

From Uzbekistan to Central Asia and the Belt and Road Initiative

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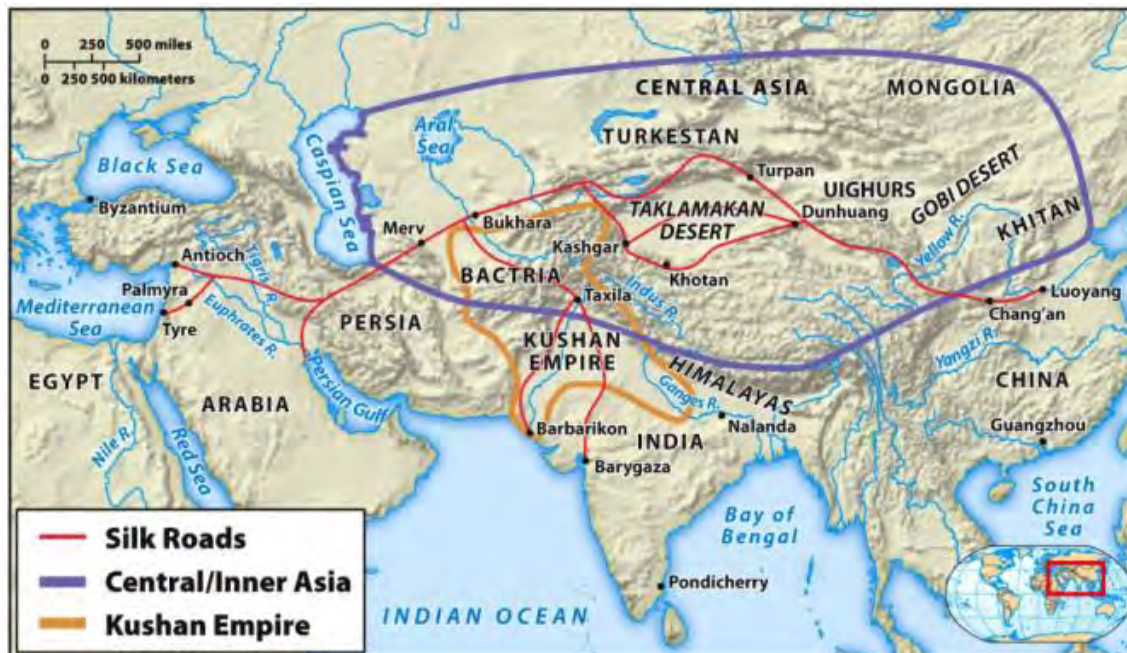
The historical silk Road(s) with many branching routes, but the centre of Eurasian connectivity had always been in the Central Asia and in particular in Uzbekistan



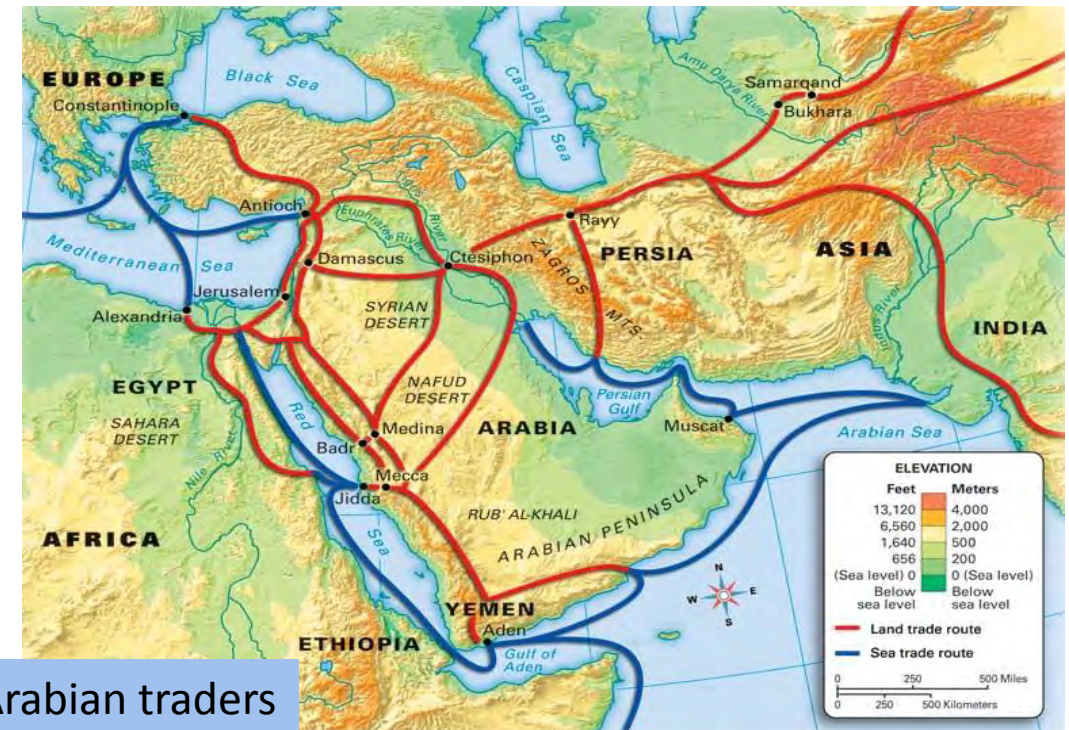
Source:
<https://philebersole.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/silk-road-map1.jpg>

