a new planetary thinking, which has been already envisioned in writings of a number of prominent

thinkers from French philosopher of the 19th century Voltaire to the modern Kyrgyz writer Aitmatov.

The core of the new planetary thinking is recognition of the emerging global society. Pax Multilateral has ed on democratic unity and the respect for cultural diversity. This new society should take into account the balance of interests at all levels of interaction. In its essence the balance of interests is reasonable, enlighten egotism, which has been a dream of many prominent thinkers in the course of our history.

This is essentially why the UN exists: to help its members to find the all-important balance of interests. Although compromise is often hard to find, it is nonetheless a necessary act in all areas of life. Without compromise in which everyone's interest is met to some extent, we are unable to live peacefully in our families, societies cannot function and nations would be involved in fighting.

The balance of interests is inseparable from the sense of proportion. Any good idea, if brought to its extreme, brings the opposite result. It is worth recalling that the great philosopher of Ancient Greece, Plato, had written at the door of his Academy: "Keep within limits."

Based on the balance of interests, new planetary thinking does not leave room for left or right extremism in politics or any kind of extremism in ethnic, religious, cultural or social spheres. Under extremism I mean not only terrorism but also violence of any kind.

"Dialogue within the context of a new planetary thinking can help people to live together in mutual tolerance and solidarity.

I would like to stress tolerance as an active and positive attitude, inspired by recognition of and respect for the rights and freedoms of others. Concern for others mist prevail over callousness and contempt. An effort to know "the other" takes the place of ignorance, blind prejudice and discrimination.

Of course, the question could arise how to accept, without being overcome by a profound sense of scepticism, that all values and truths are relative and that the appeal of universality is only an illusion? Must we, then, in the name of tolerance and solidarity give up our search for the truth and agree to tolerate everything, even the intolerable? The answer can be found through a dialogue in which the major task is not to combat what is different, but to explore and understand differences and to create a shared perception of things and events in order to resolve existing misunderstandings and tensions.

I fully share the view expressed by the Director-General of UNESCO, "It is on the basis of a reasonable consensus, favouring open societies, their

basic democratic values and respect for cultural diversity that we can find a way out of a highly destructive relativism."

From the viewpoint of political behaviour comprehensive dialogue should help to create the corps of moderates in all spheres of public and private activities, irrespective of their cultural, ideological, political or religious beliefs.

For moderate leaders, democracy is strong only in so far if is based on the rule of law and represents the people, achieves broad participation and ensures that all citizens are aware of and exercise their rights.

I believe also that the time has come to take a new look at the concept of races. Let me remind you that in ancient times this concept applied in social terms (aristocratic race and the plebeians). At the beginning of the I9th century, the French anthropologist Gobineau introduced the concept of ethnic races. Now, in the emerging democratic global society we need to think about a new concept of races – psychological races. Indeed, we can see that nowadays the major dividing line, separating not only leaders but the people in all spheres of public and private activities, is between moderates and extremists. In other words, the dividing line is between those who prefer power of logic to logic of power.

This is the time to start uniting moderates all over the world against the extremists of all kinds.

Education in common human values and human-oriented approach to the global agenda

The dialogue of cultures which is very much in need today is not the dialogue for the sake of dialogue. Its major task is education. First of all, education of the younger generation at the schools, institutes and universities as well as at the public discussions.

There are special UNESCO programmes for the education of children in the current UN decade for the Culture of Peace. I would like to emphasize that the UN also attaches particular importance to education on dialogue for parliamentarians and locally elected representatives, since they are the voice of people and play a key role in responsible and transparent governance and the application of law. Special programmes are provided by the United Nations Research and Training Institution, (UNITAR).

The focus of education is on common human values and attitudes. The common human values that transcend all civilizations, cultures and

religions, imply the mutual respect and acceptance between cultures, ideologies and beliefs. These values include: liberty and justice; rationality and spirituality; legality and moral-ethical principles; and rights and responsibilities.

You will note that common values are presented in pairs, thus facilitating reflection about the heritage that has sprung not from one but from all civilizations and cultures.

Take for example legality and moral-ethical values. For centuries humankind has shared some basic moral values. The Ten Commandments in Judaism and Christianity, Shari' ah in Islam as well as ethical codes of other religions contain essentially similar norms of human behaviour that have eternal value and apply both to individuals and states. The elements of these codes have been incorporated into a number of international accords.

Nowadays legal precision requires moral clarity, as never before. Referring to the continuing debate between idealists and realists in foreign policy thinking, I would like to express my strong belief that without moral conviction one can be neither idealist nor realist because a purely pragmatic approach would offer narrow alternatives, while morality provides the opportunity to choose between different options.

Elaboration of ethical standards is of utmost priority for the dialogue of cultures.

Education in common human values should go hand-in-hand with education in the human-oriented approach to the global agenda, which includes peace and security, sustainable development, human rights, humanitarian imperative and governance.

A human-oriented approach to peace implies the necessity of insistent actions at all levels to eradicate conflicts. The report of the UN Secretary-General "Agenda for Peace" published in 1992 has proved to be an elaborate guidebook for practical deeds. The four "P"'s – preventive diplomacy, peace- making, peace-keeping and peace-building – constitute the major tools in dealing with conflicts. What is particularly important is to pay more attention to conflict prevention with the understanding that all the major items on the global agenda need to be treated on the basis of constructive parallelism.

Without peace, there can be no sustainable development, and there can be no democratic governance. On the other hand, without sustainable development, the basis for democratic governance will be lacking and societies will tend to fall into conflicts and clashes.

The security with which global community associates the positive peace – not only the absence of conflicts but also stability, well-being and

normal relations between the states – should be treated nowadays only in human dimension.

The major breakthrough to such an approach to security has come at the end of the Cold War. In the autumn of 1989, Moscow and Washington had jointly introduced to the 44th Session of the UN General Assembly a draft resolution on security in all aspects, which was unanimously adopted as Resolution 44/21. According to this resolution, security should be treated not only in its traditional military dimension, but in a comprehensive multifaceted manner, as the security of individuals from violence as well as from hunger, diseases, environmental degradation and any violation of their human rights.

Of course, a human security approach is not aimed at replacing the security of the state, but at broadening the area of concern in order to improve the security of all, of the state and of the people. But the security of state needs the security of the individual. This should be the core of the new concept of strategic security, the key proponents of which are the leaders of Europe, the United States and Russia.

There is a general agreement that the other global agenda item, development, must strive to be sustainable to remain sensitive to social and economic dimensions and to be in harmony with nature.

The world leaders advocate today "development with a human face." This concept puts people at the centre of all aspects of the development process. It focuses equally on the ends and means of development and progress. The real objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. Poverty eradication remains the most immediate concern for development initiatives in the New Millennium. The Millennium Assembly has called on industrialized countries to grant duty and quota-free access to exports from less developed countries and to provide deeper and faster debt relief.

The Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development, was a strong manifestation that all countries agree on the necessity of providing economic growth within the limit of the earth's resources. However, the meaning of these items on human-oriented development needs a new reading.

The educational task here is greatly facilitated by the Human Development Report of 2003, prepared by the United Nations Development Programme. According to this report, human-oriented development strategies must focus not only on economic growth but also on a more equitable distribution of wealth and services. The Report introduces the Millennium Development Compact, which proposes new

global and regional policies to kick-start growth and reduce poverty. The Millennium Development Goals are based on the premise that economic growth alone will not rescue the world from the poverty that entraps more than one billion people. Without addressing issues like malnutrition and illiteracy that are both causes and symptoms of poverty, the Goals will not be met. Today's statistics are shaming: more than 13 million children have died in the past decade as a result of diarrhoea-related diseases. Each year over half-a-million women, one every minute of the day, die in pregnancy and childbirth. More than 800 million suffer from malnutrition. The Report argues that investment in industries and businesses that create jobs, such as manufacturing and textiles, are more important for human development than investments in industries that require large amounts of capital, such as oil exploration and production. The Report also calls for special initiatives to support small businesses and entrepreneurs in developing countries.

Human rights item on the global agenda speaks for itself. It is the top priority at global and regional fora. Education in human rights is of particular importance today. Human rights are little more than a "wish list" without effective and decisive actions to ensure that they are respected. From a practical point of view, an important task is the encouragement to create national protection systems and openness of all countries to global and regional observation.

Education in human rights should go hand-in-hand with education as an humanitarian imperative, which implies application of "humanitarian threshold" directed at minimizing the damaging effects of international interference on the most vulnerable groups of population (elders, women, children) not only in coercive but in all other international actions.

I would like to pay special attention to education in governance at all levels-global, transcontinental, regional and national. We often speak about good governance, but to my mind this term does not give a clear message as to its meaning, because good governance is democratic for some, and authoritarian, for others. I prefer to speak about human-oriented, democratic, responsible and transparent governance.

Democratic governance implies the existence of a system based on the active participation of the entire non-governmental sector of civil society, and on the transparency and accountability in management of public affairs. As for democracy at the global level, collective leadership in all United Nations bodies implies responsible multilateralism. By this I mean, on the one hand, recognition by all United Nations Members of the role played by the key actors required for bilateral and plurilateral policy

formulation, including matters of security. And, on the other hand, responsiveness by the same key payers to the views of all members of the global community.

Responsible multilateralism does not exclude unilateralism, which provides a certain degree of freedom of action. However, unilateralism should be exercised within multilateral bodies in a reasonable way and by taking into account the opinions of the other global community members.

At the national level, democratic governance remains the top priority. Despite two decades of expanding democracy around the world, many countries have fallen back to authoritarian rule or are facing increasing economic and social hardships. In theory, the world is more democratic than ever: 140 countries now hold multi-party elections. In practice, only 82 countries or 57% of the world population are fully democratic in guaranteeing human rights with institutions such as a free press and an independent judicial system. 106 countries still limit important civil and political freedoms. Enhanced democratic governance at all levels is intimately connected to legal governance.

A democracy without law is like a body without skin. One lesson to be kept in mind is that democracy is neither anarchy nor chaos. A genuine democracy, at all levels, can be effectively constructed on the has is of a constitution which provides legitimacy to the authorities and security to individuals by promoting the rule of law. It might be useful to underline that law and order do not entail the existence of a police state or a military watchdog but imply obligatory observation of the law, worked out by elected representatives.

It goes without saying that effective democratic governance cannot be achieved without civil society participation. That is the sphere in which social movements organize themselves around objectives, constituencies and thematic activities. Civil society is represented by committed citizens without whom a really democratic society cannot function normally.

In the context of constitutional democratic governance, the role of mass media in reducing mutual or relational ignorance deserves special attention because sustaining dialogue aims at identifying good and bad practices.

Towards a culture of dialogue

Last but by no means least: I would like to stress the importance of a culture of dialogue at all levels of interaction, starting from the family. In

other words, what is important is not only the message we wish to communicate but how we communicate it. This affects how our message will be perceived and received. In our communication we must be neutral and as devoid of double standards as possible. We must be understood correctly – not just our words but their deeper meaning. We should also speak less in generalities, and concentrate on practical undertakings thus bringing to the attention of the listeners good examples that will demonstrate how peace, stability and well-being are able to replace hatred and conflict. Of course, citing "good examples" does not imply the insistence on the adoption of a "blueprint" for all countries. What is needed today are actions, actions and again actions!

Cultural Identity and Dialogue of Cultures in the Context of Globalization

Adash Toktosunova
Secretary-General of the Kyrgyz National Commission for UNESCO

Globalization and the interaction of civilizations

Globalization is a world theory of the contemporary objective development process characterized by the formation of a new system of supranational political and economic structures and mass culture. The main challenge in the 21st century is global inequality, which preconditions interdependence of countries participating in the historical process. There are dominant countries and recipient countries. Harmonious unity can hardly be reached among countries with different level of development; the existing gap between them is increasing: the leading western countries are in the core of information and communication technologies and the recipient countries are in the role of just passive consumers.

Globalization is not a mono-measured and mono-semantic process, it is a multi-vector and contradictory development process, the pace of which varies from super ICT technologies to pre-industrial way of life (it is important to take into consideration the historical-cultural aspect of development). The questions arise: How is it possible to achieve if not solutions, then at least an objective determination of the ways to reduce such inequality and to adapt countries to the world-wide flow of globalization? Is it possible for the contemporary non-western civilizations to safeguard their identity?

There are no simple answers to these vital questions, scientists have sometimes quite opposite views. For example, according to F. Fukuyama, the Western liberal civilization has proven its superiority and has many advantages in determining the global order of life, and other countries will have to accept the stated norms of life. But according to S. Huntington,

opposition to the western forms of globalization gives a new impact to the non-western civilizations, thus provoking a clash of civilizations as an objective course of contemporary development.

Such an interpretation of the problem puts forward the issue of the essence and nature of intra-civilizational interaction in the context of globalization.

Pragmatically, the technical, post-industrial and informational civilization is oriented to commercial success at any price, which leads on the one hand to elitism as the organizing principle of economic and political life, educational system and other spheres of public life, and on the other hand to a growing social stratification. Western civilization is characterized by the triumph of pragmatism, efficiency, de-ideologized rationality and professionalism as highest virtues. Pragmatically, technical civilization plunges individuals into virtual reality; exploiting primitive forms of culture, it promotes its own achievements for everyday mass consumption. Mass culture is oriented to physical comfort, material well-being and entertainments which are sometimes equivocal and lead to an increase in crime. Pragmatically, technical civilization provides mass consumption of any product, including information product.

These are the main features of western civilization which exclude its absolute triumph in the presentation of idealistic values of life. Therefore, humankind faces the challenge of mobilizing civilizational resources of different communities and promoting their constructive interaction to determine the future trends of the world development. It depends on the values of civilizations, their degree of integration, and creative solutions of the "challenge – response" problem.

Safeguarding of national and cultural identities – the response to the historical challenge

Civilizations of the modern globalized world face the problem of safeguarding their national and cultural identities. Any civilization is shaped by each ethnic group and each culture on the basis of their respective perception and understanding of life. Such an understanding forms a special type of mentality and is realized in an original system of values. Thus, the type of mentality influences the perception of problems and contradictions of the world, the adaptation to changes and the formation of individual positions in the conceptualization of life changes through the prism of one's own "ego", i.e. self-identity. The way of thinking influences the self-identity of each ethnic group preconditioning its self-

reliance in its development and its search of its own niche in the world's historical and socio-cultural sphere.

In the context of globalization processes which remove borders between national states through transnational corporations and international communities, the capability to safeguard cultural identity means to take a worthy place in the system of the world's civilizations, not to be lost in the flow of globalization but on the contrary to adapt it to the own national social system.

How different civilizations manage to do this now, and will manage in future – the answer to this question will need time, because today there is a crisis in self-determination of cultures, national states and societies which are experiencing a period of renewal of their self-identity. Along with it, this is the time which gives impact to the development of creative potential and the mobilization of internal resources to solve the problem "to be or not to be" on the individual-regional level and to seek the ways of interaction.

What are the possible ways of intra-civilizational interaction? There are three major models of development:
-	assimilation of local civilizations to the future globalized world (F Fukuyama);
-	clash of civilizations (S.Huntington);
-	transformation of civilizations based on dialogue as the main principle of interaction.

The first model - the Western civilization unifying the whole world - cannot surpass all other civilizations for objective reasons. Today within the Western civilization itself there are rapidly accumulating internal contradictions spreading all over the world. In spite of the recognized leading position of the United States in determining the future development of the world, the opinion is expressed that the US superiority may not be ever-lasting (Z. Bzhezinsky). Therefore, this model of intra-civilizational interaction can hardly be presented as the dominant one.

The second model - Huntington's thesis of the clash of civilizations- shows contradictions with regard to the strength of the West and at the same time its weakness and the necessity to save the West from its illusive absolutization. At the same time, the proclamation of the necessity to seek and promote shared values already implies the possibility of another way of development.

The third model - transformation of civilizations - means their adaptation to the realities of the 21st century. This thesis envisages the necessity of **correlation and interaction** between civilizations and the

phenomenon of globalization itself, as both processes reflect the modern era of social development. Globalization comes out as a strategy (guidelines) of the world development; the interaction of civilizations is the essence of the present transformations of the world. Accordingly, these processes have common points of intersection, they mutually imply and represent each other. Civilizations interact through safeguarding their cultural identities. "The processes of globalization and transformation dictate the necessity to develop a model of interaction of civilizations based on their dialogue and partnership. This is a civilizational imperative of the 21st century". (1:4).

Dialogue of cultures as the way of interaction among civilizations.

The concepts of *Culture of Peace and Dialogue of Civilizations* proclaimed by the UN and UNESCO reflect best of all the meaning of dialogue as the way of interaction among civilizations. The main principles of these concepts are: mutual understanding, tolerance and respect; recognition of the multi-dimensional world and its diversity; equality of cultures and civilizations; conflict prevention. This paradigm has the greatest prospect of success as a model for the development of civilizations.

Culture is the main bearer of national and civilizational features, and it is not by chance that from the second half of the 21st century cultural problems have shifted to the centre of life. Culture becomes a resonator of the existing controversies on the personal, public, national and international levels. On the turn of centuries, there is a revival of interest in historical and cultural roots and national identity; this is equally true for individuals, generations, communities, states, nations and civilizations. Culture reflects the specific character of national and civilizational systems.

In the world's contemporary socio-cultural situation we can distinguish two trends of development: on the one hand, national civilizational renaissances enhancing differentiation of cultures and focusing on specific features reflected in the way of thinking and the system of values; on the other hand, the emergence of a new, so-called integral culture.

Integration has a civilizational approach to the structure, history and future of a society. The essence of integration is expressed in the theory of convergence, dialogue and interaction.

It is an indisputable and scientifically established fact that dialogue is the most objective, methodologically and historically confirmed and universal way towards understanding, interaction and cooperation. The notion of dialogue includes systems of values as its integral part. For example, Yu.Yakovets considers three aspects in a system of values: "1. A system of values not only outlines differences between civilizations, but it is also a common basis for dialogue and interaction between them. 2. A system of values is subject to cyclic dynamics: periodically it has crises and upheavals, in particular during changes of the world's civilizations. 3. The formation of a universal system of values based on dialogue lags behind the process of globalization based on the neo-liberal model, imposing the Western system of values on the whole world". (1:331-332).

A value-based perception of life allows to comprehend better the existing problems and contradictions, putting to the fore the correlations between individuals and the world, and between civilizations and various national-cultural systems, and shaping a vision of the world enriched with historical, cultural and social memory. It is necessary to define a system of values which could become a guideline for the development of globalization.

The paradox of the 20th century in the form of two tendencies of the development of the world - the self-determination of individuals, nations, societies and states, and the globalization of socio-cultural transformations - continues to dominate in the early 21st century. The course of history cannot be reversed. Globalization is an objective phenomenon of the historical process. In order to be adapted to the realities of the 21st century it is necessary to enter into the process of globalization, and in this, the instinct of self-preservation must come to bear.

In the context of globalization, the problem of social responsibility is of special importance. What values will the contemporary generation leave for the future generation to ensure that the thread of history will continue? The epoch-making mission of scholars, philosophers and eminent figures of culture is not only to comprehend the situation, but also **to create the spiritual image of the epoch** that will be distinct from the philosophy of the past centuries, but is much lacked today. In the practical context, philosophy comes forward as an ideology (not in the distorted sense of canonized thoughts, but in the sense of philosophy of spirit). Philosophy reflects the spiritual state of the historical time, attaching much importance to

the comprehension of global changes in the field of spiritual culture and social transformations.

Transformation of society tells about the necessity to have **guidelines for the outlook of the world**. Their elaboration, on the one hand, is facilitated by the abundance of information available, and on the other hand, is hampered by the difficulty of forming of one's own position. The integrity of an individual is formed when his/her inner development is realized in the outer environment, and the external processes influence his/her internal determination. The contemporary world is full of contradictions that seem sometimes to be insoluble; accordingly, the inner dissociation causes exclusion, which testifies to the inner fragmentation of individuals. The integrity of an individual is directly connected with the integrity of an objective reality, which nowadays the world lacks so much.

In this context, the turn to the roots of existence acquires special importance. Addressing the historical and cultural heritage is pre-conditioned by spiritual experience, understanding of the integrity of human existence and by specific national self-consciousness.

At the same time, the ideas of globalism contradict a specific national self-consciousness. The level of national self-consciousness is reflected in the capability to cultivate dialogue as a paradigm of social thinking in the 21st century: dialogue with the historical past; dialogue with other ethnic groups aimed at civil harmony; inter-faith dialogue aimed at the formation of moral norms and prevention of inter-faith conflicts; and dialogue of particular and universal cultural values in the context of globalization processes.

An individual is historically attached to a certain cultural context; his substantiality is not as much in himself as in his ability to communicate with other mental forms recognizing their right to independence. Therefore, mentality is politicized predetermining dialogism as a paradigm of existence. Dialogue as a paradigm of mentality and existence reflects the degree of cultural self-expression and social characteristics of a society. In this connection, it is quite appropriate and logical to study the phenomenon of **dialogue** as the basis of interpersonal communication, intercultural understanding and intra-civilizational interaction. The philosophy of dialogue envisages the possibilities for states to present their originality as expressions of the free will of individuals in the changing world, to have the right for legal self-determination in the face of the existence of other cultures and social systems; and to comprehend their own role in the historical process of the world.

Kyrgyzstan in the light of the world process of globalization

The socio-cultural situation of Kyrgyzstan as an independent country of Central Asia is projected both in the context of the region and in the context of the world process of globalization. The main contradiction of the present situation lies in the discrepancy between traditional culture and universal values brought by globalization. Unlike rationalism turned into universalism of the Western values, Kyrgyz people basically have a contemplative-intuitive mentality focused on local values, which is characterized by a sensitive perception of the world versus rationalism, concreteness versus abstractness, tribalism of personal relations versus the culture of law, intuitive perception and self-expression versus theoretical way of thinking, environmental harmony between man and nature versus anthropocentrism, speculativeness against pragmatism. Such discrepancies between traditional and modern values basically with regard to the archetype (archetype means prototype, idea, initial scheme of an image) go back to the nomadic world perception versus the settled way of life. Along with this, the Kyrgyz people in their majority transformed from a nomadic way of life to a settled one, therefore, the new principles of world perception are not totally rejected, they co-exist with the traditional ones.

In this case it is important to consider the social and cultural situation in Kyrgyzstan through the prism of the notion of "national character". Such an approach allows to project the correlation of national and social aspects, expressing the essence of cultural identity of a national state in the global process. Traditional mentality plays a decisive role in the formation of national identity creating an original model of the world as imagined by people. However, in the course of time, a traditional model can change according to complicated ways of thinking. In this case, the national character reveals contradictions in the world perception, at the same time integrating past and modern values within the national structure, and exhibiting its level of national self-consciousness.

