NEW HORIZONS ON THE GREAT SILK ROAD*

Eurasia is poised to become a territory of accelerated growth and sustainable development, based on its enormous natural resources and production capacity, its scientific and technical potential, and financial and human capital in the East and West, North and South of the continent.

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The city of Sawran, through which passed the Great Silk Road, II century B.C.

countries represented in SRCIC is now more than 50. SRCIC has established five professional committees - on trade, finance, culture, transportation and energy, and seven sub-organizations including Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) with possible participation in joint projects of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states as well. The acces-
Partnership (TEEP) with a common transport and logistics network as its main pillar. This would add to the OBOR initiative a top-level infrastructure mega-project, with virtually unlimited potential for development. Together with the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), no matter what form they might take in the changing political environment, TEEP might well lead to a common Transcontinental Development Belt (TCDB).

TEEP, formed by the EAEU and SCO member-states in cooperation with interested parties across Asia and Europe, including the EU, and other continents, as well as the proposed Transcontinental Development Belt, are considered to be an alternative to the attempts to monopolize all benefits from dual trends in Greater Eurasia development – for integration and for disintegration. This shows the importance of an attractive and reliable platform for the idea of a Single Economic Space from Lisbon to Vladivostok and from Helsinki and Archangel to Singapore and Mumbai. This major platform could be formed by a Trans-Eurasian Economic Partnership (TEEP) with a common transport and logistics network as its main pillar. This would add to the OBOR initiative a top-level infrastructure mega-project, with virtually unlimited potential for development. Together with the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), no matter what form they might take in the changing political environment, TEEP might well lead to a common Transcontinental Development Belt (TCDB).
new technologies and to create the barriers to the broad spread of breakthrough innovation in order to retain an advantage.

An extensive network of high-speed transport corridors with all the modern logistic facilities across the whole territory of Eurasia form the basis of the TEE project. The creation of such a network provides the opportunity not just to upgrade the infrastructure for ease of communication, but to securely connect the one and the same development in different areas. And one of the main routes between East and West in the new Eurasian transport network should be the Moscow-Western Europe transport corridor with its spur lines to the Baltic, Atlantic and Mediterranean states in the West and to Pacific, South and South-East Asia countries on the other side. Modern traffic arteries should reliably link with the neighboring states the countries of EAEU, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and SCO, restoring to a new level an ancient route «from the Varangians to the Greeks» and forming a powerful North-South transport corridor. Passing through Armenia, Georgia or Ukraine, new transport routes will help to resolve the existing conflicts, and they should contribute to economic growth almost everywhere. And the commercial attractiveness of high-speed railway links from Central Asia through Belarus to Poland and Germany, with possible outlets to Lithuania and Kaliningrad Region, is clear.

As an example, the 770-km Moscow-Kazan Manchurian Railway, might provide some useful experience which can be developed to reflect current realities. Of course, conditions – the railroad was severely damaged during the Boxer Rebellion that swept the Qing Empire in 1899-1901 – the Chinese Eastern Railway Joint Stock Co. (CER JSC) was built with the participation of foreign capital in record time (from 1897 to 1903). And this multimodal infra-structure project eventually became profitable. The next largest TSR near the Siberian city of Chita via Harbin (built as the CER capital) to Vladivostok and Port Arrows, passed through the capitals of Khabarovsk, Seoul and other major cities. Management of the project was entrusted to the Russian-Chinese Bank (RCB) established in December 1895. More than 60% of its capital came from four French banks and 15% from the St. Petersburg International Commercial Bank, which was under German influence. The Chinese envoy to St. Petersburg and Berlin (who later became the first chairman of CER) signed the 80-year concession agreement for RCB, and the CER ISC Charter in December 1896 was approved by Nicholas II.

The concession agreement granted CER the sole right of management over vast areas and that was used to the full. The CER had not just the rail-road and the rolling stock at its disposal, but also a variety of production facilities and farmland. CER also built its own maritime fleet and ran regular shipments to Japanese, Korean and Chinese coastal cities. Their entrusted mandate remains a challenge for both banks. And in terms of budget constraints this is an important consideration.

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