Central Asia as the hub of the ancient Silk Road

was not restricted to over land routes, east and west, but also extended north to south; it could go down cross the present day Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan to reach the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea that would lead to other areas of the Indian Ocean. The hub functions only diminished in the past centuries because of the Great Power Game between Russia and Britain.



Map 7.1 The Silk Roads
Chapter 7, Ways of the World: A Brief Global History, Second Edition and
Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources, Second Edition
Copyright © 2013 by Bedford/St. Martin's
Page 223 (page 319, With Sources)



Arabian traders

Source: <https://mrgrayhistory.wikispaces.com/UNIT+2+-+ISLAM>

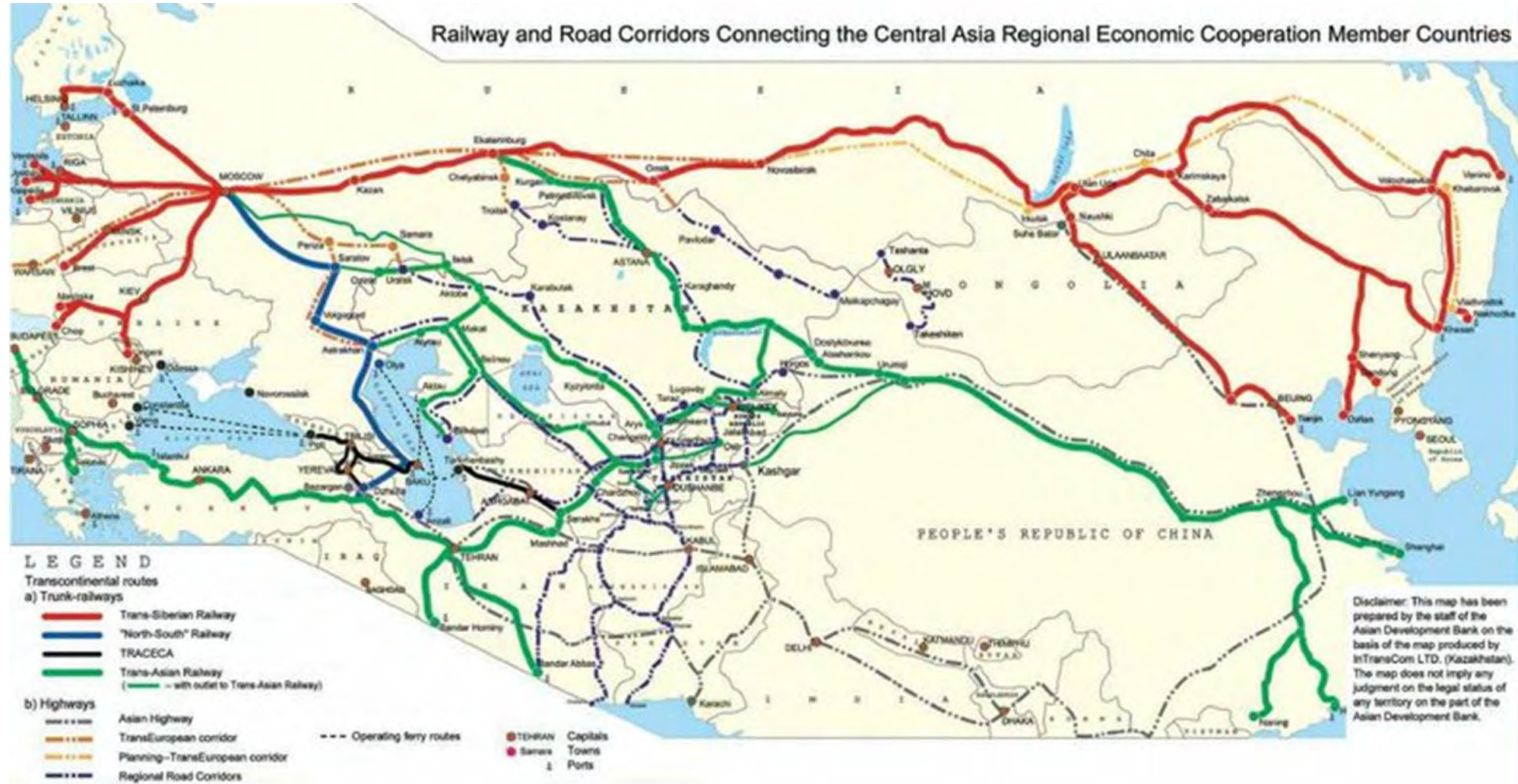


The end of the Cold War provides chances for relinking: CAREC plans for the Eurasian connections in the 1990s



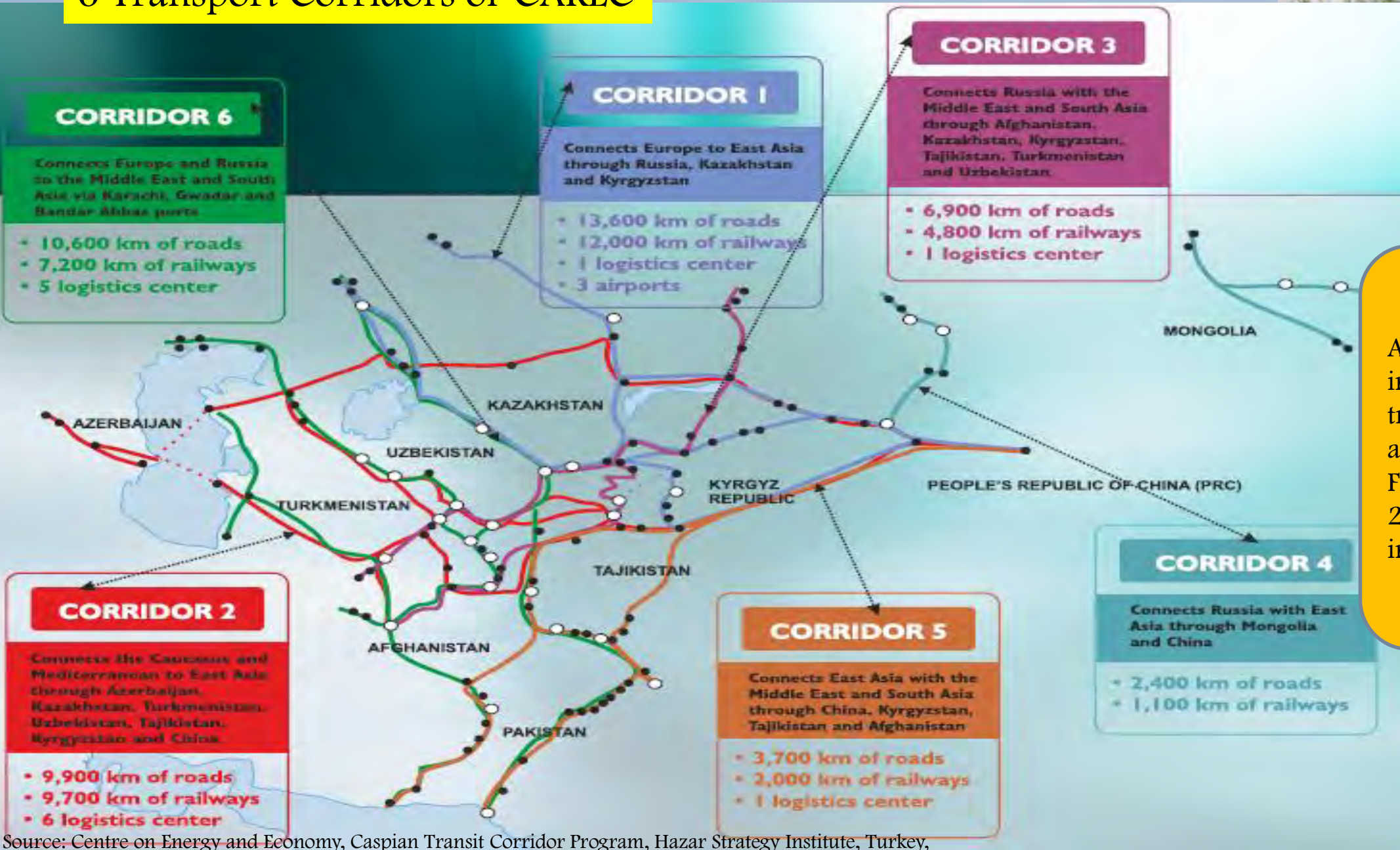
Unlocking the potential of railways: A Railway Strategy for CAREC, 2017–2030, 26 October 2016

