

جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان
وزارت انرژی و آب



د افغانستان اسلامی جمهوریت
د انرژی او اېو وزارت

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Ministry of Energy and Water

Speech of **HE Mr. Mohammad Ismail**, Minister of Energy and Water of
Afghanistan in the International Conference on
"Strengthening regional cooperation in Central Asia for promoting stable
and reliable energy within Eurasia

3-4 May 2010

Turkmenistan – Ashgabat

In the name of God who is kind and merciful

**Excellencies, brothers, sisters and dear friends Asalam o Aliakum wa
RAahmatullah wa Barakt**

I would like to thank the organizers of this important conference for granting Afghanistan and its Ministry of Energy the opportunity to participate in this conference and take steps with you towards achieving common economic goals for our region.

Our gathering here mirrors that of a family in which different members have gathered to provide input on increasing economic development and economic growth. Energy serves as the basic requirement of all countries, especially developing countries and is integral in the rapid movement of a country's economic wheels. From a regional perspective, one can observe that the utilizing domestic resources of energy supply can meet the demand within Central Asia as well as South Asia.

Central Asian countries including Afghanistan are among the richest countries in Asia that possess large generating capacity. The existence of plentiful

resources of water, petroleum and natural gas that are the main sources for electric energy generation all the countries to pave the ground to meet the demands of the Central and South Asian countries.

As everyone knows, Central Asian Republics have huge reserves of fuel and gas, abundant amount of water and suitable topography for power generation. These countries are able to meet their overall domestic electricity demands through thermal and hydropower plants, and export the surplus amount to neighboring countries facing energy shortage. Due to its dense population, existence of heavy industries, hot climate and lack of sufficient resources to generate electric energy from natural resources, South Asian countries are in significant need of electricity. The excess supply by the Central Asian Republics and the excess demand of the South Asian countries paves the grounds for the establishment of energy trade and regional cooperation among the countries.

The geographical location of Afghanistan can function as a strong bridge to promote energy trade between countries generating energy and countries purchasing it. Furthermore, Afghanistan's own water resources allow it to not only generate power from its own resources for domestic use and export but also wheel the power to the neighboring countries in South Asia. ..

In 2003, Afghanistan started discussions with its neighboring Central Asian countries on electricity transmission and regional cooperation. Here I would like to discuss briefly about programs that are necessary for strengthening of regional cooperation in Central Asia for sustainable and reliable development of energy:

- The extension of 220Kv transmission line from Republic of Uzbekistan to Kabul city completed with the assistance of donor agencies, has met partially the demand of Kabul city and the provinces lying in the route of the transmission line. With the completion of a high voltage national ring grid and connection of the republic of Tajikistan, the general shortage of electricity will be met in Afghanistan , particularly of eastern and southern provinces.
- The Republic of Turkmenistan is one of the richest countries in the region having abundant reserves of fuel and gas. It has the ability to convert the energy through gas thermal plants to electricity that will not only meet its domestic requirements, but also will meet the requirements of its neighboring countries. The only reliable route to transmit electric energy from Turkmenistan to Tajikistan and other South Asian countries by connecting a

500Kv transmission line to CASA 1000 system is Afghanistan,. Turkmenistan can transmit its generated energy to other countries in the region, which will not only be very useful to help improve the relationship among the countries , but also will pave the way to improve the commercial ties and regional cooperation between Central and South Asian countries through Afghanistan. It must be mentioned that extending a 500Kv line from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan, will be useful to fulfill partially the electric energy need of Afghanistan; and, in the future it can be used to transmit electric energy to South Asian and Central Asian countries.

- The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has significant potential and with the assistance of international institutions, donor countries and other donor agencies, it is ready to move forward toward the construction of some of its own hydroelectric plant projects. The feasibility study of some of those projects completed and is ready for implementation. The surplus amount of electricity that could be generated by Afghanistan could be supplied to the countries in need. The geographical location of Afghanistan is suitable for transit and connecting neighboring countries with each other.
- Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, through 500Kv line or through extending separate lines, can also participate in trade and strengthening of regional cooperation in Central Asia and development of sustainable and reliable energy.
- In December 7, 2007 Afghanistan was voted as the 54th Member Nation of the Energy Charter Treaty. This has given the opportunity to Afghanistan to freely participate in the regional cooperation and take an active part in the global energy trade to support the private sector, promote energy efficiency and maintain environmental protection standards in the production and supply of energy.
- The Ministry of Energy and Water of Afghanistan is determined to bring the required reform in the energy sector and has prepared the draft Electricity Law to be submitted for ratification. For active participation, encouragement and promotion of the private sector to invest in Afghanistan's electricity sector, an Interim Regulator has also been established.

Respected participants:

We hope that through the individual steps undertaken by Afghanistan and its neighbors, in togetherness and in combining our efforts, we can collectively enrich the region. In bringing the frontiers of our countries together, with high spirit and without feeling like strangers, it is my hope that each of us could work toward the development of our countries like a joint family, and like developed societies.

With regards

Alhaj Mohammad Ismail

Acting Minister of Energy and Water