In this context, taking the nomadic mentality type of the Kyrgyz people as the fundamental principle, we can state that the transformation to a settled way of life brought changes that pre-determined the transformation of their internal cultural structure. This is a natural process that is reflected in the syncretism of mentality of the contemporary Kyrgyz people. However, it is necessary to emphasize the stability of the main principle of the nomadic world outlook – easy adaptiveness to changes and radical transformation of the cultural and social system.

Archetypes pre-condition the continuity of historical traditions. In this connection, social responsibility is of special importance for the retranslation of spiritual experience. Historical memory is a criterion of the integrity of the way of thinking, allowing an interpretation of the significance of the archetypical prerequisites in the most critical periods. In Kyrgyzstan, the interpretation of cultural heritage must take into consideration the modern global processes of civilizational development.

Contemporary culture enters into dialogue with its historical past. Such dialogue enhances a revival of self-consciousness, and the archetypes determine the forms of accepting new values. Genetic openness to changes means not just feeling the new trends of the world development, but also willingness to meet them, it is not just adaptation but also an inner movement fostering inner adaptation of the external changes. Such approach should be cultivated nowadays. Life in its contemporary cultural and historical context presents an objectively existing problematic situation that is not necessarily to be created artificially. Important factor of a national state's cultural identity is the capability to oppose the obtrusion of universal stereotypes of thinking, i.e. the capability to adapt them to the cultural specificity of Kyrgyz nation.

Revival of the principles of the aboriginal-traditional system of thinking is the first stage of development after the crisis of the state's self-determination and reveals two spheres of the tragedy of the Kyrgyz culture – national-spiritual expression of consciousness and social development. The boom of the national identity, caused by the social-cultural burst at the end of the 20th century, is contradictory in its nature. National identity has both - positive aspect, because it gives impact to the development of national culture, and negative aspect, because everything traditional is sometimes absolutely exaggerated without taking into consideration the factor of the historical time.

The second trend of universalization of stereotypes of thinking in Kyrgyzstan presents an individual type of adaptation of the principles of globalization within the framework of the cultural context of the society. Of great importance here is an intent-analytical study of value orientations of the national consciousness with the aim to reconstruct certain structures that do not fit the modernization processes. In the contemporary life, the traditional system of thinking does not exist in its classical form. To achieve certain quality life in the social and cultural sphere, it is necessary to introduce rational and pragmatic approaches in the system of traditional values. At the present historical period, the motivation of the mentality of

Kyrgyz people by the system of traditional values varies according to the level of consciousness of certain social groups. The majority of the populations living in the rural areas of the country retain the traditional features of thinking; the urban part of the population is more open to quick acceptance of universal values; intelligentsia's mentality is more Europeanized, at the same time the most functional parameters of the traditional culture are preserved and developed.

Among the universal values, pragmatism is most adapted in the traditional culture, because the reality itself dictates such approach to the process of self-realization. It should be noted, that the matter is not in total revising of national-spiritual values – change of a social image does not obligatory imply radical spiritual-cultural changes. "Rationality comes out as a means of cultural values' explication to the world, and the image of this world depends on the nature of cultural values, but not on the structure of rationality. Cultural identity is based on differences". (2:33). The problem of cultural identity lies in the nation's capability to adapt functional civilizational values to the traditional cultural system. Only in this way individuality is not leveled and has the opportunity to present itself in the world process of globalization. Correlation of traditional and modern reflects the social-cultural perspective of cultural heritage and dialogue of generations.

Contemporary value orientations, reflecting the specific mentality, should be aimed at promotion of democratic criteria of development, as after gaining independence Kyrgyzstan proclaimed democratic way of development. Only an individual and people are the main criteria of democratic society, because democratic, tolerant and open to dialogue people constitute a real basis for stability and democracy in a society. This can be achieved through the development of tolerant consciousness and value-oriented guidelines. However, striving to join the world process of globalization, it is necessary not to forget our historical-ethnographical and spiritual-cultural originality, i.e. it is necessary to safeguard and to promote our national-cultural identity.

The problem of national-cultural identity reflects the essence of dialogue between ethnic-cultural traditions and innovations of the new epoch, as only such combination can represent the sovereign Kyrgyzstan as an independent geopolitical unit seeking to find its own niche in the global space. Building up our state structure, we are experiencing the situation when the system of social order has not been shaped yet, i.e. transition period in the development between traditional society and democratic state. This period concentrates contradictions between the past epoch and

the forthcoming epoch in the process of social, national and spiritual transformations determined by changed psychology of thinking. Crisis is characterized by the fact that it "cannot appear without realization of the internal impoverishment, without a desire to get out of it and without a deliberate will to gain back the lost and fragmented cultural elements and to enrich them with new ones". (3:527). In this context, it is important to study the Kyrgyz way of thinking as an **individual system** having its own positive and negative aspects.

On the basis of social, cultural and historical experience of self-cognition linked with the cognition of the world views of other peoples, we can see that the main ideas about the national character serve as an underlying reason for the formation of national auto-stereotypes, the synthesized form of which gives the information about the nature of the nation itself, and first of all, its way of thinking. Culture of thinking becomes apparent from the existing parameters of the national stereotypes and at the certain stage of its formation it pre-conditions the social side of culture influencing the historical comprehension of the cultural heritage and creation of a new system of social-cultural relationships. The formation of stereotypes helps to study the capacity of the nation to perceive the modernization processes increasing with the democratic transformations. Due to the local and to some degree static character of traditional thinking, certain innovations are not accepted, therefore formation of stereotypes depends on the structure of the way of thinking and culture in general.

The conclusion can be made, that the liberal values, due to their aloofness from the aboriginal-traditional aspect, not always can organically fit into the traditional system of existence and be transformed within it. Undoubtedly, the process of adaptation to the universal norms of civilizational existence is complicated, hierarchical and contradictory. Therefore, democratic process not based on democratic values can quickly either thrust back or become degraded beyond recognition.

On the example of the contemporary Kyrgyzstan, we can affirm that one more achievement has been made in the social development: orientation to democratic transformations has turned from theory to practice, thus symbolizing a break-through in time and space. Along with it, the specific peculiarities of the way of thinking, political consciousness, social memory and the system of national-spiritual values has a substantial effect on the processes of modernization. The individual type of the Kyrgyz democracy presents a **special experience** reflecting the unique correlation between the global civilizational process and national-cultural identity. In

this context, dialogue of ethno-cultural traditions and innovations is a historical-cultural process complimented with socio-cultural process reflecting the essence and peculiarity of social transformations in the country, such as multi-ethnicity and cultural pluralism.

Thus, the phenomenon of multi-ethnicity and cultural pluralism in Kyrgyzstan can be considered as the correlation between globalization and national-cultural identity in the context of civilizational development.

References:

1. Yu. Yakovets. Globalization and interaction of civilizations. – M., 2003.
2. N. Kiribaev. Cultural identity, pluralism, globalization and education // Dialogue of civilizations: historical experience and perspectives in the 21st century. – M., 2002.
3. A. Veber. On sociology of state and culture // Culturology. The 20th century: Anthology. – M., 1995.

Adash Toktosunova, Secretary General of the Kyrgyz National Commission for UNESCO

Dialogue of Civilizations – Cartier, Vever and Faberg Manuscripts and Jewellery

Efim Rezvan

Editor-in-Chief, Manuscripta Orientalia, St. Petersburg

In the early 1960s, a collection of exquisite, enamel-encrusted gold cigarette cases adorned with diamonds, sapphires, and rubies was bequeathed to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. They were the gift of a somewhat mysterious elderly man named Charles Antoine Roger Luzarche d'Azay. Nearly every cigarette case bears a strange Arabic inscription. Many of them were decorated with ornaments based on Islamic art traditions.

Only later did it emerge that this was a gift received by the French intelligence agent Luzarche d'Azay, who worked in the Near East, a testimony of the French Princess Cécile Murat's love for him. The Arabic letters on the cigarette cases are easily combined to form the name Cecile. The series was apparently created in the early 20th century in the workshops of the famed Karl Fabergé, court jeweler of the Russian Emperor, the Kings of Sweden and Norway, the King of England, and the King of Siam.

Eleven richly illuminated Arabic, Persian and Indian manuscripts which, according to documents, were purchased by Karl Fabergé in the early 1900s found in the St. Petersburg academic collection of Oriental manuscripts. Thanks to this discovery we are able to peer into the artistic laboratory of the Fabergé family and the firm's craftsmen, who at the beginning of the 20th century produced a series of masterpieces with elements of "Muslim decoration".

Among the manuscripts there are two miniature copies of the Qur'an, collections of poetry, literary, religious and biographical works, a beautiful album of Persian calligraphy samples, and Mogul miniatures.

The Muraqqa' (album) is undoubtedly the gem of Fabergé's collection of Eastern manuscripts. In the course of preparatory work with the album, both specialists and museum curators were struck by its

outstanding Indian miniatures and samples of calligraphy. We hope that certain folios from the album will soon be on display at exhibitions at the Institut du Monde Arab, (Paris) and the Fuji Museum (Tokyo). Recently there appeared the information that the Hermitage also has several oriental items from the Faberge private collection (bronze, carpet) as well as his jewellery works in oriental style. The Hermitage, Kremlin Museum and the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies already agreed to lend the items for the exhibition.

Not only Karl Fabergé, but also Louis Cartier and Henri Vever, all most important jewellers of the nineteenth century, had collections of Eastern manuscripts and miniatures that inspired them to create the marvels of their art that today adorn the world's great museums and private collections. These outstanding artists and jewellers most likely did not fully understand the ancient traditions that inspired the examples of Eastern miniature and calligraphy in their collections. But it was undoubtedly the profundity and power of this tradition that contained the bewitching energy that springs to life anew in their marvellous works.

Each of these artists, today associated with the highest pinnacles of the jeweller's art, owned a collection of manuscripts and miniatures. The profundity and power of the Eastern tradition added to their works the enchanting beauty that so distinguishes the unified creative principle of East and West. Only recently this would have been merely a marvellous exhibition, a unique window into the workshop of these great jewellers. But today, when we see frightening attempts to spark conflict between two great civilisations, we feel that the idea behind this exhibition has acquired a special relevance. We live in a single world, the beauty of which finds expression in its vast diversity. One hopes that it is this beauty that will, in the end, be our salvation.

Dialogue of Cultures, Dialogue of Centuries, Dialogue of Mankind

Gulruhsor Safieva

Poet, Tajikistan

One wise man was asked a question: "Whom would you like to have – a brother or a friend?" He replied: "Certainly a brother if he is a friend!" In response to the specified theme of our conference, like all others, I will say: "Certainly we Eurasians choose dialogue of cultures, by our choice once and for ever denying any conflict, not to say about the conflict of civilizations!" Particularly now! If not now, when? If not us, who?

I remember when President Mohammad Khatami of Iran declared from the most political tribune of the world – the UN tribune – a slogan "Dialogue of cultures is a dialogue of civilizations". It became clear that besides brute force, blackmail and wars, politics has the most reliable weapon – dialogue! Despite all the advanced rockets and ultramodern weapons the savage world of policy needs softer and more reliable mechanisms of protection, and culture is such a mechanism.

Then that slogan – "Dialogue of cultures is a dialogue of civilizations" – was equally perceived both by politicians and ordinary people. When the politicians begin to talk in the language of culture, our politicized life acquires green colour – the colour of life.

The world waited for the twenty-first century with trepidation. We expected a century without wars and violence. Alas, we had hardly forgotten the words "cold war", when we got burned by the fire of extremism!

September 11 now is not simply a calendar date. Humankind will memorize it as a symbol of the end of the world, which may be a deed of man himself. After September 11 the pain began to moan with the human voice and to speak the language of fear for future. For one moment the world became one common house for the whole mankind as if we found ourselves in one boat fearfully expecting the Decuman Wave.

Europe and Asia, which, as distant relatives, had always been in conflict with each other, finally turned to each other face to face and began to talk one understandable language: language of culture, language of respect, language of tolerance common for the whole mankind.

The verbose policy began to use few words. But unfortunately weakness and inability to identify the nature of violence gave a start to the death machine. As the great Omar Khayyam said:

бад кунаму ту бад мукофот дихи, пас фарк миёни ману ту чист бигу",

which can be translated approximately as follows: "If I bring evil to you, you will pay the same. Is there any difference between you and me, pleas tell me?"

Not only is extremism terrible, the lack of language of clarification of its essence, the absence of answers to questions – why? for what? are also dreadful.

If we had had answers to those questions it would have been possible to prevent the tragedy in Sumgait, it would have been possible to stop the bloody battle in Tbilisi, to avoid the most terrible tragedy – fratricidal war in Tajikistan and other former Soviet republics. But then the politicians failed to realize, they lacked political tolerance, they ignored the cultural dialogue and preferred to apply brute force.

If all wars begin with one bullet, all conflicts begin with misunderstanding, moreover with a lack of wish to understand each other and to extend a hand of friendship and mutual understanding.Any conflict, small or large, is destructive, which suits well the extremism. Extremism is a disease, a dangerous and communicable disease. Extremists as potential death bearers, should be isolated from ordinary people, and be treated if possible. As it is well known, wise doctors treat not a patient, they treat the cause of disease. Violence and extremism have causes and deep roots.

People are not born violators, killers or extremists. Violence generates violence, injustice causes injustice! Each hungry child, who is now offended and humiliated, will become an arm of extremism tomorrow. Each unfair decision, each insulting word to this or that nation, disrespect of other religions may cause new bloody conflicts. It is sad, first to mercilessly obliterate one's ideological enemies under the slogan of war against extremism, to bomb whole cities and villages, to kill hundreds of peaceful people under pretence of killing one extremist, and then to wonder why the number of extremists does not decrease. The boomerang remembers a return way.

To my mind today Eurasia is that very chance, which has unfortunately been missed for many years. To restore bridges of mutual

understanding of cultures, to create Eurasian cultural meetings, parties of classical and modern poetry, music, to organize international exhibitions and concerts… Otherwise how can we know, what happens and where? Shame on me but I know the French poetry of the past better than the creative work of my colleagues now …

We hope that the Festival of the World Poetry dedicated to the 80-anniversary of the capital of Tajikistan – Dushanbe, planned for November this year, will become an annual event and will serve as a good bridge between cultures of Europe and Asia!

Each person is part of the planet. Maybe that is why it hurts me much to see the Talibs coolly destroying one thousand year old historical monuments in Bomiyan… It was shameful to see inability of culture before ignorance, painful to see how the mankind genius was ruined together with those invaluable monuments.

But a man lives in a hope, and hope is the last to die. I still believe in the saving power of the word, culture, art. We as culture bearers should resist violence, extremism, set off power of culture, power of knowledge of mutual understanding against bloody forces. I saw an old man who courageously went to reconcile combatants …with bread. And he was a success! Literature, culture, art – are the spiritual bread of mankind, and a human being needs it!

The Tajiks say: blood cannot be washed out with blood. Blood can only be washed out with pure water. My ancient, wise, long-suffering people, in days of national tragedy, facing death, proved that His Majesty Word is the most powerful weapon against violence and cruelty. My brothers who seemed to be irreconcilable reached the main truth – power of peace against war and violence, not with the help of arms, cruelty, but with the help of dialogue. During those awful years of our history, when our men sorted out their relationships with arms, the Tajik women, custodians of the native language, sang sad and pure rhymes about love, life and death, and by their tender female power made their husbands, brothers, sons think… And they stopped to think and they became reconciled. I think the role of Tajik women in that reconciliation has not been studied yet. If you want peace and well-being in your house let the women, for whom you are ready to wipe everything out from your way, sing such song. That song will be the main human song – song of love. The number of people writing and singing about love does not decrease, and those people never fill their liver with bile. Love is the essence of culture and civilization!

The great Russian writer Dostoevsky said, that beauty will save the world. It's true; beauty will save the world, if that beauty is love.

But who of the mighty of the world keeps a small volume of poems, who at night would adorn sleeplessness with wise verses as the founders of the Tajik state – Samonides – did? I do not know… The Samanides ennobled the founder of the Persia-Tajik literature of Abuabdulla Rudaki up to the level of "Adam of poets of the East", and thus immortalized their names. In the East, particularly, in Central Asia, poets, philosophers, wise men had a special place in life of the nation and the state. We should not lose that good tradition having nothing more significant for a change!

Absence of culture, literature is fraught with appearance of spiritual extremism. The politicians should think in their every day work about the role and impact of a live word on minds and hearts of the nation. There were reasons that wise tsars always had poets, philosophers, scientists as viziers. Extremism can be and should be resisted by culture, literature, art, – this is told by wisdom of centuries, experience of civilizations! And people should learn to speak the language of love with each other.

Humanity always needed and needs a wise teacher and a good fairy tale. Almost all nations had honored wise men and teachers, poets and writers. Humankind still admires the genius of Aristotle, Confucius, Rudaki, Avicenna, Firdevsi, Khayyam, Khafiz, Saadi, Shakespeare, Whitman, Cortasara, Rembo, Goethe, Lee Bo, Basyo and many other poets, writers, scientists of East and West!

If death of one person is a tragedy, death of masses is statistics, as the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche told. But another wise man said that death of each person is death of the whole world. Unfortunately, each day of our world perishes from violence together with other innocent people!

The great French poet Paul Éluard said, "As long as violent death exists on Earth, the poets should be the first to die…" Unfortunately today the violent death became almost a common phenomenon and not only poets die. Poets die of their own weakness and shame for the word, for their mission, which cannot yet stop tanks and rockets, the whole destructive spirit of violence …

Politicians of the world! Take care of poets! They are the ones to create language, which you use to declare your love! Lest that our conference should be just a voice of a crying person in a desert and in order to make it bring the desired results – rapprochement and mutual understanding of cultures - you protect bearers and creators of the Word!

Multi-level Dialogue among the BorderingRegions of Russia and Eurasia

Kathryn Pinnick

Researcher and the Programme Coordinator for the Russia/Eurasia Programme at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London

In the context of the theme "Water, Sustainable Development and Human Security – promoting Peaceful Cooperation and Synergies through Dialogue", it is appropriate to look at policies aimed at sustainable development across national borders. Dialogue and cooperation in Eurasia is taking place between neighbouring states on different levels: in international and regional bodies, inter-governmental and inter-parliamentary bodies, state bodies or between ministries of economics, environment, transport, sub-national authorities (regions, provinces) and at the micro-level between neighbouring communities through civil society representatives or businesses.

While inter-state cooperation under the auspices of sovereign governments of the states of Eurasia is the dominant level of interaction, dialogue is also underway through informal or semi-formal (but not institutionalised) partnerships involving other actors. Interaction on that level has the potential to contribute to cooperation on sustainable development and security too. Their non-state status makes them an important channel particularly where multilateral politics on the state level appear ineffective at addressing the sustainable development of the affected communities.

In Eurasia the trend, thirteen years on from the collapse of the Soviet Union, is for multi-level dialogue to expand. The states of the region, and the border regions especially, are often seen today attempting to re-build links which were broken when the Soviet economic and political space fell apart. The difference today, of course, is that the states of the region are independent sovereign states entering into alliances of their choice and to meet their national interests as they have defined them.

One initiative of note for fostering cooperation is the Greater Altai project which is based on collaboration between the sub-national or regional authorities of the contiguous regions of Russia, Mongolia, China and Kazakhstan. The borders of these states intersect in the Altai Mountains. The Altai Mountains form the headwaters of two major Asian rivers the Ob and the Irtysh. In 1999 UNESCO included five clusters of Altai in the World Natural Heritage List.

A case study of Greater Altai provides material on the opportunities for, and factors limiting the achievement of a sub-regional economic space. Efforts at cooperation come up against a variety of constraints which range from issues of governance (the rights of sub-national bodies), to financial shortfalls, to the sensitivities of border demarcation and control and to attitudes to multilateral cooperation in general.

The objectives of the Greater Altai initiative

The Greater Altai (Bolshoi Altai) regional project was launched in the late 1990s by the region's elites to promote cross-border interaction and set up a multifaceted inter-regional institution. This institution will incorporate the neighbouring districts of Xinjiang Uighur autonomous district (China), North Kazakhstan region, East Kazakhstan region (Kazakhstan), the Republic of Altai and Altai krai (Russia) and Bayan Ulgi aimak and Khovd aimak (Mongolia). The Altai initiative is striving to bring together communities and policy makers separated by administrative borders. The parties envisage reaching agreement on such diverse issues as border regimes, development of road infrastructure and special trade zones and fostering a common information space and educational and cultural projects.

The Greater Altai project was first discussed at conferences in the region in 1999 and by April 2003 had made its first step towards semi-institutionalisation when the International Coordination Council of "Our Common Home Altai" was set up. Its multi-lateral format and objectives evoke comparisons with the Euroregions in the EU. Our Home Altai endeavours to be a similar type of organisation on the other side of the continent – an "Asian-region". Multilateral cooperative alliances often have cognitive regionalism as their foundation, that is, a common identity and/or recognition of shared problems which transcend national boundaries. One of the Greater Altai initiative's goals is to preserve the cultural and historical heritage shared by the four states of the Altai Mountain region. Alexander Surikov, then head of Altai krai

administration said at a Council meeting in 2003, "It is a place where the borders as well as the political and economic interests of Russia, China, Kazakhstan and Mongolia meet. Borders should not divide the ancestors of people who have lived on the abundant land of Altai for many centuries and millennia."

The Altai initiative is striving to get the contiguous states of the Altai Mountains to make concrete commitments on sustainable development and create an effective structure for coping with the economic challenges. The Altai region – particularly in the mountain villages – is characterised by low life expectancy, poor health, unemployment, poverty and out-migration. The strategy of the actors engaged in the Altai attempt at regionalism have set tasks which complement the objectives of sustainable development taking ecological factors into account. The language of Our Home Altai describing the desired deepening of cross-border cooperation is reminiscent of the spatial development concept of the Euroregions. The participating bodies are to work together to coordinate their policies for a common space that overlaps national territories. Like the Euroregions they aim to improve the standard of living of the residents in the neighbouring states through economic development.

The Coordinating Council of Our Home Altai endeavours to coordinate the efforts of state organs, research organisations and the public of the neighbouring regions in cross-border cooperation and in working out new approaches to the stable development of the contiguous territories of Altai. Its aim is to move statements on sustainable development and coordination from the purely declarative to a level where there is joint action as part of a common strategy for resolving shared problems. The council recognises the low level of achievement to date of attempts at international coordination of activities for environmental protection and economic development in the Altai Mountain area.