11 CAREC Countries:
Afghanistan, Azerbaijan
China, Georgia,
Kazakhstan,
Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia,
Pakistan, Tajikistan,
Turkmenistan, &
Uzbekistan
(established by ADB in 1997)



source: http://asiagateway.typepad.com/_a/6a00006345161a367e20100360004c1970b-popup

6 Transport Corridors of CAREC



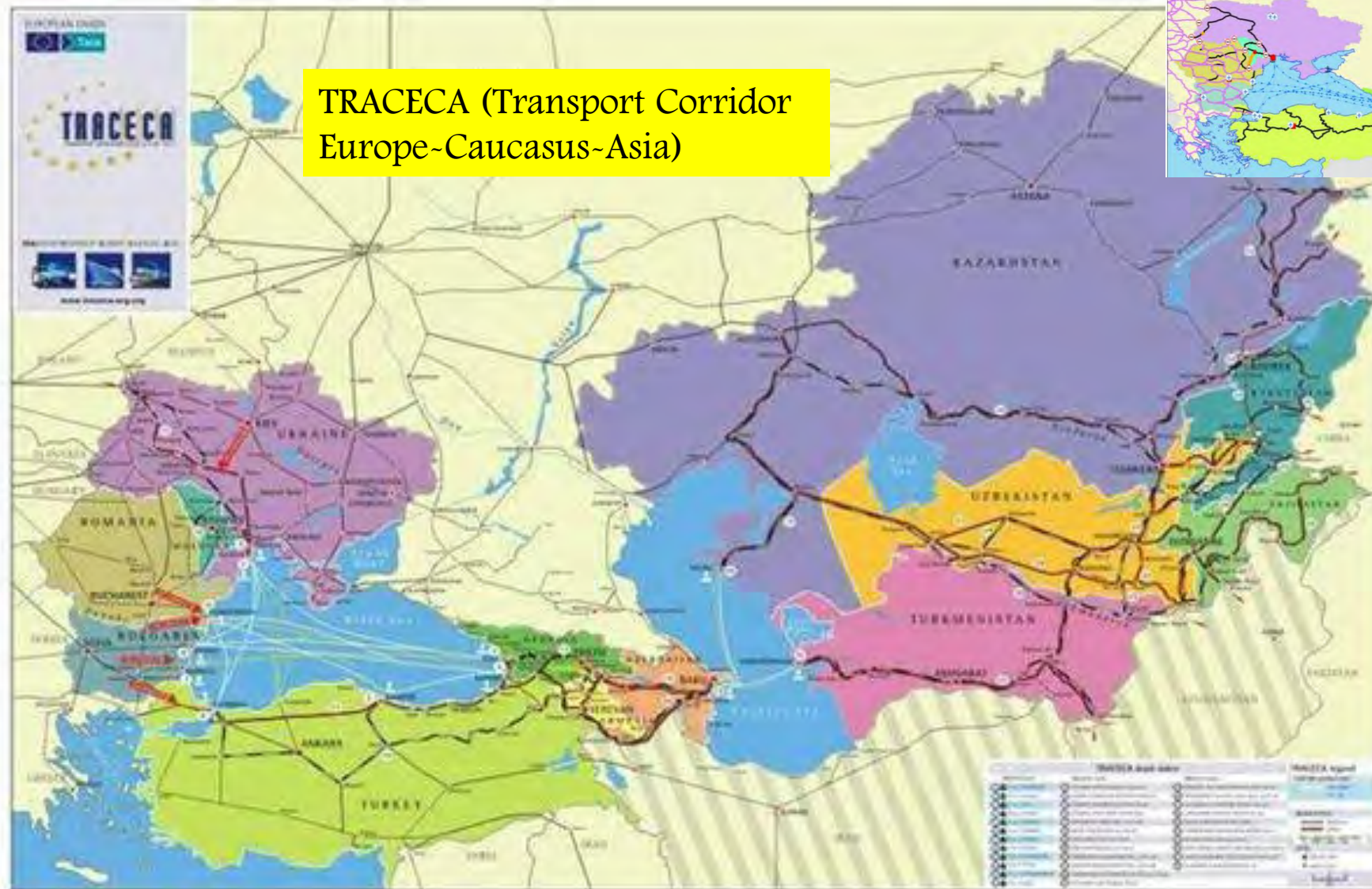
About \$24.2 billion invested in transport, trade facilitation, and energy projects; From 6 projects in 2001 to 154 projects in 2014.