The desired outcome of the promotion of dialogue is to build partnerships and develop policy recommendations. The representatives of the four states lobby their respective legislative body to pass legislation which will render assistance to state administrative bodies, businesses, academic institutions and NGOs which engage in partnership or cooperation. The Council's activities are aimed at informing the national legislative bodies too of the Council's proposals for national legislation to be coordinated on the following policy areas in Altai: protection of the environment, foreign trade, fiscal and customs regulations. Ideally relevant legislation between the neighbouring states would be harmonised particularly in regard to the stable development of border

regions and improving the socio-economic conditions of the mountain residents.

The Our Home Altai project addresses regional ecological policy and draws up effective mechanisms for the stable ecological and economic development of the Altai region. At the early stages of the Council's work, a large part of its efforts have been directed at developing cooperation on nature conservation and the joint rational economic management of Altai's ecosystems. This has been done primarily by bringing together specialists and officials at conferences. Ecology is the main area where the four states have made multi-lateral efforts to date.

Bi-lateral agreements between the states already exist in the areas of trade and economic cooperation as well as cooperation on education and science. A goal of the Council is to coordinate economic policy and combine production and export potential to the benefit of all participating regions. It also aims to coordinate policy on setting up the Altai cross-border biosphere territory, a zone of cross-border trade, tourism, joint action against illegal hunting and gathering of plants, support for untraditional forms of energy and new technology which is ecologically-safe. The Council members also call for coordination on energy projects and water issues (such as on the unfinished Katun hydroelectric power station on which NGOs are vocal in their opposition) which require a multilateral approach to resolution. Many of these policy areas are traditionally within the domain of high politics and the national governments and therefore beyond the policy remit of the regional administrations. One of the main challenges facing the Altai initiative is to have an influence on national policies on these issues.

Constraints on the path to regionalism

There are a variety of constraints and limitations which will impede progress on a regionalism agenda.

1.Financial constraints

The member regions of the Altai alliance are economically weak and in need of resources to develop this project. Whereas the Euroregion projects in northwest Russia (Republic of Karelia and Kaliningrad oblast) have been 'privileged' by their proximity to rich neighbouring states of the EU and Nordic region who have donated funds, the Altai sub-national

body is all too aware of its financial limitations and the lack of an obvious source of funding. In Altai, they know that resolution of the problems will depend primarily on their own initiatives. There is the hope that tourism and the joint development of natural resources (particularly metals) in the Altai Mountains will generate funds which will be both directed at boosting the sustainable development of the economy and at the functioning of an institutionalised body for Greater Altai's administration.

2. Capacity of sub-national bodies

Transnational bodies such as Greater Altai are restricted by the limits of the powers (administrative and physical) devolved to the participating regions by their respective states. The actors do not have great enough capacity to influence and implement policy. The participating aimaks (regions) from Mongolia have the most capacity of the four Altai Mountain states to interact thanks to the decentralisation and democratisation process in Mongolia. The aimaks have a degree of freedom over their economic and social policy and in making contacts and agreements with neighbouring states. In the Russian Federation, the division of powers between the centre and the regions (regions in general and border regions in particular) is not entirely clear. Russia's regions do have the right to engage in international contacts but they need the permission of the federal authorities and, the extent of cooperation permitted is limited to the economic sphere. Another problem in the Russian Federation is that the local (municipal) level does not have enough capacity but has to defer to the regional level. The participating regions from Kazakhstan face similar or greater constraints to the Russian regions because of the increasing centralization policies in Kazakhstan. The Kazakh regions can engage in external relations only under the auspices of the central government and within the framework of Russian-Kazakh inter-state agreements. The participating regions of China also can only interact internationally within the context of China's inter-governmental agreements with the neighbouring states. The Chinese and Kazakh regions in the Altai project have limitations on their capacity due primarily to the strategic concerns and ethnic politics of their national governments. Thus, a further important consideration relating to the capacity of the regions is that their efforts at cross-border cooperation can be usurped by inter-state relations on the central government level.

3. Ethno-political factors

The Xinjiang Uighur autonomous region of China has very limited capacity to engage directly with sub-national bodies in the neighbouring states. China's political leadership is concerned about the growing self-awareness of the Muslim Uighurs and their potential for separatism in this strategically important region. The authorities in Beijing do not allow Xinjiang region to take any action which bypasses the centre. On the other hand, China is in favour of inter-governmental cooperation especially where it has prospects for boosting the economy and development of this western region. Like the Chinese, the Kazakh central government authorities are wary of deep integration through projects such as Greater Altai for reasons of ethnic politics. The central authorities in Astana fear the emergence of secessionist tendencies in northeast Kazakhstan; these regions have large ethnic Russian populations who are considered by some to hold a preference for annexation to the Russian Federation. The concern on the part of the Chinese over the Uighurs in Xinjiang and the Kazakhs over the potential secessionist strivings of their ethnic-Russian population, is that through sub-regional cooperation with neighbouring states local and regional authorities are aspiring to at least autonomy, at most 'emancipation' from nation-state dominance.

4. Commitment to cooperation and alliances

Being in an alliance is about putting the common interest first but at this relatively early stage in their statehood, the states of Eurasia have at times shown reluctance to operate on the basis of consensus and partnership. The young states of Eurasia, Russia included, are seeking to maximise their interests. This behaviour is typical of the struggle between states for resources — as realists define international relations; each state is an actor motivated by national loyalties and identities which endeavours to maximise its interests at the expense of other states. If a regional organisation or alliance is to be successful, the actors need to be motivated by collective principles, causal beliefs and the goals of the institution. In Eurasia, there is still much scope for collective understanding and a shared identity to be promoted; communication is essential to achieve this. While the regions participating in the Altai project have recognised common interests and wish to work together to resolving shared problems, their policy initiatives might not coincide with the national interest as defined by their respective national governments.

Prospects of Greater Altai

Some of the limitations on cross border cooperation reflect the foreign and domestic policy of the neighbouring states. The prospects of Greater Altai might appear weak in the current climate of inter-state cooperation in Central Asia; but on the other hand if the Altai initiative does find a degree of success then it could contribute to regional cooperation and the resolution of trans-national problems in Eurasia. Perhaps the Greater Altai alliance will be a facilitator of a security and political dialogue and be of some use in the bilateral and multilateral relations between Russia, Mongolia, China and Kazakhstan.

As the sustainable development agenda of Our Home Altai attests, the border regions which meet in the Altai Mountains are generally rural and not well-developed in socio-economic terms. They are marginalized politically too. However they are of strategic importance. The other important characteristic of these border regions is the porous and criminal nature of the borders themselves. These border regions are host to a plethora of illegal cross-border activities like smuggling and illegal migration. These problems are trans-national by nature and thus should be dealt with by cooperation between the neighbouring states. The contiguous states have put efforts into reaching agreement on the delimitation and demarcation of the borders but the process of equipping all stretches of the borders with the appropriate infrastructure is incomplete. At the regional level Russia's regional authorities and their Kazakh counterparts for example have established direct contact through informal meetings between law enforcement and border authorities discussing strategies for countering the cross-border threats coming from Central Asia, in the absence of adequate federal programmes to strengthen border infrastructure.

Mechanisms for cross-border activities like Greater Altai emerge when people living in border regions wish to resolve shared problems related to the border. On the basis of cooperative dialogue established through the Altai initiative, there could be new projects to establish contacts and coordination on border management between all four Altai states. New border regimes also have the potential to disrupt legitimate cross-border cooperation and regular people-to-people contacts and are therefore of concern to the cross-border cooperation agenda of the Greater Altai initiative. The Our Home Altai coordinating council should take it upon itself to communicate to the four governments and the population of the border regions the need to find a balance between the control and contact functions of the borders through the Altai region. The constraints

on the Altai regionalism initiative outlined above cannot be ignored, but nor should the opportunity to expand the cooperation and dialogue be wasted.

Osmonakun Ibraimov, State Secretary of the Kyrgyz Republic; Chinghiz Aitmatov, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to Belgium, Permanent Delegate of Kyrgyzstan to UNESCO; Ko chiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO; Hans d'Orville, Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning, UNESCO; and Kathryn Pinnick, Programme Coordinator and Researcher, Russia and Eurasia Programme, the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, United Kingdom

Water Resources Assessment, Irrigation and Agricultural Developments in the Riparian States of the Amudarya River Basin

**Kristina Toderich,
Tsuneo Tsukatani and
Munimjon Abdusamatov**
Department of Desert Ecology and Water Resources, Uzbek Academy of Sciences

The five states of the Aral Sea Basin in Central Asia face common water problems because they rely heavily on the water resources of two shared river basins: Syr-Darya River in the north and Amu-Darya River in the south.

Though Amu-Darya is on Afghanistan's northern border and 17 percent of the Amudarya basin lies within Afghanistan, this country has not been a major participant in discussions about the distribution and management of Amu-Darya basin's water in the past. There are new development efforts that could cause Afghanistan to eventually play a larger role but so far it has been uncertain and depends on how Afghanistan will lay claims to Amu-Darya River water.

The impact of some industrial units on the quality and ecological state of natural water is also not known, because there is no system to control its quality and quantity, and there is a poor monitoring system on economic activities that pollute water.

In addition, actual water availability assessment over Amu-Darya basin is carried out on Kerky gauge, upstream Karagum Canal at the place bordering Surkhandarya oblasti. This is a very typical gauge that started monitoring water availability and its forecast by Uzglavhydromet in 1974. In recent years however this is the only possible point for assessment of Amu-Darya water resources, as the water flow in the rivers Pyandzh, Vakhsh, and Kafirnigan located in Tajikistan is not monitored for a set of reasons. Also it is worth noting that in recent years Surkhandarya, Sherabad Zarafshan Rivers have lost their connection with Amu-Darya.

Moreover, climate changes in this century will alter the equation in ways scientists and governments do not yet fully understand. As of spring 2002, Central and Southwest Asia comprise the largest region of persistent severe drought in the world. This drought has had devastating societal and environmental consequences and has been exacerbated by the rapid disappearance in recent decades of glaciers in Pamir Mountains that feed about 40 percent of Amu-Darya's water flow.

Agriculture is a key component in all riparian countries economy and exports, and its potential remedy for rural poverty. Afghanistan and much less Tajikistan are facing serious food shortages for the second straight year, leaving millions people vulnerable in remote areas especially mountainous regions that are in need of food assistance. Therefore, efforts to address poverty should focus on rural areas, where livelihoods rely heavily on agriculture. Tajikistan. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have decontrolled agricultural prices, abolished mandatory crop sales to the government and transferred state and collective farms to private management, but serious impediments still remain for the rural economy.

These countries had in Soviet time an expanded irrigation infrastructure, powerful water supply facilities and major power stations but currently is not capable of fully maintaining, repairing and continuously operating them.

Urgent assistance is needed to rehabilitate the countries collapsing irrigation infrastructure, repair farm equipment, procure quality cereal seeds and establish an adequate rural finance system. Without such measures it is likely that agricultural production will continue to decline regardless of the climatic conditions.

The present paper represents a detailed description from the current assessment on water resources and its use for irrigation in the agricultural sector, and the maintenance of hydro-structures gathered through field expedition work (2001-2003) along the riparian basin of Amu-Darya river that started near its origin at Pyandzh in Kunduz provinces (Afghanistan), Kumsangir district (Tajikistan) and Surkhandarya region (Uzbekistan) . We selected a case study of the transboundary upstream/downstream districts of Amudarya River Basin in order to demonstrate the actual promotion and application of some modern water saving technologies.

In the course of the study a lot of interviews were conducted in Imam-Saheb, Qorakuturmah (Afghanistan), Kumsangir, Kurgan-Tyube (Afghan-Tadjik border), Termez and Djarkurgan (Afghan-Uzbek border on the right Bank of Amudarya River) . The interviewers included representatives of the Committee for Water Resources and Committee of

Nature Protection, its province and district affiliations, province and district Hukumats (governing bodies), interregional and non-governmental organizations, and farmers.

The peculiarities of the land, its vegetative characteristics, and any irrigation systems or methods used through this vast area are discussed. Agricultural development using Subsurface Drip Irrigation (SDI) for crops cultivation both on the Left Bank and Right Bank of Amu Darya is what we suggest. Our proposal is to build permanent food production systems on dry lands of all riparian countries that will not only help to feed local people, but also will provide them with jobs. The objective is to improve farm diet diversity and income generation through the introduction of alternative seed crops into the existing crop rotation, for family consumption, market sale and possible use as animal feed. Special attention will be paid to assessing the comparative advantages and drought resistance crops.

Subsurface drip irrigation can be considered as a unique opportunity to manipulate root distribution and soils conditions in order to better manage environmental variables, such as nutrients, salinity, temperature etc. In addition subsurface drip irrigation provides water and nutrients to plants while maintaining a dry soil surface. There are a lot of advantages for the subsurface irrigation use system in the region. For example soils conservation advantages includes prevention of run-off; efficient water penetration into the soil; suitability for use both in flat lands and on slight slopes, unlike other irrigation methods. SDI is recognized as one of the conditions for approving wastewater use for irrigation of agricultural crops and public landscaping. Use of the SDI enables utilization of recycled water for a wide variety of crop, simultaneously reduces leaching of chemicals to the ground water and reduces soil diseases.

However, the major difficulties revealed mostly by us in the region include: pollution and overuse of water resulting from supply-driven water consumption and the almost luck of crop rotation; weakening of water user's organizations (WUOs), lack of investment into irrigation sector and rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure and finally, poor cooperation with downstream riparian countries.

Unsatisfactory monitoring system that is still functioning in the region means lack of common unified methods of water sampling, standards and criteria of assessment, classification of water from consuming point of view and ecological functions. All these things don't allow giving an adequate assessment of water quality, though it is the first and most important step in pointing out the problem, demands and

measure planning. There is no united standard-legal basis and much more economic mechanisms are imperfect.

Besides there is no common database about pollution and their sources, registration of water facilities, water distribution among countries is occurred without taking into account water quality.

Technical solutions in terms of both agricultural technologies involvement and water infrastructure reconstruction for water consumption and preservation are crucial needed. To improve current relations between the all Central Asian riparian countries it is also important to work out a uniform water strategy for the Amudarya/Syrdarya River Basins based on acknowledging the interest of every state in water resources development, protection and use. The establishment of an adequate legal framework work is essential for the development of water sector.

Further steps needed in the irrigation management transfer strategy include: upgrading the water management legislation administrative measures its implications for the districts in irrigation water management, as well as administrative reforms to redistribute responsibilities among the state water management bodies and empowering farmers and water user's organizations. Another important aspect involves the establishment of monitoring systems and reorganizing the governmental water management institutional makeup and increasing governmental and international donor investment.

As it should be expected, problem solution of water quality in the Central Asia would require investments into specific long-term projects, and also help in management system reorganization of water quality. At present when production level was decreased temporarily, this period is the most suitable for working out regional reliable juridical, economic and other laws, programmes, rules and mechanisms to prevent water pollution by industrial waste and sewage. Special attention should be given to system water use change in industry, introduction of ecologically pure technologies, reduction of water consumption volumes, and sewage treatment efficiency.

Main investments should be directed to purchase of equipment, development of infrastructure and restoration of control system for pollution sources (waste, sewage etc.). In spite of detailed information lack, analysis conducted up today proves that industry; national economy and waste accumulators are responsible for quality water deterioration and water ecosystem degradation as a whole. The provision of life support facilities including clean water for the people in the all region of Amudarya River Basin should be a priority in water resources allocation.

The provision of information is another key element in the irrigation management transfer strategy in the Amudarya River basin. Water users's organizations (WUOs) are a new concept in the area and almost all of them are characterized by lacking of relevant experience and information. Therefore training in managerial, financial and conflict resolution skills is important to establish WUOs as genuine bottom-up institutions. Non-governmental organizations can play a crucial role with regard to providing information and education for farmers.

The operation will also fund a series of rapid impact programmes designed to reconstruct basic infrastructures such as irrigation systems. Nevertheless, these irrigation systems require much water from watercourses including Amu-Darya and its tributaries such as the Kunduz River in Afghanistan; the Pyandzh and the Vakhsh Rivers (in Tajikistan) and Amudarya River (in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan). Therefore Afghanistan should participate in any interstate agreement for trans-boundary water resources of Amu-Darya. Otherwise conflicts between Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics may occur. In the worst case, these conflicts might bring another tragedy to Afghanistan. So, it is inevitable to arrange the interstate coordination for trans-boundary water use among all riparian states before the rehabilitation plan for Afghan Agriculture and irrigation systems is promoted.

We believe Afghanistan should be integrated within the framework of Amu-Darya Basin water resources agreement to avoid inter-state water conflicts and to provide a stable and reasonable political climate for further reconstruction efforts in the region.

Thus, the commitment, equal participation and open dialogue in all riparian countries, including Afghanistan, will promote human security and stability in the region. We (scientists, policy markers, governmental and non governmental leaders, farmers etc.) must share responsibility and take measures in order to prevent serious water shortages in the Aral Sea Basin in the coming decades.

It is hoped that this collaborative research having involved Uzbek, Tajik, and Japanese researchers can use the data gathered in expeditions like this to complement the required information and prepare the necessary steps for establishing of a sustainable agricultural development in the region and assist with the ongoing process for the development of riparian states in Central Asia.

Creation of the International Inter-disciplinary Centre of Intellectual Resources at Lake Issyk-Kul and the Common Information Area of Eurasia

Svetlana V. Prokopchina

Vice-President of the Research and Production and General Director Intellectual Systems Corporation

Purpose

The main purpose of the project of creating a common information area of Eurasia is to form a reliable and powerful methodological and technological base for making effective administrative decisions in the ecosystem of Eurasia.

Such a base is necessary for the solution of regional problems concerning nature protection and nature management, particularly for effective use and saving of natural, industrial and social resources, the organization of international cooperation in the area of business, science and culture and the creation of conditions for realization of principles of sustainable development of the whole region.

The urgency and special importance of these issues for maintenance of sustainable development of the whole society and each individual region create the necessity of a detailed study at the methodological and practical levels to ensure coherence and specificity in tackling problems of interest to the Eurasian region.

Content

Within the framework of the project "Rational and effective use of water and power resources in Central Asia", implemented by the centre of intellectual technologies "RIAC INTEC" as part of the UN Special

Programme of Economy of Central Asian Countries, eight regional centers were created on the basis of the methodology of Bayes Intellectual Technologies (BIT) for monitoring the situation and support of decision-making on the management of water-power resources of Central Asia. BIT is designed to create systems of accounting, audit, management of resources, entities of the production and territorial complexes and situations under conditions of risk and significant uncertainty which was the reason for selecting this methodology and technological base in order tocreate a network of centres.

The project is aimed at the implementation of a coordinated regional strategy for the use and saving of these resources and providing harmonious development of the Central Asian region and related countries taking into account the national and regional interests. After the formation of five independent states in Central Asia by virtue of the fact that the unified production and economic complex has been separated within the national borders, a deficiency of professional communication between experts arose and, the system of an exchange of experiencewas limited. There were new complicated economic, social and ecological tasks awaiting solution, for which active information communication with advanced international experience is needed. All these factors are characteristic to the waterpower complex of the region. The rivers are trans-border in nature, power is mainly based on hydro-energy engineering, and the basic hydro-units have complex, irrigation-power purposes.

The main objective of the international programme for technical assistance and cooperation is to solve the aforementioned problems. Results of their realization including information resources are not related to each other, they are not incorporated and they do not cooperate. It does not allow to effectively involve them in the solution of new problems or the implementation of new projects. However, it is necessary to note that the first stage of implementation of any project, scientific and technical programmes and activities is the stage of information and conceptual design that further creates the methodological, functional material base.

The purpose of the project is to create a common information space of the countries for a more efficient control of major spheres of life of the Eurasian region, to organize rational nature management and to develop an optimum ecological-economic strategy of management of industrial, agrarian and fuel and energy complexes.

It is planned to create a net of distributed information-analytical centers (DIAC) as a basic infrastructure for the common information space

for collection, storage and analytical processing of the information about the situation in the economic, social and ecological areas.

Expected results

DIACs created in Eurasian countries are intended to operate in the common methodological and technological environment, developed on a fundamental mathematical basis with application of the Bayes integrating technologies for systems of monitoring, audit, support of decision-making and formation of hypotheses in complicated information conditions. DIAC intellectual technologies allow to carry out analytical processing of available information with subsequent identification of risk factors in various spheres of economic activities and development of recommendations for working out an optimal strategy of the state and commercial organizations in the economic, social and ecological areas.

The information-analytical system also represents an opportunity to audit the internal normative documents of states-members of Eurasia for conformity to world legal standards. For the DIAC network to be used at the microeconomic level it will include components designed for creation and development of the control systems for quality and carry out of all kinds of internal audit (quality, personnel, ecological, power, financial) at the Eurasian enterprises, which would allow to support the preparation of enterprises for certification in conformity with international standards: ISO 9000:2000, ISO 14000 and branch options of the specified standards.

With a view to integrating the information and intellectual resources it is expedient to open a centre at Lake Issyk-Kul under the aegis of UNESCO as the base of intellectual resources of the Eurasian countries. The programme of developing the centre as the base point of inter-ethnic, intellectual cooperation and as a leading centre of the created network will be considered at the Summit of Heads of the Eurasian States in June 2004.

We propose to consider the creation of the following distributed information-analytical system of intellectual centers of development , to serveas the basic result of the project of creating a common information space of Eurasia:

the complex distributed information base on resources of Eurasia, and also related components of the ecosystem for the countries of Central Asia and region as a whole;

the integrated base of normative-legal and normative-methodical (national and international) documents in the form of electronic libraries for the Eurasian region;

systems of support of making administrative decisions for management of the realization of projects and programmes, their interrelation and the control of performance in the countries and region as a whole;

systems of cadastres, monitoring and audit of natural, industrial and social resources of Eurasia;

control systems of industrial entities, power and product lines, transportation highways on the basis of the international standards, certification of industrial and territorial systems, power, ecological and economic audit for the specified resources of the countries, determination of the dynamics and trends of development of conditions and situations for water resource entities, water use and power;

organizations of Eurasian scientific cooperation, formation and development of scientific schools and training of scientific experts;

distance training and transfer of knowledge.

Practical significance

The data atests that for the last years the sphere of communication technologies has been rapidly developing in the Central Asia and continues to develop. It gives an opportunity to Central Asian countries to advance to a qualitatively new level of use of information technologies - use of intellectual systems of expert evaluation and automatic adoption of decisions in all areas of management which are not yet popular in the republics. The advanced intellectual information resources are necessary for the solution of primary tasks. The creation of a common information space of Eurasia (for example, on the basis of above-stated "pilot project" in Central Asian countries, the Russian and Ukrainian centers of intellectual technologies) will allow to solve tasks of management of risks and to make use of the potential of the countries of the region to integrate the results of the work of the system, its information and computing resources to address a wide range of essential issues of economy, policy and protection of the environment for Central Asian countries.