TRACECA ~ financed by the European Union and aimed at the development of the transport corridor from Europe, crossing the Black Sea, Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and reaching the Central Asian countries (first initiated in 1993 with 13 members since 2009)



Rail investment projects

EU and
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Bulgaria
Georgia
Iran
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Moldova
Romania
Tajikistan
Turkey
Ukraine
Uzbekistan



Source: LOGMOS
Master Plan, Sept. 2014



Source: http://www.georgien-onlinenews.de/Pics_masala/BTK_Eisenbahn.jpg

Oct. 2017 opening of
the BTK railway

Source: <http://www.traceca.org/en/countries/azerbaijan/azerbaijan-in-traceca/>

2005 updated version of trans-Asian railway network by UNESCAP



117,500 km of
railway lines
serving 28 member
countries



As part of the Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development project of UNESCAP in April 1992 & it takes the form of Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans Asian Railway Network effective from June 2009

Source: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Toward an Asian Integrated Transport Network*, Monograph Series on Managing Globalization, No.1, United Nations, 2005, p.105

Figure 21: Map of the Trans-Asian Railway, September 2005 (Source: ESCAP Secretariat).



Source: http://www.georgien-onlinenews.de/Pics_masala/BTK_Eisenbahn.jpg

Oct. 2017 opening of the BTK railway (from Baku to Tbilisi to Kar)



Central Asia's transport connectivity by 2016



KUT are major suppliers of gas to China

Source: <http://www.eurasianbusinessbriefing.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/China-Central-Asia-pipelines.gif>

From landlocked-ness to regional railway hub

Scheme of Uzbekistan Railways



1. China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan (CKU) railway ready to start construction of the missing Kyrgyzstan section;
2. Operation of the Angren-Pap railway line in 2016, improving the connection between the Fergana Valley with the rest of Uzbekistan and beyond.

Source:
<https://www.votpusk.ru/story/edit/foto/large/39003.jpg>

The support of China's Belt and Road Initiative to Central Asian development – regular freight trains linking with Europe & Central Asia