The actual task of a dialogue of civilizations is to integrate and rationally use the information and intellectual resources of the Eurasian countries.

Significant scientific researches have been executed in the Eurasian region, however the results are not summarized and not accessible to the wide public to help them in making administrative decisions.

It is necessary to organize the collection, processing and transfer of the information, accumulated knowledge, scientific and a cultural heritage of the Eurasian countries.

In this respect it is reasonable to create a Eurasian network of the information and analytical centers on the basis of information resources and systems created within the framework of the international projects, for example, the project the Special UN Programme of Economy of Central Asian Countries for management of water and power resources of the Central Asian countries.

Besides it is expedient to create a new information-analytical centre at the Lake Issyk-Kul as an international interdisciplinary centre for protection and sustainable development of the ecosystem of the unique water object and for the ecosystem of the Eurasian region as a whole.

To continue working with UNESCO on the creation of an institute or centre under the auspices of UNESCO, (Category 2).

To create a working group of experts on the creation and staffing of the centre at the Lake Issyk-Kul in the form of a "Network of Excellence".

Muslim Religious and Social Organizations in Russia as a Factor of Stability and Social Consent

Haris Ahmedovich Saubyanov

Head of the of Council Office of Muftis of Russia

Let me on behalf of the Council of Muftis of Russia, its Chairman, Sheikh Mufti, Ravil Gainutdin and Russian Muslims to sincerely greet you with traditional Muslim greeting: "As-?s-Salyamu Aleykum va Rahmatu l-Lahi va Barakatuhu" and to express the gratitude to the organizers of this Forum for hospitality and kind reception on the ancient, blessed and eternally young land of Kyrgyzstan, as well as for the opportunity given to the Council of Muftis of Russia to take part in consideration of such important issue, like "Eurasia in XXI century – Dialogue among Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations?", and also for the opportunity to share with you problems that make the Moslem Clergy and Russian Muslims to worry. And evidently they have similar cause for concern like most of us do: prosperity, well-being, peace and consent between nations and confessions.

It is pleasant to note, that leaders of the region's States, outstanding political and public figures, clergymen, representatives of scientific intelligentsia, culture and mass media are being involved in the work of Forum. All of that demonstrate considerable interest of the world community, the CIS countries and Russia in issues of interaction of civilizations and cultures.

Today a great deal was said about confrontation of civilizations, attempting to oppose Islamic and Christian civilizations. In fact, there is no political confrontation between traditional monotheistic religions: Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism. Confrontation emerges between traditional religious morale of the East, to our point of view a bearer of which is Islam and a cult of materialistic permissiveness, whose ideolog is modern Western liberalism. But Islam is not against human rights and freedoms, as it is not infrequently being blamed by anti-Islamists, it is just against moral human decomposition, an intrinsic decrease of population

and death from drugs, AIDS and other negative expression of the free world. Islam brought to the world the study on equality and brotherhood of all people and nations, the study on human rights to free choice of religion, the study on agreement – as the highest form of peace co-existence between people and nations, representing various faiths and views.

All of that was reality during several centuries of the Khalifat prosperity, while   in Europe hundred thousand of dissidents were on fire.

Indeed, modern life of Russian society and Russian Muslim organizations is apprehensive and alert with hopes, difficulties and contradictions. As you aware, troublesome developments are taking place in the world.

It is well known that complex processes of economic and social refinement, spiritual renewal are taking place in the Russian Federation. In this connection it is pleasant to note the significant event in spiritual and religious life of Russian Muslims – the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Central Muslim Temple of Russia Moscow Jami – by Muslims of the Russian capital. We can confidently state that during 14 centuries of existence of Islam in Russia we didn't have any equivalent event of such scale. Historically, it is the first time when Muslims' joy is shared with the head of the state – the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin – other leaders of states and cities, respected muftis of the Russian regions, representatives of Muslim organizations from a number of CIS and far-abroad countries, regular believers who took part in the event. The delegation of Muslims from the Kyrgyz Republic, headed by Azreti mufti of Kyrgyzstan Muslims, Muradali Adji Djumanov participated there as well. In the course of the event the Council of Muftis of Russia and the Clerical Department of Muslims of Kyrgyzstan signed an agreement on cooperation. This Agreement has never had an analogue for whole history of developing Islam and relationship of Muslim religious organizations in Russia. This created new positive trends in brotherly relationships among Muslims of Russia and Kyrgyzstan.

"Oh people! We created you as men and women, as nations and tribes to recognize each other. Indeed the one who is the most devout in front of Allah is the one who is the most godfearing." (Koran, 49:13).

When nations cognize each other – it makes them not only comprehensively wealthy but builds a sense of respect to national peculiarities of both their own ethnic cultures and traditions of other nations, promoting their contiguity for the sake of triumph of humanistic purposes and ideas. ??? encourages nations, including Muslim ones to

respect human rights and inter-confessional tolerance, but not to invoke armed conflicts, which at times are being artificially provoked by certain set of people, as a result of religious or ethnic distinctions, and are performed as if "for the sake of religion", we, Muslims of Russia, oppose extremism and terrorism, as this phenomenon is alien to our religion and we are opposed to penetration of alien movements and trends, particularly those manifested as extremist, creating hostility between confessions and nations. In this connection, the Council of Russian Muftis initiated to issue a Fatwa "On inadmissibility of justification of extremism and terrorism by the rules of Alcoran and Sunna", approved by a solid vote and leader while developing the base document – "Basic regulations of the social programme of Russian Muslims", where basic moments of relations between Muslims and secular state are reflected. The rules of our religion are particularly actual in nowadays, when intolerance, enmity, xenophobia, aggressive nationalism, religious extremism are prevailing in the world. The Prophet Mohamed (Peace be upon him and Allah's blessing!) said, "The one who calls to intolerance, fights being encouraged by intolerance and those who died in his intolerance do not belong to us".

I am sure, that the organizers of the International Forum have determined the same objectives and tasks as the main focus, directed first of all at developing peaceful constructive dialogue of representatives of religious and cultures, as well as for preserving spiritual and cultural diversity of multi-polar world community, for developing the culture of mutual respect and neighbourliness. It evokes our (Russian Muslims') highest benevolence, since the Most High said to His blessed Prophet, "If your Lord would wish, then every single one in the world would come to believe. But, will you really compel people to become faithful?" (Koran, 10:99)

As it is well known, the Islam In Russia has Eurasian character. Muslims of the Russian Federation being the part of Muslim world, consider themselves as bearers of Western and Eastern civilizations. They were brought up in the spirit of two cultures, and regenerated devotion to spiritual wealth, that imply sense of deep respect to a life in general and to innate dignity of each person, and his right to a life free of violence. Some mass media, including Russian ones, distort the notion of Islam and Muslims, artificially linking the word "Islamic" with terrorists. The society scares Islamic revival, as if it embodies a threat for the non-Muslim world. In this connection, I want to note the wise words of the President of the Islamic Republic Iran, Mohammad Khatami, who said as early as 1997, "A return to common a Islamic home doesn't mean moving back, denial of

scientific achievements, retreat from the modern world and aiming at conflict with other nations. On the contrary, only after such a return to our common identity will we be able to live in peace and tranquility with other nations and states. It is possible to ensure life and peace in practice, only if everyone entirely understands not only the culture and way of thinking of others but also their traditions, custom and anxieties".

I want separately dwell on activity of domestic Muslim organizations aimed at strengthening national security and cooperation with military-force structures. In the late twentieth, early twenty-first centuries, terrorism was determined as the sorest problem, representing comparatively new challenge to the whole mankind. Terrorism implies vast demolitions, loss of life, cruelty and inanity, compelling the world community to consolidate efforts to combat against it. I want to note that protection of the motherland, state interests and the care for its security – is the most important Muslim duty to in front of the Most High. The Prophet Mohammad, Allah blesses and greats Him, said: "Love of Motherland – is part of your faith". That is why in homilies and fatwas Islamic leaders paid and are paying big attention to patriotic upbringing of their faithful nationals, their willingness to protect theur own Motherland, security of native land at any historical periods, independently on a form and character of political structure of a country. Like under the Golden Horde, Moscow reign, Russian Empire and USSR, the Muslims remain patriots of their motherland.

At present we are standing by the crucial milestone of the mankind history, that requires intense moral and spiritual guidance for determination of new trend for developing the World (Moslem) society. The future of the mankind is in unity of diversity, in peace relations and co-existence of various cultures and civilizations, and we are all responsible for that: state leaders, public figures, religious and clerical leaders and ordinary citizens of our countries. Our task – is to strengthen the unity, unify nations of our countries, independently on their national and religious belongings for the sake of triumph of Peace and Justice, as predetermined in the Alkoran " And this is my straight path; follow this way not other ones, in order not to be detached from His way. This is His will - possibly you will be godferaing!" (6:154-153).

A New Age of Regional Cooperation in Central Asia?

S. Frederick Starr

Chairman, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, United States of America

"Nation building" is again in the air, not only because of developments in Afghanistan and Iraq but because the collapse of the USSR overnight created fifteen new states. Five of these—Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan— lie at the heart of the Eurasian land mass. Along with neighbouring Afghanistan, China's Muslim borderland of Xinjiang, and Azerbaijan, they might be called, in the words of Owen Lattimore, "the pivot of Asia."

What is the record to date of nation-building in this strategic region? The task is immense, and made more difficult by the relatively small size and physical isolation of the individual economies. These can be overcome only by taking advantage of complementarities within the region and with powerful neighbouring economies. Which poses a second question: will Central Asians base their future on zero-sum thinking or on regional collaboration? This paper assesses progress to date in this crucial area. It will conclude that a new era of regional cooperation may be dawning.

Getting to yes

The collapse of the USSR released the peoples Central Asia to assume their place in the world. At first, the newly- formed states seemed dazed by independence. Some appeared immobilized; others acted decisively but then seemed to qualify their reforms. All felt insecure.

The largest and smallest, Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic, undertook bold, western-style reforms, but then partially undermined them with countermeasures that are only now being re-examined. Uzbekistan opted for gradualism and the preservation of tax collection and other key state functions. Turkmenistan sought to found its new state on

what appeared to be ancient tribal principles. Tajikistan fell into a bloody civil war. And across the Caspian, Azerbaijan struggled to grapple with the loss of a fifth of its territory to a neighbour.

Ten years on, there are all too many signs of narrow nationalism, authoritarianism, lawlessness, corruption, weak civil societies, and poverty. One major western paper went so far as to characterize the region as a zone of both totalitarianism and failed states, while a leading think tank argues that human rights abuses were turning the region into a tinderbox, ready to explode with Islamist wrath.

The trouble with these assertions is not that they are wrong, but that they are incomplete and hence distorted. They underestimate recent progress, and also the travails that post-colonial states everywhere undergo. Comparisons with post-colonial Latin America or Africa would produce far more favourable assessments. They are blind also to the extent to which most of the features they decry were fully developed during Soviet times. Suffice it to recall that back in the 1980s poverty and miserable health services in the Ferghana valley drove scores of desperate women to the ultimate act of self-immolation.

Moreover, these grim assessments are static. They all began as snap-shots taken in the early- and mid-1990s, before renewal took hold. Rather than take a fresh shot, analysts reprint the old picture, adding only a few touch-ups. Thanks to this process, they ignore important indicators that reveal greater dynamism. Finally, they do not proceed from an adequate recognition of Central Asia's assets. In fact, these assets are so significant and complementary as to warrant the conclusion that the region as a whole, under the right policies, is a strong candidate for outstanding economic and social development in the coming years.

Central Asia's abundant resources

It is no secret that the Caspian region contains about 4% of the world's known oil reserves and possibly still more of its gas. Far smaller than Saudi Arabia's or Russia's, these reserves are nonetheless sufficient to jump-start the regional economies. Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan are already benefiting from them, and have set up trust funds modelled on Norway's in order to channel profits into education and development.

Less well known are the region's other mineral resources, such as gold, zinc, uranium, and molybdenum, which abound in the petro-poor mountain states. Glaciers atop these same mountain ranges release water, which turn the down-stream deserts into blossoming oases and provide

vast hydroelectric potential. Though often a source of conflict, water resources can equally foster cooperation, as has occurred throughout most of the region's history.

Central Asia is the world's second largest producer of cotton, and also one of the most fertile zones anywhere for fruits and vegetables; until a generation ago Afghanistan was the world's largest exporter of dried fruits. But crude Soviet irrigation systems caused salinization and water logging on a third of all arable land in the Aral Sea basin. Also, Soviet planners, eager to forestall economic separatism, deliberately placed plants for processing agricultural produce elsewhere. Recent investments in transportation and processing facilities are only now beginning to change this.

Any fair enumeration of the region's assets must give pride of place to its human resources. To be sure, poverty is a stubborn problem in all countries. In terms of GDP per capita the former Soviet states range from 104th (Kazakhstan) to 197th (Tajikistan), out of a total of 231 countries. Unemployment is high in all the non-petro states, reaching 30% in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and far higher in Afghanistan. Everywhere the worst poverty is concentrated in remote mountain zones and border areas.

These figures place the region's people squarely among the world's poor. Birth rates remain high, with fully 28% of the population under seventeen years of age. And both infant and maternal mortality are higher than in China, Indonesia, Thailand, or the Philippines. Tuberculosis, hepatitis, and brucellosis made inroads during the 1990s, yet remain low by comparison with the rest of Asia.

Indeed, in spite of poverty, the overall health of the peoples of Central Asia is comparable to those in the more advanced developing countries.

A dramatic exception is the explosion of HIV-AIDS, especially among the Turkic and Muslim peoples of neighbouring Xinjiang. Unless checked, this poses a mortal demographic threat to the Uyghurs and Kazakhs of that part of Central Asia under Chinese rule.

Of immense importance for the future is the fact that overall population growth is now under control everywhere except in Afghanistan. The so-called "demographic transition" from high birth-high death rates to low birth and low death rates is well-advanced across Central Asia. Maternal mortality, for example, is now dropping. Indeed, the rate of decline of population growth across Central Asia is steeper there than anywhere else in Asia, including China, with its one-child policy. Population growth will continue for another generation but Central Asian

economies will not have to "run fast just to keep up." This means that future GDP gains will translate more quickly into improvements in people's lives, and hence into social stability.

In no area are Central Asia's human resources more strikingly in advance of countries with comparable GDP levels than in education. Soviet policies assured that literacy is nearly universal and it remains so today. Also, the population is numerate: one can present issues to small farmers and tradesmen in quantitative terms and expect to be understood.

Both enrollment and completion rates at all levels of education remain among the highest in Asia. Female participation in education at all levels places Central Asia at the forefront of the developing world and well in advance of nearly all other Muslim societies. Poverty and the growing polarization of incomes are as yet only marginally reflected in school and university attendance, except in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Access to education among people of all incomes is far higher than in China, India, Thailand, and the Philippines. Overall, key indicators of educational attainment place Central Asian countries solidly in the first world. Only Afghanistan and Xinjiang lag behind.

Whatever their resources, governments across Central Asia continue to invest in education. Uzbekistan, for example, devotes a larger portion of its budget to education than does Russia. However, the expansion of the market economy threatens to decimate the ranks of teachers and university professors, especially in the wealthier countries. Another shortcoming of Central Asian education is in work-related competencies. Practical modern skills remain in short supply. Millions of older men and women must be retrained if they are to compete successfully with professionals in other modern economies and if they are to benefit from the global division of labour. Time will help solve this problem, but the short-term cost in diminished productivity must be addressed.

Poor governance everywhere threatens the delivery of education and social services. This problem is especially serious at local levels, where under-trained and under-paid personnel kept over from the Communist era readily succumb to corruption. This leads to widespread discontent that compromises the credibility and even the legitimacy of governments.

Thus, while Central Asia's educational successes remain intact, they face threats from every side, including slippages in gender equality. The only way to stabilize the situation is through deep and painful restructuring, which will require external assistance to smooth the transition. Afghanistan, where some 4,000 schools are being rebuilt, shows what dramatic improvements are possible with focused interventions.

Distance: Central Asia's curse

Under normal circumstances, Central Asia's natural and human resources would combine in a kind of chemical reaction to create wealth. But in this region circumstances are far from normal. Nowhere are there more landlocked, and even double-landlocked, countries. Nowhere are distances greater to surrounding ports and centres of industry and trade.

These brute realities impose on the region's economic life a kind of "distance tariff." Transport costs drive up the price of all goods moving in or out of Central Asia, retarding the development of the national economies of the region as a whole.

These costs are driven up further by the inadequacies of the inherited infrastructure, especially in the energy, water, and transportation sectors. The USSR built excellent railroads, but largely refused to link Central Asia directly with the broader world, except through Moscow. Only one line ran East to China and none to the Indian sub-continent or to Iran and the Middle East.

The region's chief commodities—oil and cotton—were also exported inefficiently through Russia. Another major resource, hydroelectric energy, was scarcely exported at all. Intra-regional trade was also discouraged for fear that it might foster solidarity among the Turkic peoples at the expense of their ties with the Slavic North. The entire infrastructure was designed for an autarkic economy based on heavy industry and failed to anticipate the needs of an emerging internationalised service sector.

Meanwhile, Central Asians' age-old skills in dealing with distant markets fell into disuse. After independence each of the new countries imposed its own visa regimes, border controls, and protective tariffs. Such measures increased the "distance tariff," reduced access to foreign entrepots, and threw each country back on its meager domestic market. Regional trade all but evaporated.

Marco Polo's single visa

When Marco Polo traveled across Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan to China in the fourteenth century he did so with a single document and without facing any customs inspectors. The Mongols' bloody conquest drew the entire area between Europe, the Middle East, China and India into a single loose empire. This generated a last burst of continental trade along the so-called Silk Road. This boom continued until political fragmentation, rent-seeking tariffs, and the invention of improved sailing ships destroyed the region's competitive advantage. The ensuing centuries, during which

Central Asia rotted as a backwater, attest to the harsh economic punishment that high "distance tariffs" can inflict.

The keys to economic and social renewal in Central Asia lie in the improvement of infrastructures and reduction of governmentally imposed constraints on region-wide trade. This is the obvious conclusion that can be drawn from efforts to expand regional and continental trade elsewhere. The European Union arose from efforts to remove impediments to the movement of coal among the founding states. The six countries of MERCOSUR and the Community of Andean Nations in South America, NAFTA, and similar regional arrangements elsewhere, all seek this same objective, as do WTO and other international trade bodies.

Why are the Central Asian states not already at the forefront of the worldwide movement to develop transportation, remove constraints to trade, and foster economic cooperation? It is too facile to say, as some do, that the reason is because a number of governments in the region "just don't get it." For the history of the past ten years presents an impressive array of initiatives to promote these objectives.

Barely were the new states established than the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan (later joined by Tajikistan) formed the "Central Asia Union," which evolved into the Central Asia Cooperation Organization (CACO). Shortly thereafter, Uzbekistan got all five states to declare the region a "nuclear free zone." Kazakhstan, meanwhile, organized periodic meetings "On Confidence Building Measures in Asia" that brought together officials from all Asian countries. Russia created the Commonwealth of Independent States, and then the Eurasia Economic Community.

At the same time the dormant Economic Cooperation Organization (Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey) revived and expanded its membership to include all the new Central Asian states. Turkey, meanwhile, organized periodic meetings and joint projects among countries where Turkic languages are spoken, and a consultative group (GUAM, then briefly GUUAM) linked Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan with Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova. China entered this busy field by spearheading the Shanghai Cooperation Council, while both China and the Kyrgyz Republic succeeded in gaining admission to the World Trade Organization.

All the main international banks and donor organizations advocate a regional rather than purely national approach to Central Asia. The World Bank's Aral Sea Programme and the Asian Development Bank's Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) initiative are typical. The US Agency for Internal Development (USAID) and similar entities in Britain,

Canada, Japan, Switzerland, and Germany all stress trans-national cooperation as the basis for their extensive projects.

Notwithstanding these efforts, regional economic cooperation long remained stalled. There were shortcomings in the international efforts, to be sure, but the deeper cause of this failure during the 1990s and down to the present is the fact that all the regional states face internal and international challenges that have caused them to downgrade the importance of regionalism as a policy goal. Until these are resolved, dreams of reviving Marco Polo's tariff-free world will remain just that.

Pulling apart: the countervailing forces

Since George Washington, leaders of post-colonial governments have been preoccupied with the need to protect their sovereignty and build security. Acutely conscious of their own weakness, Central Asian leaders feared that Russia might reassert control over them. Down to the fall of the Taliban, Afghanistan posed even more ominous threats. Clandestine groups in every country in the region fomented religious extremism and engaged in drug trafficking, often together.

To most dangers the new leaders responded defensively, turning inward. When compelled to enter into foreign commitments they preferred bilateral ties that could be played off against each other, rather than multi-lateral arrangements.

Meanwhile, long-suppressed cultural differences began to re-emerge. The Tajiks' Persian culture contrasts sharply with that of their Turkic neighbours. Formerly nomadic peoples like the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and Turkmen, have different approaches to hierarchy, the resolution of disputes, and negotiating than the urbanized oasis dwellers, the Uzbeks, Uyghurs, Azeris, and Tajiks. Mountain dwellers focus on subsistence while the swelling ranks of urbanites are already wrestling with the forces of globalization. Even the dominant religion, Islam, has a different character among the former nomads, who were Islamized late and incompletely, than among those inhabiting the ancient centres of the faith on the region's oases. The Soviet system suppressed all these differences but sovereignty enhanced them, at least in the short run.

Given this, it is no surprise that the new states would choose different strategies of development, ranging from Uzbekistan's statism to the Kyrgyz Republic's bold demarche to the WTO. The other states ranged along the continuum defined by these poles. As countries pulled apart, regional trade declined.

There were others reasons for this as well. The fact that neither intra-regional borders nor those with neighbouring states had been delineated all but guaranteed that border tensions would rise, to the detriment of trade. Finally, many in the region feared that large economies nearby, especially China, would swamp Central Asia with cheap goods and destroy local industries.

Over the first decade of independence these centrifugal forces neutralized the benefits that might have come from promoting regional cooperation and trade. Paradoxically, one of the strongest assertions of a regional approach came from the radical Islamists, with their dream of a single Muslim community, or umma. But theirs is a backward-looking vision, out of step with the demands of open societies and market economies.

What has changed?

All trends eventually reach their apogee and then fade. As the new states of Central Asia enter their second decade, is there any reason to think that the forces that caused them to turn their backs on one another have peaked, and that a new era of greater cooperation might be dawning?

A mounting body of evidence suggests that this is indeed the case. The isolationist phase of national consolidation is now waning, while more cooperative and integrative trends are making themselves felt across Central Asia. Six instances of this new development can be cited.

First, the American destruction of the Taliban regime and crippling of Al Quada removed the single biggest source of regional instability. True, radical Islamists still make probes in all countries of the region, including Afghanistan and China's Xinjiang, but the regional governments are much better equipped than formerly to deal with them. And while drug trafficking has increased, this is due as much to the insatiable demand for drugs in the West as to circumstances within Central Asia.

Second, in spite of dire prognosis, all the new states have survived intact. The civil war in Tajikistan ended; the Ferghana valley did not fall prey to widely- predicted ethnic conflict; and Russia, notwithstanding a general heavy-handedness, has respected the new sovereignties.

Third, the process of reform in every country has advanced to the point that the general character of each state is now formed. Each government now accepts that it must deal with its neighbours as they are, and not as it would like them to be. This new realism, arising among peoples who over the centuries honed their trade-bred skills at deal

making, is already generating a practical thrust to regional transactions that was lacking earlier.

Fourth, the task of delineating the region's external borders is nearly complete. The borders of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan with China have been fixed, as has Kazakhstan's long border with Russia, and Turkmenistan's with Iran. While many intra-state borders in the region are still being delineated, long sections of the sensitive Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan border are settled, and others soon will be. As this happens, regional comity will revive.

Fifth, heady new prospects have been opened for trade in every direction, challenging regional governments to adopt policies that will enable them to benefit from them. Crucial among them are the opening of the former borders of the USSR to the South and East, enabling Central Asia to become the main truck route between the Urals and West Siberia and Iran and India, as well as between Europe and China.

These developments fall short of a full embrace of regional cooperation and trade, but they mark an important shift of priorities. A decade ago regionalism was an idealistic affirmation that seemed incompatible with the need to confirm new sovereignties and provide for basic security. Today it is coming to be seen as a necessary complement to sovereignty and a tool for enhancing security through trade-driven prosperity.

Steps forward: economic

Many concede that Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan are experiencing a new prosperity, but attribute it solely to the sale of oil and gas. Never mind that Russia's economy, also buoyed by high prices for hydrocarbons, is not doing as well as Kazakhstan's, or that Azerbaijan is moving forward despite the need to care for 800,000 citizens displaced by the Armenian occupation of several of its provinces.

Outside the energy sector, some observers see Central Asia only in terms of developmental failures. This view is wrong, even though the initial post-Soviet collapse was real and demoralizing. By 1994, however, the economies of Central Asia began to recover, and by 1998 a new period of growth began that continues to the present. Today the economies of the broader Central Asia region are expanding at rates that are comparable to those of the most dynamic economies of Asia. The fact that GDP growth among states not exporting oil is projected at 4-5% annually indicates that the overall expansion is not simply the result of high oil prices.

Uzbekistan may have fallen to last place in the region, but its 4.4% annual rate (2003) is still respectable by any measure. Growth in other countries range from 5% in the Kyrgyz Republic, 8% in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, and 17% in Turkmenistan. The average annual growth for the entire region over the past five years was 8.4%, as compared to Russia's 5.9%. In neighbouring Xinjiang the rate has been far higher still, making it the most prosperous of all China's inland provinces.

Nor has this been achieved by incurring unsustainable budget deficits. Kyrgyzstan's shortfall still exceeds 5% of its budget and Azerbaijan's is 2%, but Tajikistan's is only .2%, Turkmenistan's budget is balanced, and Uzbekistan's runs a surplus. Heavy borrowing by Tajikistan following the end of its civil war and by the Kyrgyz Republic after the collapse of its military-industrial firms created burdens for the future, but otherwise macroeconomic stability is the order of the day, even in Afghanistan, where a new currency has been successfully introduced. Inflation has fallen to reasonable levels everywhere except in Uzbekistan, and even there the target is down from 27% in 2002 to 18% today.

This is not to say that all is well. Unemployment remains at nearly 30% in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, income distribution everywhere is becoming polarized (although far less so than in Russia), and the millions living in poverty have yet to benefit from the overall growth. Turkmenistan's heavy subsidies to consumers disguise poverty there, but without eliminating it. Yet both the direction and rate of change in the region are now so positive that the question is no longer how to create growth but how to sustain and expand it, and how to spread its benefits throughout the population.

• The following are among the most critical concerns for the years ahead:

• Full convertibility of the local currency remains an issue in Turkmenistan and, to a lesser extent, Uzbekistan. Central banks are everywhere functioning and attracting bright young western-trained economists, but exchange rates are yet to be set in an atmosphere of transparency, leaving the door open to bureaucratic manipulation.

• Except in Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic, privatization remains a work in progress. Kyrgyzstan was the first country in the former USSR to privatize land and Kazakhstan is following suit. But the other countries are stuck in the half-way house of long-term leases for both land and larger industries. The absence everywhere

of mortgage systems means that owners of private property cannot make their asset work for them.

- Taxes remain onerous, in Uzbejkistan, for example, claiming up to 27% of the gross revenues of small and medium sized businesses. Overall tax burdens range from 22% to 39% of GDP, although Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are all working to lower the figure.

- Once taxes are reduced and rationalized, they must be collected. With the partial exception of Uzbekistan, no government in the region can claim an effective system for collecting taxes. Absent that, tax avoidance will remain a widely practiced art, to the detriment of all state functions, including health and education.

- Banking remains undeveloped everywhere except in Kazakhstan. Branches of foreign banks partially fill the gap, but do not provide the credit that small and medium-sized firms need in order to develop. The absence of region-wide banking retards the implementation of otherwise promising projects.

- Uzbekistan has built a handsome stock exchange but few firms are listed there, and the situation is only marginally better elsewhere. Securities markets require laws, enforcement mechanisms, and sophisticated information systems. Until these are in place, capital flows will follow inefficient bureaucratic orders rather than the laws of the marketplace, while small and medium sized businesses will remain undercapitalized.

- Existing infrastructure still reflects the political priorities of the old Soviet State Planning Agency (Gosplan) rather than the market. So great are the region's needs in this area, and so dramatic the likely effects of improvement, that this should be a main priority for international investment.

Steps forward: political and institutional

It is easier to level the (justified) charge that authoritarian rule and cronyism prevails throughout Central Asia than to explain why this is so. The fact that post-colonial governments in Asia, Africa, and South America exhibited the same tendency provides a hint. In each case the collapse of the old authority destroyed mechanisms for balancing the interests of regions, clans, and patronage systems. Strong presidents arose by default to fill this role. They see their choice as between using the old patronage systems or being defeated by them.

But why the harshness that often characterizes the new governments in the former USSR, and their casual notions of human rights? Again, a historical note is in order. The Soviet system died from the head down. Politburos faded away, but local and regional structures of the old Ministry of Internal Affairs (including police) persisted. Even when new leaders champion reform, unregenerate local bureaucrats can easily neutralize their efforts. The fact that international assistance programmes often belittle these people or ignore them entirely makes them dig in their heels all the more stubbornly.

Will this authoritarianism prove a passing phase or will it become permanent? Pessimists insist that it accords well with local cultural traditions. They argue that oasis cultures were always hierarchical, and dominated by a hereditary Emir who controlled the water distribution system.

But this fatalism ignores a number of positive forces at work in Central Asia today. For example, with the exception of Turkmenistan, the new constitutions all limit presidential terms and call for elections thereafter. A president may resort to machinations to extend his term, but local and international opinion exerts growing pressure for periodic changes at the top through transparent elections. Scepticism is warranted, but it is too early to conclude that this won't eventually happen in Central Asia.

Meanwhile, parliaments may be ineffectual but they exist nonetheless, as do political parties. In Uzbekistan, for example, the four legally registered parties all began life as creations of the state, to the exclusion of other non-registered parties that had arisen through more normal processes. Yet over time each of the four registered parties has come to focus on specific issues that appeal to particular segments of the electorate. Several have established contact with European parties with similar programmes.

Elected officeholders play almost no role in major decisions in Central Asia. But evolutionary processes already at work in nearly every country could transform the situation over time. In short, what may have begun as a charade can readily evolve into systems allowing genuine participation.

Other positive developments warrant notice. In every country the rump armies inherited from the totalitarian Soviet state are now feeling the effects of reforms more appropriate to open societies. The private sector is expanding, and with fewer of the oligarchs who dominate the scene in Russia and Ukraine. This fosters the psychology of a civil society, even

when the legal rights of voluntary associations remain limited. And the combination of freer travel and improved access to information breaks down autarkic thinking. As all this occurs, subjects are gradually coming to see themselves as citizens.

Whatever the longer-term potential of these developments, centralization of decision-making in a few senior officials remains the order of the day across Central Asia. How, then, to evaluate the prospects for change? Three issues bear close watch:

First, transparency. Foreign businessmen operating in Central Asia expect to devote up to 6% of their total costs to "off-the-books" payments to local officials. The fact that corruption often falls with the growth of national wealth may augur well for the longer-term but does not help the situation today. For this to happen, national governments will have to welcome press coverage of corrupt practices and push the courts to prosecute bribery when it occurs.

Second, clientage and patronage. Old patronage systems will prevail until effective and open practices of election, appointment, and remuneration are firmly established. Transparency is essential for this, but the core problem is the weakness of elective parliaments and the lack of oversight in the civil administrations.

Third, civil service reform. Across Central Asia there are too many officials receiving too little pay. In several countries the number of civil servants has actually increased since independence. Because their pay is pitifully inadequate, they engage in rent-seeking and vent their frustrations by violating the civil rights of citizens. This will continue until the number of civil servants is reduced, the pay of those remaining is increased, and all gain access to training in the skills necessary for civil administrators in a democratic society.

Returning now to the question of whether authoritarianism, with its many trappings, is a passing phase or a permanent pathology. What, if any, are the grounds for optimism? This review has pointed to several mitigating factors that hold promise for the future. Beyond all these is the emergence of a new generation of men and women whose education has led them to expect fundamental change in the critical areas enumerated above.

All governments in the region have allowed or encouraged large numbers of their young people to study abroad, especially in Europe and North America. These returning students are already introducing expectations of "normalcy" with respect to participation, accountability, and transparency. Their impact can already felt, but time and patience are required for this process to come to fruition.

Steps forward: infrastructures, physical and institutional

The agenda for future cooperation in the critical area of infrastructure includes:

- Intra-regional road networks, especially those reaching isolated sub-regions and mountain zones;
- New roads and railroad lines to external markets to the East and South, especially those that will reach the rail and road head at Kashgar in Xinjiang, Pakistan's emerging new port at Gwador, and Iran's expanded ports at Bandar-e-Abbas and Chabahar;
- Intra-regional air links, not only connecting capitals but also linking oblast' centers with the capitals and with each other;
- Region-wide telecommunications systems. NATO's Silk Road Satellite project holds promise in this area but this and other systems must extend connectivity to rural districts and remote centers;
- Reconfigured energy systems and grids, which were designed to serve Soviet industrial needs and have for a decade suffered from massive underinvestment. These must also be extended to export electricity to China and South Asia;
- Improvement of water sharing and irrigation systems on a region-wide basis, which demands major expenditure if they are to become sustainable.

These measures will go far towards overcoming Central Asia's "distance tariff." None presents exceptional technical challenges. Together, they will promote income generation in impoverished sub-zones and in the region as a whole. So, one might ask, what could possibly retard the introduction of measures that hold such obvious promise for the region's sixty million people?

Clearly, these initiatives will require massive capital investments. Yet this prospect is less daunting than it may at first appear. Projects can be ranked in terms of their ability to generate a quick economic payoff. As those higher on the list reap benefits, investments in the remaining initiatives will grow more attractive.

The key to success lies in creating the necessary region-wide institutional arrangements. These in turn require a spirit of mutual trust and perceptions of common interests that was scarcely evident during the 1990s. But the process of institution building can itself become an instrument for fostering such trust. The challenge, then, is to raise the banner of regionalism and build the region-wide institutions and attitudes that will give it practical meaning.

This is vividly evident in the critical energy-water nexus. Downriver countries view water resources purely in terms of irrigation needs, while upriver countries see them mainly in terms of hydroelectric generation. Both are zero-sum calculations. Such archaic thinking thwarts serious investment in the region's non-hydrocarbon resources.

A framework agreement reached in 1998 demonstrated that region-wide cooperation is now possible. But the annually negotiated barter arrangements that the agreement put in place respond more to bureaucratic politics than to economic reality. To correct this, the Asian Development Bank has proposed a new regimen based on multi-year agreements separating irrigation and hydropower needs. A permanent hydropower-water working group could pursue this promising notion.

Similar institutional arrangements are needed to harmonize taxes and customs, the licensing of trans-national shippers, and regulations on trade, banking, border controls, and the settlement of disputes. None of this will happen without regular consultation among regional leaders at the presidential and ministerial levels. After an initial spurt of consultations after 1991, such activity fell into abeyance. Now it is beginning to revive.

New water and electricity management groups involving both upstream and downstream states are in place. Bi-lateral agreements on water between both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and China have resolved potentially serious conflicts along the Ili, Chui, and Talas rivers. The Central Asia Cooperation Organization (CACO) organizes regional consortia to design projects and mobilize external sources to pay for them. Given this, a summit of CACO states would be timely.

In addition to multi-lateral meetings organized by the countries themselves, the Asian Development Bank took the lead in convening Ministerial Conferences in 2002 and 2003. All regional states were represented as participants or observers, and senior officials from neighbouring states were present as well. The conferences affirmed that region-wide economic cooperation is the key to both national security and poverty reduction. Further, they adopted an agenda of projects in transportation, trade, and energy, and agreed to work together to mobilize the necessary international resources.

In a follow-on conference, representatives of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Iran adopted a common programme for the removal of barriers to region-wide roads transport. Further initiatives involve a feasibility study for a Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India oil pipeline, and the adoption of a European Union –sponsored programme for border management throughout the region.

Through its Central Asia Economic Cooperation Programme, the Asian Development Bank has set up expert groups and other region-wide collaborations to foster customs reform and improve related legal and physical infrastructures. Five region-wide meetings have already been held and others are scheduled. Meanwhile, intensive efforts focus on the development of a pan Central Asian transit system capable of competing effectively with other continental routes in an era of globalization.

In spite of this fruitful start, much remains to be done before the new sovereignties are enhanced by a framework of regional collaboration. For instance, restrictions of various sorts still inhibit the flow of news and information among the states of Central Asia. There exist no locally-controlled region-wide news services or even cooperative agreements among national services like Khabar (Kazakhstan) and Asia-Plus (Tajikistan).

Region-wide approaches are only now beginning in the field of education, where national laws on licensing and accreditation preserve educational autarky. However, the emergence of the Kyrgyzstan International University and the American University of Central Asia suggest a renewed interest in region-wide cooperation in education. More recently, the establishment of the University of Central Asia by the presidents of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and the Aga Khan promises to bring innovative approaches to the alleviation of poverty across the entire mountain zone of Central Asia.

Other spheres can also play a role in under-girding collaborative and region-wide approaches to development. Although some national athletic teams compete against one another, there no pan-Central Asian athletic leagues in any sport. Culture, especially popular culture, and the arts have similar potential, and also carry the possibility of reminding publics of the deeper commonalities that underlie national differences.

Conclusion

The combined gross domestic products of the six countries covered in this survey is $45 billion. Add to this the GDPs of Afghanistan and Xinjiang in China and the total is impressive by any measure. An annual growth overall rate of 5% for the next decade is reasonable and even likely.

These figures reflect market economies that are still in embryo, with few of the efficiencies created by competition and trade. With the exception of oil, gas, and gold, few investment decisions affecting the region have been taken with an eye to meeting world demand. Nonetheless, the data of the past few years suggests that the autarkic

thinking that characterized the first post-Soviet years has now peaked, and that the first steps towards the creation of an enlarged and economically significant "Central Asia" are already being taken.

Acknowledging this, will this region be able to compete effectively on a Eurasian land mass dominated by economic giants? The answer hinges on its success at neutralizing the negative effects of distance through the development of globally competitive transportation networks. It will also depend on Central Asians' ability to identify and exploit the complementarities that exist among regional states and thereby reach beyond limited local markets.

This in turn calls for political will of a sort that has been largely absent over the past decade but may finally be crystallizing. It is now generally understood that the most serious threats to Central Asia's security are all regional in character and can therefore only be addressed regionally To varying degrees, necessity is forcing the newly states to cooperate. The question is whether they will be as ready to work collaboratively in order to reap opportunities as to avoid disaster.

This survey suggests that such willingness may now exist. The old generation of leaders can take a degree of pride in having successfully guided their countries through their perilous first steps as sovereign states. True, along the way they have complicated and prolonged the process of transition. Yet they have also shown resourcefulness and tenacity in balancing and containing competing interests, with the result that the survival of these governments is no longer at issue.

Meanwhile, a new generation of politicians and business people is rapidly emerging onto the scene. Unlike their elders, they tend to perceive security above all in economic terms. Where their elders were mainly trained as engineers, Party workers, or Soviet planners, the new elite brings practical experience in finance, information technology, and administration. They think in terms of globalization and regional synergies rather than autarky. Far more secure than their elders, they will be the ones to lead the coming effervescence in regional trade and development.

But international assistance—including expertise and large-scale investment—will still be needed during the critical period that is now dawning. It will be important for the multi-lateral development banks and national assistance programmes to work closely with one another, and to listen ever more attentively to the concerns being expressed by the increasingly competent men and women who are gaining prominent posts in the region itself. The good news is that all this is actually beginning to happen.

Development Outcomes of Turkmenistan since Independence

Ivan M. Stanchin

Doctor of economic sciences,
National Institute of State Statistics and Information, Turkmenistan

Initial heritage. To estimate achievements of Turkmenistan, the scale and the importance could be done only on the basis of comparison with the initial period, an estimation of the heritage of the Soviet authorities. Turkmenistan, having huge natural wealth was not a proprietor of the wealth. Twelve years ago, yearly oil, gas, cotton, astrakhans and silk amounting to almost 15 billion US dollars were exported from Turkmenistan. However, neither people nor the country had become rich, and, on the contrary, they've become poorer. Natural resources were injuriously and irrationally used. Therefore the problem of Turkmen Priaral'e occurred and many other environmental problems which the country will have to heal for many years.

Having almost third world reserves of natural gas, Turkmenistan had the lowest level of gasification of populated areas. One out of two establishments of social sphere were huddled in un-adapted, non-standard, premises in emergency status. No investments were made for setting up the industries for processing local raw materials. Only 3 % of the harvested cotton was processed directly on a place, while the rest was exported from the country. Turkmenistan which has followed the road of independent development, had to start from almost nothing while making first steps on creation the national economy.

Bases of the statehood: For each citizen of Turkmenistan, 27 October 1991 is a special date. This day under the initiative of the architect of the Turkmen statehood and its First President S.A. Niyazov, the independence of Turkmenistan has been proclaimed. The thousand-year dream of Turkmen people came true. Twelve years that have passed from the date of declaration of independence is a short period of time from an historical perspective. However, during this period huge political, legal and social

and economic transformations happened in Turkmenistan, for which in other situation many decades would be required. In the country a situation of national consent is created serving as a basis of harmonious transformations in the society, dynamical development of all sides of a life, spiritual revival of people, national customs and traditions.

The important event in the life of people of Turkmenistan was the fact that on 12 December 1995 by resolution the United Nations on the recognition and support for the neutrality of Turkmenistan was adopted. These two days - 12 December, and the Day of Independence of Turkmenistan, 27 October - became national holidays of the Turkmen people.

During the years of independent development, political, legal and social and economic transformations promoted a strengthening of the sovereignty of Turkmenistan as well as recognition of the status of a permanent positive neutrality of Turkmenistan by the United Nations. Being guided by the requirements following from the status of the positive neutrality, the Government of Turkmenistan develops the foreign policy on the basis of unconditional observance of recommendations and resolutions of the United Nations, the international conventions and agreements, peace, friendly and equal relations with all countries, non-interference to internal affairs of other states, directs efforts for consolidation of the sovereignty.

In the governmental system remarkable national values are inherited from the historical past, such as the number of rich democratic traditions that are embodied in creation of the supreme representative body of people's power – Khalk Maslakhaty and other democratic governmental institutes in Turkmenistan.

In the area of foreign policy the state construction is carried out on the basis of target programmes of social and economic development and evolutionary transition to market economy, maintenance of high force of law, observance and maintenance of human rights and freedoms, improvement of life standards of people, social support of vulnerable groups of population.

Basic priorities of political development of Turkmenistan, ratified during the years of independence are the following: development of the national statehood, construction of democratic, based on rule of law and secular society, introduction of the policy of humanism, which recognizes personalities of people as a supreme value, maintenance of justice in the society, implementation of principles of peace-loving and good relations with neighbours, development of friendship and equal cooperation in

foreign relations as well as maintenance of peace and public order in the region.

Economic reforms: From the first days of independence Turkmenistan has started development of its own model of economic development. Distinctive features of the strategy of market transformations in Turkmenistan in transition period consist of evolutionary character of transition to market economy, the strong, balanced state policy and active role of the government in management of economic transformations and priorities of social protection of the population. The main perspective directions of economic reforms in the country have been precisely determined. They are based on overcoming orientation of economy on raw materials, development of market reforms, effective utilization of natural wealth, creation of favourable conditions for life, health and security of people, high-grade moral and physical development.

Implementation of economic reforms was carried out step by step according to the economic programme of " 10 Years of Stability ». Some areas of the large-scale ten years' programme of development of market economy in the country have received the detailed development in such target national programmes, as "Grain", « New village », "Education", "Health", « 1000 days » and others. Implementation of target programmes of economic development has provided finalization of the first stage of reforming of economy, has generated the positive public attitude to market transformations of the country and towards development of private property. The reliable base for the further intensive development of national economy and rational use of natural wealth of Turkmenistan has been created. At each stage the achieved results were verified with the proposed reference points of economic transformations. Priorities of each subsequent stage of development of economy were defined in a view of real conditions of its functioning. The main component of the economic reform strategy at all stages was social security of the population.

Macroeconomic policy: Within 1992-2003 the economy of Turkmenistan has been a subject to significant fluctuations. In many respects it has been connected with developed by the time of independence structure of production. Mainly agrarian specialization of a national economy at the initial stage of reforming has provided high share (40 %) of agriculture in the structure of GDP. Thus, cotton-oriented specialization was accompanied by the gap in food, cattle-breeding and forage industries. The share of the industrial production in gross domestic product was low (17 %) and more 80 % were the mining industries.

Deformation, irrationality of the structure of economy of Turkmenistan were demonstrated in the impossibility of the country to be self-supported in terms of finished goods, including food, and incompleteness of stages of production. Therefore more than 70 % of the needs of the country were provided on the account of import. This situation at the initial stage of economic development essentially limited practical implementation of the sovereignty of Turkmenistan and demanded deep structural reorganization of all national economy

During the years of independence the structure of gross domestic product has essentially changed. The share of production industry in gross domestic product in 2002 was 37 %, and percentages of processing industries in the added value of the industry has increased up to 48 %, including light industry and food production to 42 %.