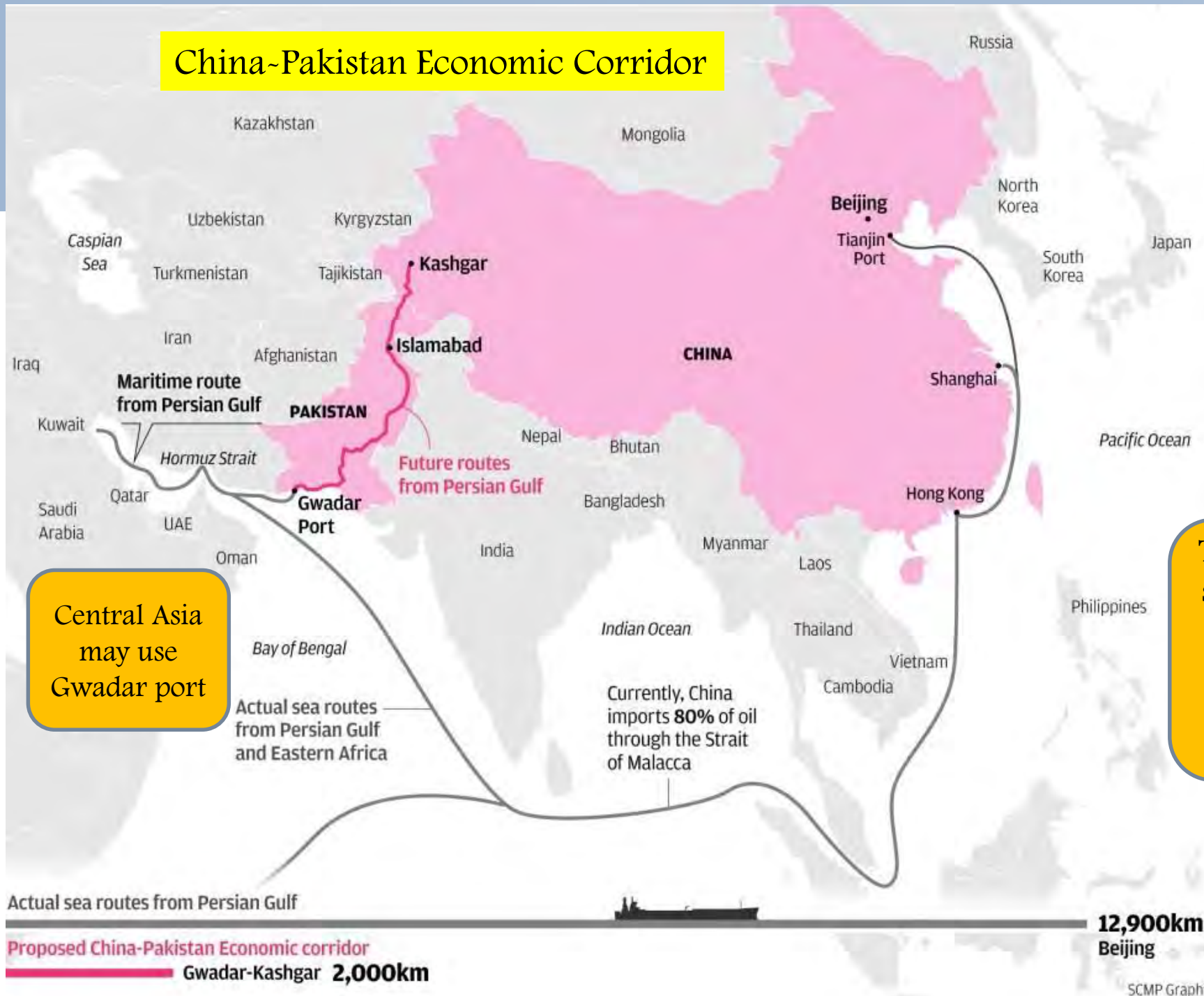


Central Asia serves as the regional hub for China Europe trade:

- ~ The northern route through Russia and Kazakhstan;
- ~ The southern route through Uzbekistan with extensions to Turkey, Persian Gulf & Arabian Sea