The share of agriculture in the gross domestic product of Turkmenistan – GDP - decreased to 23 % in 2002. Thus the structure of agricultural production has radically changed. Importance of priority branch – cotton was preserved, and production of grain has been restored, bases for development of livestock breeding were set up. All the above has provided the food security of the country. At the present time more than 80 % of the needs of the population of Turkmenistan in food are satisfied due to domestic production.

In the GDP structure the greatest part also falls at the industry. In 2003 its share in GDP was 38,5 %, while the share of agriculture - 18 %, constructions – 8,1 %.

The economy of Turkmenistan has been traditionally focused on manufacture of material products. Percentage of services was low, which was an evidence of under-developed infrastructure of the country. Consistent structural policy of Turkmenistan promoted that, since 1997, percentage of the service industries, began to grow and has achieved 35 % in 2002.

The carried out by the government investment policy promoted active re-structuring of economy and formation of a high share of accumulation in gross domestic product. Since 1996 total accumulation of fixed assets in the structure of GDP averages to about 40 % while at the initial stage of reforms the percentage of investments in the GDP structure was about 20 %.

The growth of gross domestic product by 7 % has been marked in the national economy for the first time in 1998 given reduction of gas extraction and absence gas export. Over the past four years Turkmenistan has kept the first place in the world on growth rates of GDP.

High growth rates of gross domestic product promoted increase per capita income. Gross domestic product per capita across Turkmenistan was 6,299 US dollars in 2003 (on the parity of purchasing power).

It is necessary to note, that according to the qualifications of the economic systems used by the World Bank, Turkmenistan has been transferred from the group of countries with low income to the countries with average incomes.

The special place in formation of gross domestic product of Turkmenistan belongs to non-governmental sector which role in maintenance of the accelerated rates of development of economy grows. Today in Turkmenistan more than a half of the gross domestic product is created by non-governmental sector of economy. It is formed by high rates in agriculture, trade, and construction, in the area of services.

The industry: With a view of maintenance of economic independence of the country the industrial policy directed on development of new processing industries, creation of the manufactures which produce finished goods have been developed. Within the framework of processing sector development the focus is given to export-oriented and import-substituted industries as first priority.

High scale of a cotton resource has predetermined the leading role of cotton-processing complex in structural reorganization of the industry. For years of independent development in the country dozens of cotton processing enterprises were constructed and entered into operation. The total value of new textile manufactures makes more than 1 billion US dollars. The favourable climate created in Turkmenistan for foreign investors promoted attraction of external capital to the textile industry. The share of investments of the foreign companies in construction of textile manufactures is steadily kept at a level of 15-20 %.

The result of the efforts undertaken was the accelerated growth of facilities on processing of cotton, which now exceed a level of 1991 more than by 12 folds. In 2003 in comparison with 1992 the manufacture of cotton fabrics has increased by 3,5 folds, knitted products – by 2,6 folds, yarn cotton – by 12 folds, knitted cloth – more than by 5 folds. Escalating production of textile goods, high consumer qualities provide dynamical growth of textile export: in 1999-2003 its volume has increased by 2,8 folds. The share of textile production in total amount of export of the country reaches 10 %. The geography of export is also extending. Today the Turkmen textiles is exported to the consumers of more than 30 countries of the world, including such industrially advanced countries as the USA, Canada, the Great Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland, etc. Jeans fabrics

are exported from Turkmenistan to the country that is the native land of jeans – the United States of America.

Within the framework of implementation of the Programme « the Grain" priority sector import-substituting directions of industrial development of Turkmenistan are flour-grinding complexes and mix-fodder complexes. With participation of foreign firms the flour-grinding complexes with elevators have been constructed and entered into operation as well as facilities and warehouses for storage of grain, allowing to process and to keep all volume of a grain prepared in the country.

According to the governmental course on food independence of the country the significant number of projects on construction and modernization of the food producing enterprises has been implemented. These are – dairy factories, shops on processing meat, drying of fruit and vegetables, the enterprises on soft drinks and mineral water, manufacture of confectionery products and bakeries, a factory of children's food, mini-beer factories, etc. The degree of stability of the consumer market of the country has considerably raised, its dependence on the basic assortment of food products has decreased. In 2003 the share of production of own manufacture in total amount of retail food has made over 70 %.

During the years of independent development significant rates of growth have been generated in pharmaceutics, in manufacture of plastic products, etc.

As a result of the large-scale development of some branches of processing sector the dependence of national economy on the level of production in a fuel and energy complex has decreased. Today in the framework of the above complex 35 % of gross output of the industry of Turkmenistan is produced against 70 % in 1991. However high efficiency of foreign trade in energy carriers, and also growing needs of the real and social sectors of the country have dictated expediency to preserve priority positions for the fuel and energy complex in the economic growth of Turkmenistan. In 2003 the oil extraction has reached 10 million tons, gas – 60 billion cubic meters. Significant investments are used for development of its production capacity. In 1991-2003 lots of projects on escalating energy capacities and energy distributing infrastructures have been implemented, as well as the projects on search and arrangement of new oil deposits and processing capacities. Largest of them is reconstruction and modernization Turkmenbashi oil refining factory, amounting to 1,5 billion US dollars. Leading companies from the advanced European countries and Japan participated in implementation of the project. Introduction of progressive technologies has allowed to increase level of extraction of the

secondary fuel resources from crude oil, to master release of new kinds of mineral oil – non-polluting highly refined gasoline, lubricant oils. Alongside with it, manufacture of such product of oil-chemistry as polypropylene is organized. Traders from the countries of Europe, Northern America, East Asia, Japan act as buyers of mineral oil, which means that there is an active process of strengthening Turkmenistan positions in the external world markets of secondary hydrocarbons. In 2002 the German firm Tecknip has started construction of installation of the hydro clearing of fuel, which will lower the contents of sulphur in it by 150 folds – from 0,15 % to 0,01 %.

Project Tecknip means the beginning of the second stage of reconstruction of the Turkmenbashi oil-refining factory, one of the purposes of which is the increase capacity of processing about 6 million tons up to 10 million tons of oil per year. Another purpose is manufacture of the "light" mineral oil fully complying with the world standards of the European Union.

Annually growing volumes of export of energy carriers are serious economic base for structural reorganization of economy of Turkmenistan, growth of life standard of the population.

Agriculture: In agriculture the in-depth economic reforms are carried out, which have allowed cardinally to change the structure of manufacture and the attitude to property. Among the countries of the Central Asia region that are carrying out provided. According to the Constitution of the country, under the direct leadership of the President of Turkmenistan, the programme of land-water reform has been developed and is successfully carried out. Farmers and lessees of Turkmenistan use land and water free-of-charge do not pay taxes on livestock the government grants significant privileges for cultivation of wheat, cotton and rice. All the above eventually creates significant incentive of escalating the volumes of manufacturing agricultural products. During implementation of the programme "Grain" significant investments have been directed on expansion of areas under crops, improvement of seeds reserves, increase of productivity of wheat and technical equipment in grain growing. Significant development in the system of manufacture was received by private sector (fig. 1).

Fig 1.

Share of public agricultural enterprises and private farms per gross output (%) for Turkmenistan
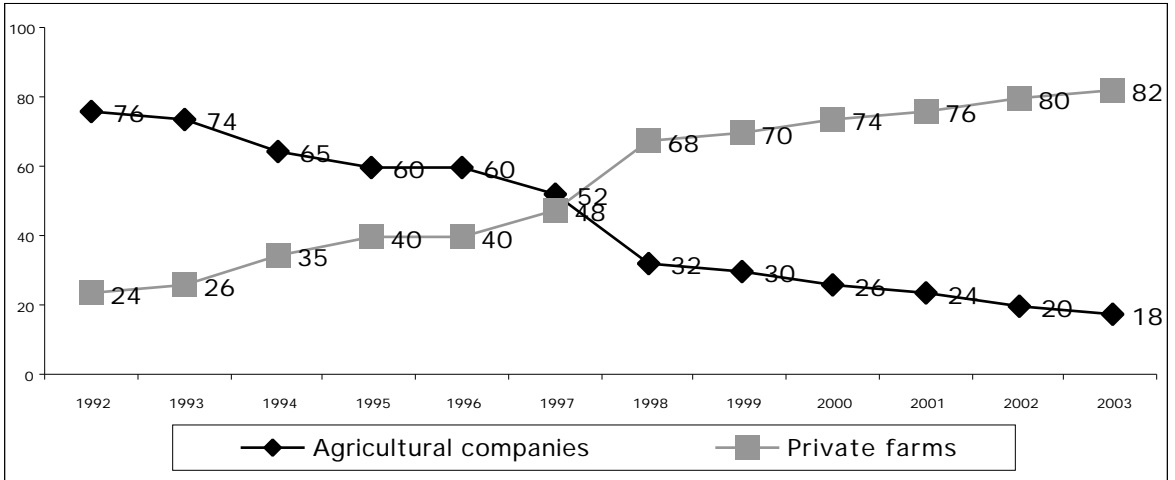
Over the years of independence the share of public agricultural enterprises in the total amount of the gross output has decreased from 76 % to 18 %, of private enterprises, on the contrary, has increased from 24 % to 82 %.

Escalating of volumes of manufacture of agricultural products is, to a certain extent promoted by expansion of the areas of the irrigated land. With significant annual excess of the planned parameters the manufacture of the basic types of agricultural products (tab. 1) is growing.

Table 1

Plant growing in Turkmenistan, one thousand tons

Indicators	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Wheat	373	509	712	879	453	707	1229	1510	1705	2010	2312	2535
Cotton	1300	1341	1283	1294	435	635	705	1304	1031	1137	490	714
Vegetables	312	286	386	376	310	241	295	306	346	414	448	493
melons & gourds	199	176	215	199	190	118	122	134	135	168	190	194
Fruits and berries	48	39	43	36	24	30	34	42	62	75	91	98
Grapes	125	114	133	163	94	131	140	153	195	238	245	246

Source: institute " Turkmenmillihasabat ".

Annually grain-growers gather the record yields of wheat. In 2000 1,7 million tons were collected, in 2003 – more than 2,5 million tons. Per capita manufacture of wheat has exceeded 400 kg. Being a country that imported wheat and flour in the past, Turkmenistan has turned to the country completely covering the needs for bread. Over 1992-2003 manufacture of vegetables has increased by 1,6 folds, fruits and berries – by 2 folds and a grapes – by 2 folds. It has allowed the population of the country to consume all-the-year-round vitamins necessary for their health.

Positive results and in livestock industries (tab. 2) have been obtained received.

Table 2

Production of livestock industries, one thousand tons

Indicators	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Meat (living weight)	172	192	189	196	199	198	228	234	288	324	377	397
Milk	470	711	716	727	755	755	766	878	989	1250	1398	1529
Eggs, one million pieces	292	267	270	270	273	274	277	325	376	434	506	625

Source: institute " Turkmenmillihasabat ".

During the years of independence manufacture of meat (in alive weight) has increased in 2,3 time, milk – in 3,2 folds, eggs – in 2,1 time and a wool – in 2,1 folds. For the same period a livestock

Table 3

Livestock of cattle and bird in Turkmenistan, one thousand heads

Indicators	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Large livestock	1004	1104	1181	1199	1155	1128	1423	1571	1601	1853	1890	1970
Sheep & goats	6265	6314	6503	6574	6138	5956	6052	7200	8834	12001	13320	13904
Poultry	6461	6528	5781	4991	4237	4235	3156	4034	5451	7150	8417	12907

Source: institute "Turkmenmillihasabat".

The population has increased two-fold, sheep and goats by 2.2 fold and poultry by 2 fold. The increase in cattle population and poultry and their increased efficiency have provided essential growth of volumes of production of livestock industries (tab. 3).

Transport: The transport complex of the country develops on accelerated rates according to the strategic directions determined in the National programme. Construction of the railway Tedzhen - Sarakhs-Meshkhed of 300 kms long and Turkmenabad – Atamurat of 215 kms long is the beginning of implementation of the National Programme of development of railway transportation. Practically new transport network of the country has been recreated during the years of independence. Lots of assets have been invested in construction of the new roads and replacement of vehicles. New automobile and railways have been constructed, air and sea lines have been extended.

Main railway Ashkhabad – Karakumy –Dashaguz of 530 kms long is being constructed rapidly. It will allow increasing of cargo volumes by 63,6 million tons and passenger transportation by 95,2 million persons.

New automobile highway Ashkhabad – Karakumy –Dashaguz is under successful construction. Construction of the highways Ashkhabad – Turkmenbashi, Ashkhabad – Mary – Turkmenabad – Atamurad proceeds.

In 2002 cargo transportation by sea in comparison with 2001 have increased by 2,5 fold.

Airliners of the National Airlines " Turkmenhovaellary " carry out regular flights for more than 30 countries of the world. Aircrafts of more than 40 airlines of the world fly daily in air space of Turkmenistan across the trans-Asiatic highway connecting Europe with countries of Southeast Asia. During the years of independence the park of aircrafts of Turkmenistan was filled up with 10 airliners such as "BOEING"

Reconstruction and modernization of the air terminal will be completed by 2020, and the park of aircrafts will be increased due to purchasing of extra 30 comfortable planes.

The transport complex of Turkmenistan has allowed to connect the steel ways of Europe and Asia, has brought in the significant contribution to revival of the Great Silk Road in its modern meaning. Uniform transport network created during the years of independence allows more effective use of the natural wealth of Turkmenistan, to develop productive forces of all regions of the country, to master new territories and considerably improve life conditions of the population.

Investments: During the years of independence more than 700 new industrial facilities were constructed, whereas for the years of the Soviet period - only 115. Besides, plenty of new schools, hospitals, apartment houses and other objects of social infrastructure have been constructed and entered into operation. The panorama of cities and village of the country has changed. In all Velayat centres and in many Etrap centres the beautiful modern buildings have been constructed, memorial complexes have been open, parks and squares are have been broken. Construction of comfortable apartment tower buildings has started, in some of them people already live.

The first years of the current century are characterized by higher investment activity. 236 industrial facilities have been put in operations. Due to foreign investments and assets of the enterprises technical and technological renovation of leading sectors of economy and escalating of volumes production have been provided.

In the course of 2000-2002 the electricity transmission lines of 268 kms in length have been put in operations; gas pipelines: Malai – Zerger - Sakar (101,4 kms), Dostluk – Khodjambaz - Beshir (132 kms), « 10 years of independence of Turkmenistan » - Uchadji (90,5 kms); oil-and-gas deposits Southern Gamyshlydja (Balkan Velaiyat), « 10 years of independence of Turkmenistan », Chartak, Gagarinskoe (Lebap Velaiyat), Gundogar , Yelguiy (Mary Velaiyat) have been set up.

On Turkmenbashi oil refining factory installations on manufacture of the highly purified gasoline, lubricant oils and polypropylene have been introduced.

Textile Corporation (Ashkhabad) with capacity of 1,5 million meters of poplin and 2,4 thousand tons of yarn, cotton factories with capacity of 5 thousand tons of yarn in Serdar, 7,5 thousand tons of a yarn in. Khalach and in Kaka - 2,83 thousand tons of a yarn have been constructed and entered into operation. In general, more than 1 billion USA dollars were invested into development of textile complex during the years of independence.

Social area: In Turkmenistan the target programme on providing dynamical development of the human capital is carried out. Each citizen is provided with an opportunity to create jobs for himself or for the others as well as to gain incomes from self-employment and from hired labour.

High rates of economic growth, development of the initiative and enterprise, stabilization of consumer prices have provided outstripping growth of monetary incomes of the population in comparison with indicators of the programme. In 2000 they have been exceeded by 15 %, and in 2002 – by 46 % (fig. 2).

High involvement of people in the process of reforming has changed the structure of gross income of the population. Percentage of labour incomes has grown, and the share of social transfers has decreased. New sources of monetary incomes – incomes on property, sale of real estate and enterprise activity have appeared.

Fig. 2. Monetary incomes of the population across Turkmenistan, billion manats
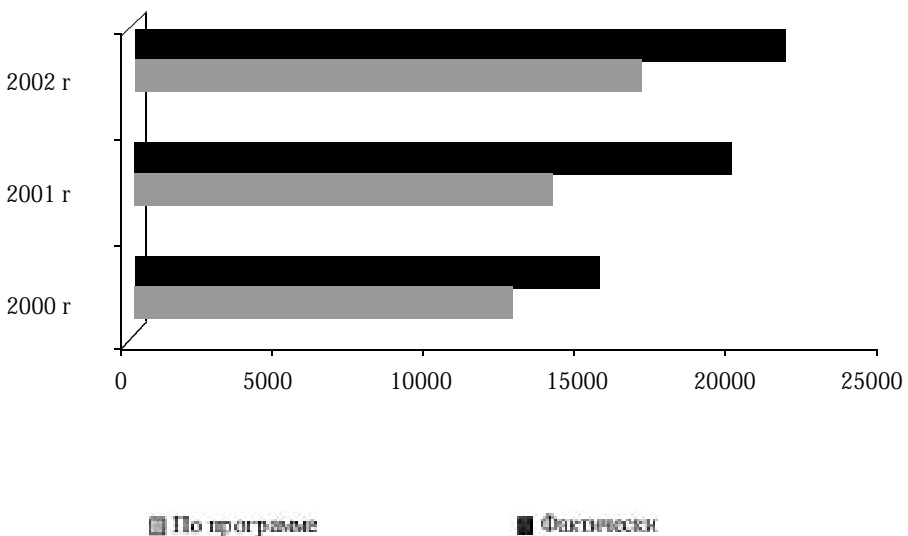
Due to the growth of well-being of the population in 2000 the per capita caloric content of a daily diet of the population of Turkmenistan has exceeded the standards of the World Health Organization by 2 %, in 2001 – more than by 5 % and in 2002 – by 6 %.

Peculiarity of the social and economic transformations in Turkmenistan that such transformations are determined in close cooperation with spiritual renaissance of the society, the ways of which are proposed in Rukhnama – the Programme of spiritual revival of the nation.

According to the researches which have been carried out by the Economic Commission of the United Nations on Europe (UNECE), in 2003 Turkmenistan was the absolute leader in terms of growth of economy, which had a growth rate of 17 % (tab. 4).

Table 4

Countries	%	Countries	%
Turkmenistan	17	USA	3,1
Azerbaijan	11,2	Japan	2,3
Kazakhstan	9,1	The Great Britain	2,1
Lithuania	8,9	Israel	0,8
Ukraine	8,5	Germany	-0,1
Russia	7,3	Portugal	-0,8

Source: the United Nations have recognized Turkmenistan as the leader on economic growth. Magazine « Altyn Asyry n ykdysaduyeti », 2004.

The basic areas of social and economic development of Turkmenistan in long-term. People of Turkmenistan are confident about their future., naming XXI century the Golden Age. And it is well justified. In the country significant successes in social and economic development have been achieved, the atmosphere of a spiritual generality, national unity and consent, high trust to the Government of Turkmenistan and to its national leader the President of Turkmenistan Saparmurat Turkmenbashi is created. At the Joint Session of the XIV State Council of Elderly of Turkmenistan, Khalk Maslakhaty and the National movement "Galkynysh", that took place in the month Alp Arslan (August, 2003) a number of important decisions have been adopted, one of which is the National programme « Strategy of economic, political and cultural development of Turkmenistan for the period until 2020 ». One of the priority tasks provided by the National programme is achieving by

Turkmenistan the level of the advanced countries, preservation of its economic independence and security due to the high sustainable rates of economic growth, introduction of new technologies and labor productivity.

High growth rates of economy will be provided due to accelerated development of practically all branches of economy. Total production is planned to be increased in 2020 in comparison with 2002 by 18 folds; industrial output – by 17 folds. Processing industries will be developed on accelerated rates in comparison with extractive industries, which will allow to generate the diversified, modernized and competitive industrial sector. The volume of agricultural production will increase by 11 folds, construction – by12 folds.

The greatest growth of gross production will be achieved due to development of the service sector, the growth rates of which will be much higher than industrial sectors. In comparison with 2002 the volume of services will increase by more, than 25 fold.

Implementation of the planned transformations will allow increasing of the gross domestic product of Turkmenistan in 2020 in comparison with 2002 by more than 16 folds. In the structure of the gross domestic product the greatest share in 2020 will belong services, it will make up to 48 %, which is typical for the countries with the advanced market economy. Shares of the industry will make up 32 %; agriculture -14 %; and construction - 6 %.

The high level of investments into a fuel and energy sectors will be kept. 25 billion US dollars in total are proposed for the development of that sector. Investments to agriculture and infrastructure of the agri-industrial sector will essentially increase.

The accelerated rates of the processing sector development in comparison with extract sectors will be provided. Proper rates of economic growth will be provided due to use of the natural resources of Turkmenistan, high projected rates of manpower growth, the further intensification of economy, stimulation of investments, introduction of high technologies and structural transformations, growth of scales of foreign economic relations. The volume of investments due to all sources of financing will increase in 2020 in comparison with 2000 by more than 17 folds

Oil-and-gas complex: The development of world economy stipulates growing needs of many regions of the world for hydro carbonic raw materials. A number of long-term intergovernmental agreements on deliveries of Turkmen gas to Russia, Ukraine, Pakistan, and Iran are proof. With the purpose of increase in oil recovery and gas in

Turkmenistan the large-scale works will be launched in the field of geological researches. Construction of oil deposits Kelker, Shatut, Gerchek , and on the sea - Elbars, Lachyn, Charlyk and others will be continued; gas deposits in Korpendj, Chekishlyar; as well construction of gas deposits on the sea and on land. Volumes of processing of raw oil on Turkmenbashi and Seyiddin oil refining factories will be increased simultaneously. In 2020, 22 million tons of oil will be processed there. About 170 gas wells, arrangements for the Shatlyk group of gas deposits is planned. The volume of investments into the oil-and-gas complex will considerably increase. Works will be financed, mostly from domestic sources, however the expansion of participation foreign investors is planned as well, especially in the process of search for the hydro carbonic raw materials, along with oil and gas.

Energy and chemical complexes: Development of electric power industry until 2020 will be directed towards full satisfaction of the needs of Turkmenistan as well as escalating of export to the neighbouring countries - Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan and countries of the Central Asia. Construction of new, reconstruction of on-going power stations is planned. Due to comprehensive and an effective utilization of the rich source of raw materials the production of nitric and phosphoric fertilizers will be increased, manufacture of potash fertilizers and production of other new kinds of chemical production – caustic soda, chlorine, paint and varnish production will be organized, etc. The technical capacity on extraction of natural sulphur will be reconstructed, modernized – on manufacture of technical iodine. With a view of a combination of production of the chemical industry manufacture of various rubber-based products will be arranged for export. Manufacture of polypropylene will considerably increase. Escalating of polypropylene production will be used for expanded manufacture of plastic products, as well as additional industrial component in development of mechanical engineering.