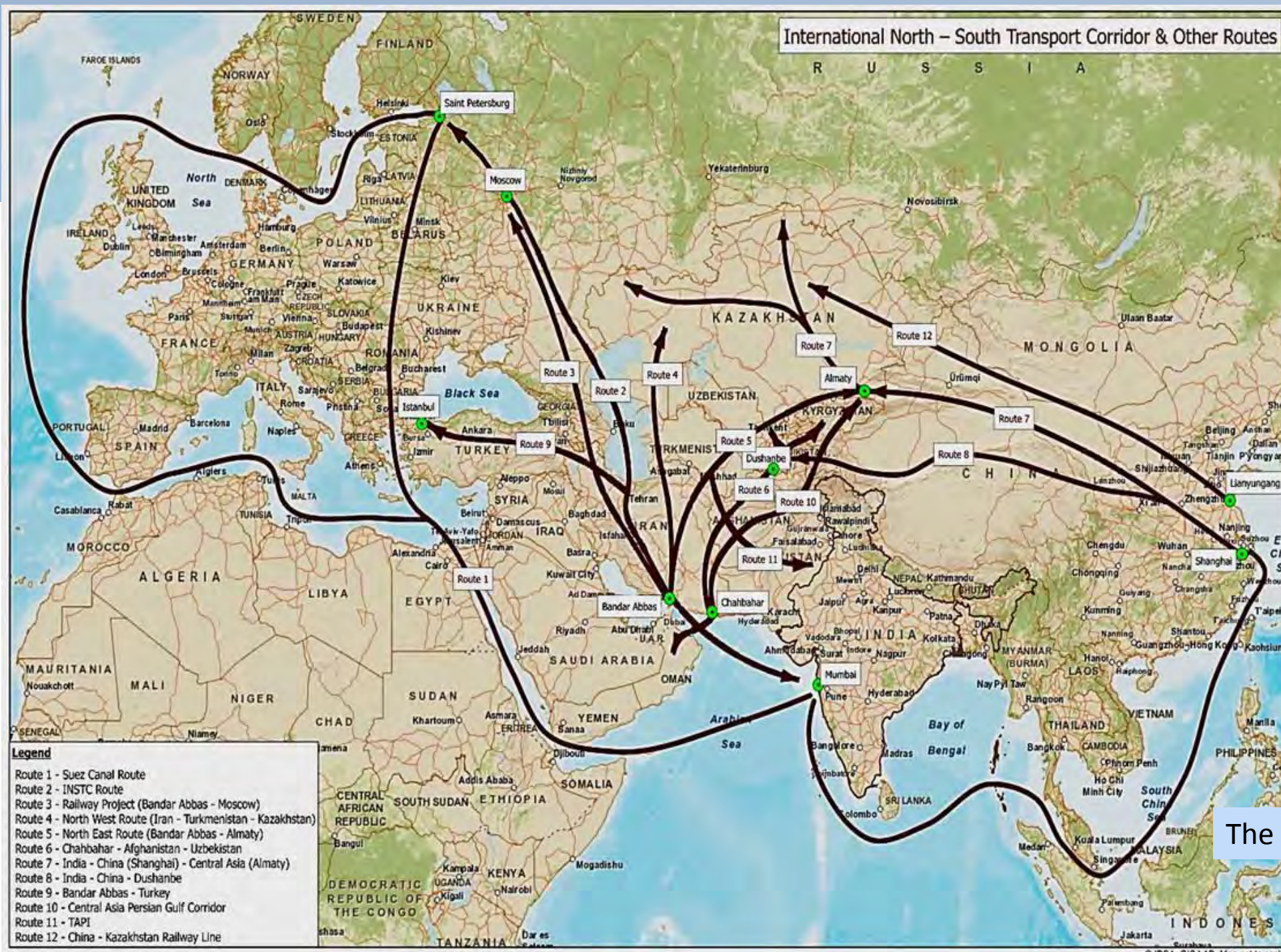
China-Pakistan Economic Corridor



A game changer for China's link with the Middle East (oil supply) – to avoid the Indian Ocean altogether

The improved Gwadar port has started operation in 2017 with also cargoes carried from Kashgar through the Kara Kunlun Highway for seaborne transport via the port

Source:
<http://walizahid.com/2015/11/economic-corridor-gets-4-layer-security-as-gwadar-to-be-made-weapon-free/>



From the heart of Eurasia of Uzbekistan and Central Asia, the silk road routes spread in all directions

The Russia & Indian perspective

Source: GIS Lab, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi.

The role of Hong Kong



Leveraging on the local Global financial and advanced producer service centre functions and its special relationship with other parts of China, Hong Kong could serve as the overseas headquarter for Uzbekistan and Central Asia countries and become the platform for investors and firms as well as other economic and social organizations from all countries to exchange, cooperate and collaborate. Diversity brings innovation and synergy would mean coevolution and mutual benefits. Modern telecommunication technological advancement has eliminated the limitations imposed by geography and weakened any space-related institutional and cultural obstacles.

Hong Kong needs to improve connectivity with Uzbekistan and Central Asia by means of bilateral investment agreements, free trade agreements, visa exemption agreements and other economic and cultural cooperation as well as direct flights. Hong Kong should have more education exchanges with them.