Transport complex: The transport system of the country in 2020 will provide one fifth of the national income of the country. According to large state projects in 2011-2020 the highways with hard pavement Serdar – Etrek-Uelhbjkev (265 kms), Mary – Serhetabat (330 kms), Tedzhen – Serahs (107 kms), Turkmenbashi – Garabogaz – state border (Kazakhstan) fro 240 kms, including 40 kms of the new construction will be reconstructed. New domestic railroads– the railway Ashkhabad – Kara Kum – Dashoguz, state border (Kazakhstan)- Turkmenbashi and Bereket – Etrek will be introduced. Along with construction of new railroad lines, the

large-scale programme of electrification of railways will take part. With a view of maintenance of the planned volumes of extraction of hydro carbonic raw material, increase of reliability of its supply to the world markets a continuation of works on creating transport infrastructure, implementation transnational oil - and gas-supplying projects will be provided. In the long term a significant share in transportation of passengers and cargoes will belong to vehicles. Mobility of the population will increase and entrepreneurship will become more active.

Building complex: Planned volumes of new construction and reconstruction of the on-going industrial objects cause necessity of construction of new cement producing facilities in Magdanly - region Lebapskogo Karljukskom Velayat and in Balkan Velayat. Implementation of projects on construction of the metallurgical enterprises on metal recycling will allow to increase volumes of production of Ferro-concrete products and constructions according to the needs of the building industry and with the account of qualitatively new building materials. Large-scale housing construction will be allowed to generate by 2020 qualitatively new housing.

Consumer complex: Textile complex of Turkmenistan will receive further development. The assortment of products of cotton will be considerably expanded: fabrics for clothing and for curtains, velveteen, velvet, lawn and others. 8 cotton processing factories will be constructed in Velayats of the countries and in administrative Etrap centers in Babadaikhan, Serahks , in Bakharly and Khalach. Over 650 million US dollars will be invested on development of the textile sector. It is planned to carry out construction of wool processing factories, leather processing and shoe factory.

Agri-industrial complex: Development of agriculture will be directed on full satisfaction of the needs of the population in food; the industries – in raw materials; and on expansion of export capacity. Escalating of volumes of agricultural production will be achieved due to improvement of ameliorative state of land, use of mineral fertilizers, increase of efficiency of cattle, other methods of an intensification of production. The ameliorative state of land will be improved due to construction of the Turkmen Lake, construction of new and expansions of the existing capacity of reservoirs. In addition, construction of the complex of hydraulic engineering constructions of the reservoir dams "Dostluk" with regulating capacity of 1250 million cube is being constructed at the stage of completion jointly with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Parameters of manufacture of agricultural production in the long term until 2020 are presented in the Tab. 5. Wheat production will increase in 2020 in comparison with 2000 by 3,3 million tons, production of raw cotton – by 4 million tons, meat (in living weight) – by 2,2 million tons, milk – by 7 million tons. Manufacture of other kinds of agricultural production will considerably increase, the forage reserve (tab. 5) will extend.

Table 5

Production of agriculture in Turkmenistan for the period until 2020, thousand tons

Parameters	2000	The forecast	
		2010.	2020.
Wheat	1705	4000	5000
Cotton	1031	3000	5000
Vegetables	346	1140	3000
Melons and gourds	135	585	1350
Fruits and berries	62	430	900
Grapes	195	640	2000
Meat (in living weight)	288	740	2450
Milk	989	2850	8000
Eggs, one million pieces.	375	1400	3000

Efficiency of an agricultural complex will allow an increase by 2020 of the production of basic food per capita and will provide food consumption similar to the levels found in countries of the European community.

Social complex: Due to construction of new hospitals, health centres and the diagnostic centres the level of development of public health services will be at the level of the world standards.

Capacity of schools and children's pre-school establishments will increase. Increase of a cultural level of the population will be promoted by increase of the number of libraries, theatres, and cinemas. Housing for the population corresponding to the European standards, equipped with all amenities in the view of climatic factors is planned to be increased by 2020 up to 35 square meters per capita.

It is planned that salary rises will be carried out twice every five years. The taxation of private sector housing is not proposed. By 2020

conditions of free use by the population of electricity, natural gas, water and a salt are proposed to be kept.

Life Standard: Life standard of economically advanced countries of the world is adopted in Turkmenistan as the basic parameter of economy development.

By 2020 essential economic growth will allow to provide a high level of prosperity of the population, to improve quality of nutrition and to expand food assortment. Consumption of meat and meat products per capita will increase up to 75 kg a year, milk and dairy products – up to 415 kg, fruits, vegetables, melons and gourds – up to 466 kg a year.

Growth of real monetary incomes and increase of purchasing capacity of the population will promote cardinal changes of a life of households – level of supply of durable goods, such as computers, home appliances, cars and others will be raised, real estate owned by the population of Turkmenistan will increase.

Change of a life will be essentially affected by the accelerated development of the service sector, which will increase leisure time (especially for women) to be used for education of children, spiritual and intellectual development.

The Government remains the main guarantor of maintenance of social protection of citizens of the country that will create preconditions for intensifying birth rate, for achievement of steady tendencies of death rate reduction both for the children and for capable to work population. Expected life expectancy will increase by 73,5 years.

Governmental efforts in that respect will be directed on maintenance of a healthy life style, cardinal improvement of quality and increase of efficiency of health services, in particular on enhancing the quality and efficiency of actions on health protection of children and mothers, bringing up the physically healthy generation.

Recognition by the international community of the status of a constant neutrality of Turkmenistan adhering to a principle of strict observance of the obligations taken by the country as well as consistent policy of " open doors » will enable to expand the scale of economic and cultural cooperation of Turkmenistan with neighbouring countries and other countries.

Parameters of development of Turkmenistan for the future are based on realistic forecasts and the weighed estimations based on the actually achieved progress over the years of independence.

Cultural Cooperation of the Countries of Central Asia: Experience and Problems

Shahobitdin Sradjivich Ziamov

Professor of the University of Tashkent

Culture at all times played and still plays the important role in the development of a society. National originality is shown by the culture, it provides connection of generations, promotes formation of high spiritual and moral values of people.

During the period when the Central Asian republics were members of the former Soviet Union, the culture of their nations has passed serious tests and has suffered significant losses. The alien ideology, the ideologized cultural values of other nations were imposed to the nations of the region. Any aspiration of the best representatives of the Central Asia nations to develop their own national culture was considered by the authorities as a display of nationalism and idealization of the feudal past. All the above led to reassessment of many national cultural values, strengthening of isolation of a significant part of people from their cultural roots, deleting national customs and traditions from their memories, to depreciation of their native language in the social and political life. However, despite of all communist experiments, despite the official policy on forming the uniformed "soviet nation" deprived of ethnic peculiarities, the nations of the region have managed to keep their self-identity.

Independence has opened for the peoples of Central Asia wide opportunities for national revival, restoration and development of their cultural values and joining to the world cultural processes, from which they were separated during many decades. Independence has opened wide opportunities for cultural cooperation between the states of the region, the status of which on the turn of 1980s -1990 was on a low level due to the disintegration of the former Union and due to economic difficulties. Such cooperation did not meet the needs of the nations in the transition period and developed only in some fields and not on a regular, systematic basis.

Weakening of cultural exchange and widespread cooperation in this field could have negative consequences for the nations of Central Asia who were concentrated within their national-state formations and in the states of the neighbouring Central Asian countries. At that time it was well understood by the governments of the above republics and by the representatives of creative intelligentsia.

The development of cultural cooperation on the intergovernmental level was enhanced by signing in January 1994 by Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and later Tajikistan of the Agreement on Common Economic Space, which provided strengthening of not only economic, but also cultural integration processes. This Agreement became the basis for the system approach of the governmental bodies to the issues of cultural cooperation. On the basis of the Agreement bilateral cooperation agreements in the field of culture were concluded between the republics.

Thus, in the Agreement between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, the parties have undertaken the obligations "to develop relations between the nations of the two countries in the field of culture and arts in every possible way, promoting the development of languages and cultures of all nations and ethnic groups living on their territories, to enhance cooperation between cultural institutions at the governmental, regional and local levels". The forms of co-operation were defined according to the challenges of time. Special events, the so-called 'Days of Nations' were held in both countries. The Days of Kazakhstan were held in Uzbekistan in May 1994.

More than 600 representatives from the fraternal republic participated in the above events, most of them were prominent representatives of the Kazakh culture and arts, as well as figures of literature and well known creative groups. Among them there were the following: the Folk Music Instrument Orchestra named after Tatimbet, the State Dancing Ensemble "Altynai", the Kazakh Drama Theatre named after M. Auezov and others.

Days of Uzbekistan in Kazakhstan were held in May 1995. Performance of the Uzbek ensembles "Yalla" and "Shodlik", performances of the Uzbek State Academic Theatre named after Khamza were successfully performed on the Kazakh land. The films of the Uzbek cinematographers raised great interest . The Days of Kyrgyzstan and Tadjikistan in Uzbekistan were held in 1998. During the Days of Kyrgyzstan in Uzbekistan the following Kyrgyz creative groups were represented: ensembles "?-Maral", "Kambarkan", "Jash Kyiyal" and others.

Analysis of cultural cooperation of the countries of the region in 1990s of the XX century shows that many joint cultural events took place both locally and in trans-border areas. Joint celebration of the "Navruz" Holiday was held, local theatres staged joint performances, etc. These events were organized on a regular basis, forming the common traditions. In addition substantial attention was paid to the revival of national traditions, customs, restoration of historical monuments, and restoration of the doomed to oblivion during the Soviet period names of the outstanding state and public figures who had played an important role in the history of the nations with the aim to use it in the education of young generations and formation in them the sense of national consciousness, strengthening brotherly links of nations in Central Asia. The events devoted to the 1000th anniversary of "Mans" Epics, 660th anniversary of Amir Temur, etc. have a great significance. These events were widely celebrated in all countries of the region.

In the 90s in each of the countries of the region various public and non-governmental organizations engaged in culture became more active . In this connection it became necessary to coordinate their activities at the non-governmental level.

This ideas was expressed by many well known figures of art, culture and sciences of all Central Asian countries in 1994-1995. Some of them proposed to set up the regional nongovernmental movement "Cultural Forum of the Nations of Turkestan". In November 1995 the Kurultay (Assembly) of the figures of art , culture and sciences of the region took place in Tashkent. There the decision was taken on creation of the international social movement "Cultural Assembly of the Nations of Central Asia". The People's writer of Kyrgyzstan Chinghiz Aitmatov was elected as President of the Assembly. The Message of the Kurultay Participants to the people of arts of the republics of Central Asia stated: "We all live in the same region and therefore the destiny and the future of each of us cannot be out of our concern, non of us can be indifferent. Let's stretch our hands to each other". According to the adopted by Kurultay programme, the following was defined as the major objectives of the Assembly: to preserve carefully the rich traditional heritage, common for all nations of the region; to familiarize the world with the successful achievements in the field of literature, arts, science and to seek new opportunities to improve and promote activities in this field.

Creation of the Assembly was very timely and met the needs of cultural development of the nations of the region under the new conditions. It should become an integrating force in consolidating the efforts of creative

intellectuals on strengthening cultural cooperation and unity of the nations of Central Asia. Due to its efforts a lot of regional cultural events were organized, various in form and in contents, which received broad support not only from creative intellectuals, but also from the general public.

Under the conditions of independence when each of the countries of the region has the opportunity to join the world cultural processes, various international festivals, competitions and other events started to be widely organized in the countries of Central Asia. Creative groups from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan also took part in the above-mentioned events. International Musical Festival "Sharck Taronalary" ("Melodies of the East") which was founded in 1997 in Uzbekistan with the purpose of mutual enrichment of cultures of the nations of the East, acquaintance and popularization of the best traditions and achievements of the national musical art based on deep traditions of universal values of national creativity belongs to the above-mentioned events . The first Festival took place in the city of Samarkand in 1997 and creative collectives and performers from many countries of the world, including India, China, Russia, Azerbaijan, the USA, France, Pakistan, Egypt, Japan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and other countries of the world participated at the first Festival.

The musical festival "Sharck Taronalary" was recognized and approved by UNESCO and other international organizations as a Forum promoting development of the world culture, national creativity, spiritual enrichment and consolidation of the nations. Figures of Art and Culture from Uzbekistan took active participation at the international festival "Young Generation", organized in Bishkek, as well as in the work of the international movie festival "Youth cinema of Central Asia: New Vision" which took place in the capital of Kazakhstan.

All the above mentioned allows us to draw the following conclusions:
- Restoration and development of cultural cooperation between the Central Asian countries under the conditions of independence is completely in compliance with expectations and needs of the nations of the region. It allows to preserve the common cultural space and centuries-old cultural traditions of the related nations;
- Cultural cooperation in 90th, despite of the objective and subjective difficulties developed between these countries both at the governmental and non-governmental levels. It promoted growth of cultural exchange, occurrence of new forms of such exchange, strengthening brotherly feelings and attitudes among people;

-       Cooperation in this sphere enables, along with other factors, to avoid tensions in inter-ethnic relations in transition period, as well as to avoid conflicts, similar to those that took place in the period of 1989-1990 in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, it helped to successfully resist the religious fundamentalism and extremism which strived to depreciate the centuries-old traditions, customs and ceremonies of the nations of the region, to bring them back to the medieval norms, including religious issues and to create serious problems between the Moslems in the attempt to split their unity. Sometimes the confrontation between the Vakhabitts and representatives of traditional Islam took place in some families.

Analysis of cultural cooperation testifies also to the fact that in the new Millennium there is again decrease of cooperation. Cultural Assembly of the Nations of Central Asia has actually stopped its activities. The reasons are somehow different from those existing at the turn of 1980 – 1990 . Certainly, among other reasons are economic difficulties existing in the majority of the countries of region, which have an adverse effect on cooperation in this field, however, but basically there are other reasons. First of all, it is activization in the region by the end of 1990s of the international terrorism which has a goal of a violent overthrow of a secular political system in the region, Islamization of the region and introduction of the strict restrictions in people's free moving from one country of the region to another, establishment of a visa regime between some of the countries. Secondly, changes in the orientations of the foreign policy of the states of the region and termination of the activity of the Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC) which was not just an economic coordinating structure, but also the interstate body that allowed the countries of Central Asia to cooperate in the field of culture on a regular basis. After the Central Asian Cooperation Organization was set up, no positive changes were observed in this field.

Weakening of cultural cooperation within the Central Asia space under the conditions of globalization and westernization, transformation of region into the arena of collision of interests of the influential states can cause very serious negative consequences. First of all, it represents danger for the Central Asian civilization as such, which consolidates the nations of this region. On the other hand, reduction of cultural cooperation can lead to weakening of brotherly links between the nations of Central Asia, to formation of tension in interethnic relations, to deteriorate the situation of ethnic groups in the states of the region. The Resolution of the UN Commission for Human Rights, adopted on April 15, 2004, condemning

the situation with human rights in Turkmenistan, confirms all this. It says that in this country there are infringements of rights in the development of cultural and language traditions of ethnic groups, represented mostly by people of the neighbouring states, who face serious problems in teaching their children in their mother language, in practicing their national traditions and customs. In this context, one of the most important tasks for the Central Asian countries is to strengthen joint efforts enhancing cultural cooperation at both governmental and non-governmental level, including participation of Turkmenistan. At the same it is probably important nowadays to involve into the process of cultural cooperation the people of Afghanistan who have been released from the Taliban regime. It will allow many people of this country to come back to their cultural sources, to get consolidated with other nations of the region in order to preserve their self-identity. It will be a right step, taking into account the fact that the nations of both Central Asia and Afghanistan for many centuries have been members of the same state formations – the states of Samanids, Gaznevids, the Empire of Timurids, or being in different states, closely cooperated

Henrikas Iouchkiavitchious (2nd from left), Lithuania, Former Assistant Director-General of UNESCO; and Gregory R. Copley, President of the International Strategic Studies Association, United States of America

PART III

Reports of the Working Groups

Shared Values and Ethical Principles

Report from Working Group 1

The working group on Shared Values and Ethical Principles consisted of 20 senior officials – from international and state bodies, educational, research and religious organizations – coming from 10 countries. The working group sought to apply the perspective of shared values and ethical principles to the challenges facing the Central Asian region.

In working from this perspective, and based on the written and oral presentations made, the working group developed the following points and proposals:

1. Educational solutions to many of the regional challenges were considered as being of paramount importance, underpinning virtually all other aspects, such as regional integration, security and political/economic viability.

2. Within the context of education, it was recommended that a region-wide approach be taken to some aspects of the training of teachers and the harmonizing of some educational curricula and textbooks so that societies could avoid the problems created by excessive national bias in understandings of history and social issues.

3. Within the context of education, and because of concerns over problems caused (regionally and globally) by imbalanced media

reporting, and imbalanced media priorities and emphasis, it was recommended that regional training and orientation/familiarization be arranged on an ongoing basis for journalists to ensure that appropriate levels of professionalism and responsibility could be developed in the regional media. This would avoid the prospect for external/state media regulation or censorship, which was deemed to be an unacceptable alternative.

4. It was recognized that language has a significant impact on policy and action, and, as a result, it was recommended that all attempts should be made to refrain from reference to the concept of "conflict of civilizations" – which tended to imply an inevitability of such an occurrence – and replace it with language that advocated the dialogue among cultures.

5. There was significant consensus that "Central Asia" could now be viewed as a coherent political region, despite remaining differences and remaining issues of border finalization, and despite differences in approaches to issues of government, security and economic philosophies among the States of the region.

6. Issues of regional integration focused strongly around the historic role of the region as the hub of trade and communication. Emphasis was placed on the importance of the function of the Great Silk Road, both as a tool of trade and prosperity, and as a means of harmonizing cultural understanding between regional states. Mention was also made of Russia as a critical element of the land bridge between East Asia and Europe, and the vital necessity for harmonized focus on the development of regional arterial infrastructure. This was considered the critical element in bringing Asia and Eurasia/Europe into a coherent entity.

7. The creation of a regional integration model or plan by the States of the region was recommended.8. It was recommended that a "Silk Road Project" be created to gather knowledge of religions of the entire Silk Road peoples, including Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism, and other beliefs, so that greater understanding could be achieved between the peoples of the region, and by the world at large, helping to formulate common ethics and values.

9. There was a recommendation that institutes of Central Asian Studies be encouraged to be formed throughout the world so as to ensure greater depth and breadth of international understanding of, and interest in, the region.

10. It was proposed that a regular intellectual gathering be held in Central Asia, a forum that would help to promote peaceful regional development and global interaction. Such a gathering would mirror, in some ways, the annual Davos gathering in Switzerland.

11. Given the evolving condition of representative government around the world, it was expressed as an opinion that the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights now needed to be supplemented, by a declaration that acknowledged human responsibilities, perhaps in the form of a proposed UN "Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities". It was stressed, in this regard, that all communities had a responsibility to understanding and to respect one another, and that immigrant and refugee communities also had a responsibility to work within the framework of their host societies. At the same time, host societies also had a responsibility to protect the cultural identities and norms of their guest communities.

12. It was recognized that the security situation throughout Central Asia continued to face significant challenges, and that these challenges

Osmonakun Ibraimov, State Secretary of the Kyrgyz Republic; Chinghiz Aitmatov, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to Belgium, Permanent Delegate of Kyrgyzstan to UNESCO; Ko chiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO; Hans d'Orville, Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning, UNESCO; and Gregory R. Copley, President of the International Strategic Studies Association, United States of America

Intercultural Dialogue, cultural diversity and heritage in the Eurasian perspective

Report from Working Group 2

More than 20 presentations were made to the working group. We had a discussion of the role of the Soviet heritage in central Asia. Various views were expressed. It was emphasized that a non-ideological approach to the evaluation of this heritage is necessary.

There has been a "demonization" of Islam, especially after 9/11. There is a moderate reformist trend in Islam that is predominant, for example, in Central Asia. It would be necessary to extend the dialogue to include various interpretations of Islam, including its reformist, liberal interpretation.

The region represents many confessions and inter-religious tolerance has been formed during centuries and a unique experience of peaceful coexistence has been accumulated.

It is recommended that we organize a seminar on the historico-logical definition of spatial and chronological characteristics of "Eurasia". The peoples of the region need to know and understand their own pre-history starting from the axis era (the era of prophets), i.e. some 2500 years ago, when the Euro-Asian space as a civilizational and cultural space started to emerge.

To include human rights and democracy as an important dimension of dialogue between cultures. In this dialogue nobody should be exclusively on the receiving end. Such a dialogue should lead to a better understanding of values of different societies protected through the concept of human rights.

It is important to honour and respect diversity. Tolerance is not sufficient; it is a 0 negative term. Instead, we should speak of respect for diversity. A dialogue can take place only in democratic societies. Therefore, democracy is a precondition of a dialogue between cultures. This dialogue should be free from external pressure.

Support should be provided to established programmes that emphasize these principles and promulgate such through education and other means. In addition, support should be provided to initiatives such as the "education for the globalization of knowledge" project, publications, conferences and establishment of a global academy. Also, programmes should be established to provide new tools and skills to a more effective definition of cultural policies and cultural management, building on established structures rather than creating new ones.

There is a need to establish inter-cultural dialogue with the West and to study the activity of non-formal religious trends in Central Asia. UNESCO should become an integrating force in the region's cultural space at the NGO level, as well as provide dialogue with the West.

Many ethnic groups live outside their national boundaries and have difficulty satisfying their cultural needs. Also, they experience official policies of the countries in which they live. UNESCO should support/establish special programmes aimed at studying rights and possibilities of Central Asian ethnic groups to satisfy their cultural needs and other problems.

One participant expressed concern for the negative effect which the development of supra-national entities may impinge on intercultural dialogue For example, the argument of an "European identity" -an identity subject to contradictory definitions -cannot be opposed to Turkey's entry into the European Union. The participant stated that the big supranational political entities should be understood in terms of space (open) and not territory (closed and exclusivist).

Throughout history religious freedom has been the exception, not the rule. Many minority confessions struggle with legal requirements and prejudice on an official level, making their existence difficult in many countries and among many cultures.

UNESCO should support programmes, material and educational conferences to stress both the intrinsic and the pragmatic, as well as the legal, considerations of religious freedom. Emphasis may be on freedom of conscience, the dignity of the individual, the equality of respect for beliefs, the rapid exchange of information by high tech means, and the constant exchange through travel. Also, an emphasis should be made of international agreements and instruments such as the UN "Universal Declaration".

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the emerging strong nationalistic tendencies in the Central Asian region – known in history for its tremendous intermingling of cultures and peoples – is a concern. The history of cultural interaction along with the Soviet legacy in managing culture can provide an invaluable tool in bringing peoples and governments together and reducing the risk of separation and conflict.

A high level meeting of ministers of culture could initiate the process of re- linking the institutions of art and culture in the Central Asian states with signing of a memorandum of understanding that would lead to specific protocols and contracts between cultural institutions. This would facilitate various cultural activities between the countries of Central Asia, such as:

reciprocal tours of music and dance groups; admitting of students from other republics in all areas of culture; cooperation between houses of culture; cooperation between universities academies of science, and encouraging more liberal visa regiments for better access to peoples across country borders.

Also, UNESCO should encourage that governments of Central Asia undertake measures that would facilitate a cultural dialogue between societies.

Water, sustainable development and human security -promoting peaceful cooperation and synergies through dialogue

Report from Working Group 3

Summary

Water is the basic resource for Central Asia. The problem of water cannot be viewed in isolation from other energy supplies. Globalization is relevant to water management; some countries have access to water, others do not. The challenge is to ensure everyone has access to clean drinking water and water for agriculture. Sustainable development is contingent on resolving this challenge. Water, if it is not managed appropriately, can generate tensions between states -and between regions within a state -or it can lead to cooperation. Specialists in various regions of Central Asia are now working to address the challenges of not only access to water, but the conservation of ecosystems and the optimal management of water use. The group therefore also discussed the innovations in technology which are aimed at facilitating rational use of water. It is clear that dialogue is the key to resolving the challenges and also the consequences of mismanagement

to date. Water cannot be viewed in isolation from other challenges related to other components of sustainable development.

Regional cooperation

The lack of cooperation between countries sharing water resources is one of the main obstacles in the way of rational water management in Central Asia. Water scarcity and the linkage to power generation is potentially contentious. The group debated the extent of bilateral and multilateral agreements between the states of Central Asia on water. The Interstate Coordinating Water Commission between Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan was mentioned. All too often it is clear that the states adopt a competitive rather than a constructive cooperative approach. The old reliance on force or putting pressure in an effort to meet one's own interest is still seen. However it is not only a matter for these states of meeting their national political interest, low levels of economic development also limit their capacity to contribute to a regional system of sustainable development. In other words, not all the countries of Central Asia are at the stage where they can collaborate with others. Cooperation on water must facilitate the development of Central Asian states so that they are economically developed enough to manage their water problems.

International assistance

The group debated the role of the international community in addressing the water problems in Central Asia and discussed the financial assistance provided by the international financial institutions (IFIs) in particular. Criticism has been voiced within the region and by experts that there have been too many draft projects and meetings but little concrete action. Some of the [group pointed out that international projects have been implemented and that they were (implemented jointly with national governments.

Plans and projects have not been implemented even when numerous studies have been carried

out, agreements signed and dialogue is ongoing. Greater cooperation is required to put these into effect.

Borrowing money from IFIs is not the sole answer; the assisted states also need a business plan on how to move forward step by step. This would give the states of the region a sense of ownership over the

projects too; they would be subjects of a policy not merely objects of an international plan. Increased consultation with stake holders at all stages of planning, design, development and operation will contribute to the efficient use of water resources. The group recognized that the IFIs and international consultants should be engaged in more discussions with the national governments.

Technical developments

Innovations are available to facilitate monitoring of quality and quantity but overall in Central Asia there is only poor monitoring of economic systems that pollute water. Urgent assistance is needed for irrigation infrastructure to foster the development of agricultural production. Surface drip irrigation is one solution which could generate permanent food production systems. However, using irrigation equipment on a commercial basis can be problematical because the costs to private farms are too high. Equipment should be accessible, efficient and sustainable. Application of new technologies and sustainability of such projects requires continued investment and adequate safeguards from the relevant national governments.

Multi-level Dialogue

The forum for experts to discuss water and sustainable development this week at Issyk-Kul must be considered the start of a dialogue. We recommend that future meetings are held on a regular basis to continue our discussions.

We support the creation of an information and analysis centre in Central Asia, perhaps under the auspices of the UN, for example UNESCO. Concrete steps should be taken without delay to set it up. It would be an international and inter-disciplinary information and resource centre for experts interested in the protection of ecosystems and sustainable development of water sources in Central Asia as a whole. It can draw on the positive experiences in Central Asia to date. It is important to develop an integrated database, intelligent technologies and decision support systems for risk management for the environmental and rational use of natural resources; access to information for interested parties should be guaranteed so that they gain a complete picture of Central Asia as a whole, not just focus on their own state's position. Training must also be more widespread.

It is important to teach school children about the importance of water and the context of water management in Central Asia.

Increased contact is necessary between academic experts and politicians/ representatives of state organs. Government and state organs should take greater account of studies by experts; the states of Central Asia (including Russia) should learn from international experience where committees of experts advise the administration and departments. The printed studies of experts need to reach the desks of the relevant ministers.

There also needs to be more contact between pure scientists specializing on water and environmental issues and experts from the applied sciences. Specialists from the region should have a greater input into designing projects with international partners too.

Human security

Water is clearly a human security issue. Environmental degradation of the ecosystem is linked to human, economic and political security. Other than water, we discussed other issues which have been identified as affecting human security. Central Asia is a transit corridor for drug trafficking and assistance is required to deal with this. Other transnational threats are international criminal groups which are trafficking not only in drugs but in human beings and small arms; smuggling of goods which results in loss of revenue for local governments and other negative socio-

Woman in traditional Kyrgyz dress

ANNEXES

Annex 1

Programme

Wednesday, 9 June 2004

Afternoon Arrival of Participants Evening Dinner and concert

Thursday, 10 June 2004

10.00-13.30   Opening and Plenary Session
Statements by the co-hosts of the Conference

H.E. President Askar Akaev,

President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan

H.E. Mr Ko chiro Matsuura

Director-General of UNESCO

Theatrical performance of Manas

Annex 2

List of Participants

Askar Akaev,	President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Co-organizer of the Conference
Ko chiro Matsuura,	Director-General of UNESCO, Co-organizer of the Conference

HEADS OF STATE OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES

E. Sharipovich Rahmonov,	President of Tajikistan
Said Mahmud Raheen,	Afghanistan, Minister of Education and Culture
Elcin Ilyas-ogly Efendiev	Azerbaijan, Vice Prime Minister
Mohammad Ali Abtahi	Iran, Vice President
Byrganym Sarievna Aitimova	Kazakhstan Vice Prime Minister
Rais Munir Ahmed	Pakistan, Minister of Tourism, Sports and Youth
Eleonora Mitrofanova	Russian Federation, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Huseyin Celik	Turkey, Minister of Education
Ovezgeldy Ataev	Turkmenistan, Speaker of Parliament

PARTICIPANTS

Aktan Abdykalykov	Kyrgyzstan, Film maker
Dokdurbek Adambekov	Kyrgyzstan, Member of the Medical Academy
Martti Ahtisaari	Finland, Personal Envoy of the Chairman-in-Office of OSCE for Central Asia; former President of Finland

Asylbek Aidaraliev	Kyrgyzstan, Adviser to the President
Toktobubu Aitikeeva	Kyrgyzstan, President, Kyrgyz National Radio-TV Corporation
Chinghiz Aitmatov	Kyrgyzstan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kyrgyz Republic to Belgium, Permanent Delegate of Kyrgyzstan to UNESCO
Mayram Akaeva	Kyrgyzstan, First Lady
Imil Akkoziev	Kyrgyzstan, Adviser to the President
Shaislam Akmalov	Uzbekistan, Vice Rector, Tashkent Islamic University
Roza Aknazarova	Kyrgyzstan, Minister of Labour and Social Protection
A. Amataeva	Kazakhstan, Vice Minister of Culture
Mehdi Parvizi Amineh	Netherlands, Senior Research Fellow, International Institute for Asian Studies,
Gurban Nariman-ogly Amirov	Azerbaijan, First Deputy Chief, Department for Education, Science and Culture
Cholponkul Arabaev	Kyrgyzstan, Juridical Academy
Ablabek Asankanov	Kyrgyzstan, Rector, Kyrgyz State Pedagogical University
M. Farhad Atai	Iran, Independent Researcher, Imam Sadeq University, School of Political Science and Islamic Studies, Teheran
Murat Mukhtarovich Auezov	Kyrgyzstan, Ambassador, Director-General of the National Library of Kazakhstan
Nurgul Aylbekova	
	Kyrgyzstan, Soros Foundation
Murat Begaliev	Kyrgyzstan, Chairman, State Commission for Culture under the Government
Yossef Bodansky	Kyrgyzstan, Director of Research, The International Strategic Studies Association
Valentyn Bogatyrev	Kyrgyzstan, Director, International Institute of Strategic Studies
Altai Borubaev	Kygryzstan, Speaker of the Parliament

Tina Bovermann	UNESCO, Consultant, Bureau of Strategic Planning
Sagyn Bozgunbaev	Kyrgyzstan, Trade Union Federation
Anvar Bugazov	Kyrgyzstan, Professor, Kyrgyz National University
Rusty Butler	United States of America, Vice-President, Utah Valley State College
Chinara Chokubaeva	Kyrgyzstan, Head, Department for International Co-operation, Prime Minister's Office
Gregory R Copley	United States of America, President, International Strategic Studies Association
Bolot Djanuzakov	Kyrgyzstan, First Deputy Head of the President's Administration
Geidar Djemal	Russian Federation, Head of the Islamic Committee of the Russian Federation
Irfan Asgharali Engineer	India, Director, Centre for Study of Society and Secularism
Jantsankhorol Enkhtuul	Mongolia, Science Researcher, International Institute for the Study of Nomadic Civilizations
Mahmud Muhammadi Eraki	Iran, Chairman, Organization for Cultural and Islamic Affairs
Amitai Etzioni	United States of America, Professor, Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies, Washington University, Washington D.C.
Rim Giniyatullin	Uzbekistan, Chairman, International Fund for the Aral Sea, Tashkent
Jean-Francois Gossiaux	France, Director of Studies, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales
Pavel Gusev	Russian Federation, Editor-in-Chief, "Moskovskiy Komsomolez",
Fazletdin Hamraev	Uzbekistan, Vice-President, Cultural Association of Central Asia, Tashkent
Anjum Haque	UNESCO, Director of Office and UNESCO Representative for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, UNESCO Cluster Office, Kazakhstan

Nasra Hassan	Pakistan, Chief, Public Affairs and Inter-Agency Branch, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Vienna
Zhou Hongfei	China, Professor, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Xinjiang
Gaiha Ibragimova	Kyrgyzstan, First Deputy Minister of Education
Osmonakun Ibraimov	Kyrgyzstan, State Secretary
Kanybek Imanaliev	Kyrgyzstan, Director, Publishing House "Ushkun"
Henrikas Iouchkiavitchious	Lithuania, Former Assistant Director-General of UNESCO
Ulanbek Isabekov	Kyrgyzstan, Head of Department of the Ministry of Finance
Beksultan Ishimov	Kyrgyzstan, Academy of International Affairs
Anatoly Ivannikov	Kyrgyzstan, Deputy Minister of Education
Ahmad Jalali	Iran, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate to UNESCO
Ravchan Jeenbekov	Kyrgyzstan, Chairman, State Property Committee
Alykbek Jekshenkulov	Kyrgyzstan, Deputy Chief of President's Administration, Head of the Department of Foreign Relations
Erkeaym Jorobekova	Kyrgyzstan, Head of the UNESCO Chair "Democracy and Intercultural Dialogue in Multiethnic Societies"
Kubanychbek Jumaliev	Kyrgyzstan, First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Transport and Communication
Sabit Jusupov	Kazakhstan, President, Kazakh Institute of Social-Economic Information and Prognosis
Askar Kakeev	Kyrgyzstan, Rector, Kyrgyz National University
Tolobek Kamchibekov	Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek State University of Economy and Commerce
Serguei Kapitza	Russian Federation, Professor, Russian Academy of Natural Sciences
Ednan Karabaev	Kyrgyzstan, Vice Rector for External Relations, Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University

Kenech Karachalov	Kyrgyzstan, State Agency for Registration of Real Estate Rights
Bolot Kenenbaev	Kyrgyzstan, First Deputy Governor of the Chui Oblast
Tachkul Kereksizov	Kyrgyzstan, Public Figure
Nurgul Kerimbekova	Kyrgyzstan, Head, Department Foreign Policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Vladimir Kouchnirenko	UNESCO, Liaison Officer, Sector for External Relations and International Cooperation
Kurmanbek Kubatbekov	Kyrgyzstan, Agency for Drugs Control
Zarylbek Kudabaev	Kyrgyzstan, National Statistics Committee
Talant Kushchubekov	Kyrgyzstan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Samuel Lee	Republic of Korea, Director, Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding
David Lewis	Kyrgyzstan, Director, Central Asia Project, International Crisis Group
Christopher Lovelace	World Bank, Senior Manager, Country Manager for Kyrgyzstan
Ekaterina Luzanova	Kyrgyzstan, Vice Rector for Science, Kyrgyz National Conservatory
Zamirbek Malabekov	Kyrgyzstan, Committee for State Income
M. Ashraf Malik	Pakistan, Head, Project Administration Unit, Agriculture, Environment, and Natural Resources Division, East and Central Asia Department, Asian Development Bank, Bishkek
Bazarbai Mambetov	Kyrgyzstan, Permanent Delegate of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Eurasian Economic Community
Erkyn Mamkulov	Kyrgyzstan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mytalip Mamytov	Kyrgyzstan, Minister of Health
Omurzak Mamyusupov	Kyrgyzstan, Chairman, State Commission for Religious Affairs
Ularbek Mateev	Kyrgyzstan, Vice Prime Minister
Kubul Mayrkulov	Kyrgyzstan, Manager, Administration of the President's Office

Leonid Medvedko	Russian Federation, Professor, Russian Academy of Sciences
Olga Medvedko	Russian Federation, Researcher Intellectual Dialogue of Civilizations Institute
Oleg Minushkin	Russian Federatin, Professor, Medical Academy of Russian Federation
Karybek Moldobaev	Kyrgyzstan, Rector, Kyrgyz-Turkish University
Lubava Moreva	UNESCO, National Officer for Culture, UNESCO Office Moscow
Parviz Morewedge	USA, Director, Global Scholarly Publications, New York
Markus Muller	OSCE, Ambassador and Head of the OSCE Centre, Bishkek
Rein M llerson	OHCHR, Regional Advisor, Central Asia
Jumanov Murataly	Kyrgyzstan, Holy Board of Muslims
Syrtbai Musaev	Kyrgyzstan, Rector, Bishkek Humanitarian University
Turatbek Musuraliev	Kyrgyzstan, State Agency for Forestry
Vladimir Nifadyev	Kyrgyzstan, Rector, Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University
Kemer Norkin	Russian Federation, Advisor to the Mayor of Moscow
Askar Nurmanov	Kyrgyzstan, International Centre for Globalization Issues
Poman Omorov	Kyrgyzstan, Chairman, State Agency for Science and Intellectual Property
Remi d'Or	France, Director, French Institute of Central Asia Studies, Tashkent
Sergey Ordzhonikidze	UN, Director-General, UN Office at Geneva
Tynymbek Ormonbekov	Kyrgyzstan, Head of Department of Social Issues, Prime Minister's Office
Asan Ormushev	Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyz-Kuwait University
Hans d'Orville	UNESCO, Director, Bureau of Strategic Planning
Damir Oskombaev	Kyrgyzstan, Chairman, Finance Chamber

Vladimir Petrovsky	Russian Federation, Ambassador and Chairman, Dialogue Among Civilizations Foundation
Krista Pikkat	UNESCO, Executive Officer, Office of the Director General
Kathryn Pinnick	United Kingdom, Programme Coordinator and Researcher, Russia and Eurasia Programme, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London
Laryssa Polkovnikova	Kyrgyzstan, Krygyz-Russian Slavic University
Valeriya Porokhova	Russian Federation, Professor, Russian Academy of Sciences
Ann-Belinda Preis	UNESCO, Senior Programme Planning Specialist, Bureau of Strategic Planning
Serik D. Primbetov	Russian Fderation, Deputy General Secretary, Eurasian Economic Community, Moscow
Svetlana Prokopchina	Kyrgyzstan, Director-General, Distributed Information-Analytical Centre for Intelligent Technologies
Georgiy Pryakhin	Russian Federation, Publisher
Philippe Rekacewicz	UNEP, Consultant
Efim Rezvan	Russian Federation, Editor-in-Chief, Manuscripta Orientalia, St. Petersburg
FW (Russ) Russell	UNESCO, Programme Planning Specialist, Information Manager, Bureau of Strategic Planning
Saadettin Sabaz	Turkey, Head of Department, Ministry of Education
Turgunbai Sadykov	Kyrgyzstan, Academy of Arts
Gulruhsor Safieva	Tajikistan, Poet
Kartanbai Samakov	Kyrgyzstan, Chairman, Parliament Committee for International Relations
Haris Saubyanov	Russian Federation, Chairman, Administration of the Holy Board of Muslims
Reza Shabani	Iran, Head of the History Department, International Centre for Dialogue among Civilizations

Muhtar Shakhanov	Kazakhstan, Writer
Vyacheslav Shapovalov	Kyrgyzstan, Vice Rector, Kyrgyz National University
Janybek Sharshenaliev	Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyz Technical University
Shaban Shimshek	Turkey, Deputy Minister of Education
Vladimir Shmyrev	Russian Federation, Professor, Russian Medicine Academy, Moscow
Jerzy Skuratowicz	UNDP, UN Resident Co-ordinator & UNDP Resident Representative in the Kyrgyz Republic
Kynatbek Smanaliev	Kyrgyzstan, Deputy Minister of Education
Ivan Stanchin	Turkmenistan, Researcher, National Environmental Institute
Svetlana Susslova	Kyrgyzstan, Chairperson, Central Asian Academy of Arts
Batyrbek Sydykov	Kyrgyzstan, Rector, Kyrgyz Agriculture Academy
Kadicha Tashbaeva	Uzbekistan, Director, International Institute for Central Asian Studies
Jumabek Tentiev	Kyrgyzstan, Rector, Kyrgyz State University for Architecture and Construction
Kristina Toderich	Uzbekistan, Head, Department of Desert Ecology and Water Resources, Uzbek Academy of Sciences
Osmon Toguzakov	Kyrgyzstan, Director, Institute of Philosophy and Law, National Academy of Sciences
Isa Tokoev	Kyrgyzstan, Chairman, Assembly of People of Kyrgyzstan
Adash Toktosunova	Kyrgyzstan, Secretary-General, Kyrgyz National Commission for UNESCO
Farkhad Tolipov	Russian Federation, Assistant Professor, Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies,
Bakir Ulu Tursunbai	Kyrgyzstan, Ombudsman
Anvar Tursunov	Kyrgyzstan, State Commission for Architecture

	and Construction
Emilbek Uzakbaev	Kyrgyzstan, Academy of Management
Dunya Verwey	Switzerland, Researcher, Dialogue Among Civilizations" Foundation
Chjan Yannyan	China, Ambassador of China to Kyrgyz Republic
Shahobitdin Ziyamov	Uzbekistan, Senior Consultant, Professor, Pedagogical University of Uzbekistan
Victor Zotov	Russian Federation, Professor, Russian University of Friendship of Peoples

Theatrical performance of Manas

Emomali Sharipovich Rahmonov, President of
Tajikistan and Prime Minister Nikolay Tanayev
of the Kyrgyz Republic

Emomali Sharipovich Rahmonov, President of Tajikistan

Ko chiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO; Askar Akaev, President of the Kyrgyz Republic; Emomali Sharipovich Rahmonov, President of Tajikistan; and Mohammad Ali Abtahi, Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Osmonakun Ibraimov, State Secretary of the Kyrgyz Republic; Chinghiz Aitmatov, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to Belgium, Permanent Delegate of Kyrgyzstan to UNESCO; Ko chiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO; and Hans d'Orville, Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning, UNESCO

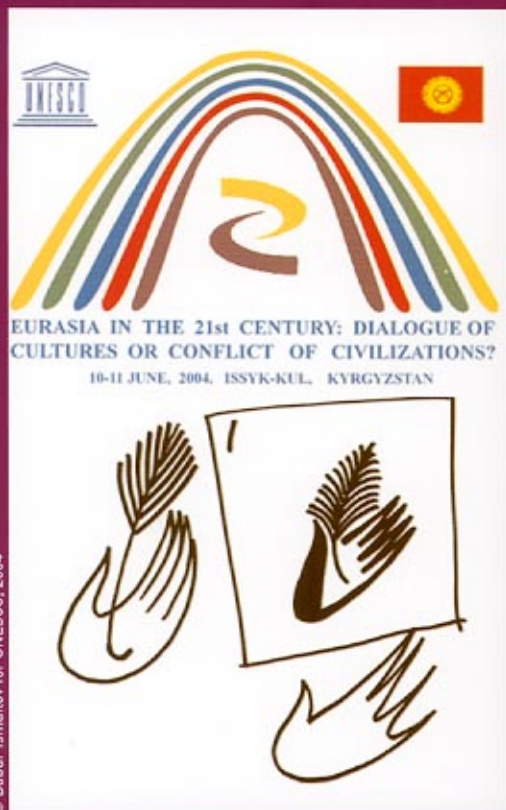Ko chiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO

Notes

Notes

Excerpts form the Issyk-Kul Declaration on Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations in Eurasia

For centuries, Eurasia has been at the crossroads of continents, philosophies, ideologies, trade routes and geopolitical and strategic processes and interests. It has become home for diverse cultures, providing an environment within which the rich experience, aspirations and customs of nations can be effectively shared.

Under conditions of globalization, major developments in Eurasian life and culture have acquired an international dimension.

Indisputably, globalization begets dialogue and international cooperation.

By moving toward mutual trust, dialogue, social harmony and peace, the states of the region can embark on a most promising journey together.

EURASIA IN THE 21st CENTURY: DIALOGUE OF CULTURES OR CONFLICT OF CIVILIZATIONS?

10-11 JUNE, 2004, ISSYK-KUL, KYRGYZSTAN

Today a multi-level and multi-pronged dialogue must be initiated and fostered both among and within civilizations with a view to developing the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous life of future generations. A major line of dialogue should aim at a synthesis between the values of rights, democracy and autonomy on the one hand and those of responsibilities, community and social order on the other hand. Dialogue must focus on the centrality of shared values, which confer meaning to life and provide form and substance to human identities.

Dialogue must be built in the present to bear its true fruits in the future.

For further information about UNESCO's activities related to the Dialogue among Civilizations, please see:
http://www.unesco.org/dialogue