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## Attitudes on Trans-Himalayan Cooperation



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### Abstract

The aim of this essay is to understand the attitudes on Trans-Himalayan Cooperation. The approach was to pick up the main thoughts presented in the Fifth China-South Asia Cultural Forum (Chengdu, December 14-16, 2015) on the topic “Exploring Cooperation across the Himalayas”, synthesize those attitudes using a Q Method approach and suggests a SWOT Analysis to categorise the main cooperation issues and strategies. Five types of attitudes are named and described: i) Regional Cooperation for Peace and Development; ii) Effective Cooperation on Research and Education; iii) Effective Sectoral Cooperation; iv) Cooperation on Poverty Reduction; and v) Cooperation on Corridors. Two different strategies are discussed: a) a passive strategy that assumes that the economic dynamism between nearby countries can be threatened by terrorism fuelled by inequality, poverty, water shortages and energy instability; and b) an active strategy that explores the cooperation opportunities associated with globalization, exploring academic and research capabilities, designing sustainable water agreements, promoting energy and touristic resources or implementing Trans-Himalayan corridors.

**Keywords:** *Regional Cooperation, Trans-Himalayan Cooperation, Economic Corridors*

## 1 - Introduction

The Himalayas are between the two most prominent economic spaces of the XXI century, (Kaplinsky and Messner 2008<sup>1</sup>) India and China (Economist, 2010<sup>2</sup>). Since ever this natural barrier between rich territories and remarkable civilizations, fed them with water and soil, filtered the passage for silk and spices, and – with the active testimony of local settlers – contributed to the humans’ communication or muteness among themselves and between themselves and the Heaven. The Himalayas are the wall that permits the door, the barrier that requires the link while providing the opportunity for alternative passages through the sea and the air; they can also be the bases of mountain centralities testified by cities like Lhasa or countries like Nepal<sup>3</sup>. Somehow these mountains guarantee the identity of civilizations moulded by the relations to the otherness.

Since ever those places and passages were shaped by nature and marginally managed by nearby settlers and remote civilizations. Nevertheless, globalization and technology are changing the capacity of those nearby and remote decisions makers, and necessarily their thoughts over those passages and places. What are the main attitudes and values on Trans-Himalayan Cooperation? What are the common values and attitudes that can be the bases for effective cooperation and sustained development?

The aim of this essay is to contribute to the understanding of what are the attitudes and values on Trans-Himalayan Cooperation. The approach is to pick up the main thoughts presented in the Fifth China-South Asia Cultural Forum (Chengdu, December 14-16, 2015) on the topic “Exploring Cooperation across the Himalayas” and to undertake an analysis to identify the main common attitudes and values that can provide some guidance for effective cooperation.

Point 2 provides a summary of the main thoughts presented in the Fifth China-South Asia Cultural Forum. Point 3 shows the selection of thoughts and synthesises attitudes regarding regional cooperation in Souths Asia. Point 4 derives alternative cooperation strategies and in Point 5 discusses the prospective effects of those strategies on cooperation and development.

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<sup>1</sup> The Economist, 2010 - China and India, Contest of the century. Aug 19<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Kaplinsky, R. and D. Messner 2008: Introduction: The Impact of Asian Drivers on the Developing World. In: World Development 36 (2): 197–209.

<sup>3</sup> Wolfgang-Peter Zingel commented the draft paper writing that “Mountains are not necessarily boundaries and, historically, many human communities of the diverging valleys of the same mountain range communicate on the ridges. Historically, the Kingdom of Bolor once was a fairly large kingdom controlling the high ranges of the Western Himalaya and the Karakoram”.

## 2 – The Fifth China-South Asia Cultural Forum

### Presentation

The Institute of South Asian Studies of Sichuan University, organized the Fifth China-South Asia Cultural Forum in Chengdu, China, on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015, involving around fifty scholars, students, experts and stakeholders from China, India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Singapore, Bangladesh and Europe. It included five speeches in the Opening Session, six comments in the Closing Session and twenty-seven presentations organized into five themes: Conceptualization of Trans-Himalaya Cooperation; Political and Security Cooperation; Trans-national infrastructural development and economic cooperation; and Cultural Exchanges and Educational Cooperation.

### Common assets of Trans - Himalayan peoples, paths and places

The Opening Session recalled a set of common assets shared by Trans – Himalayan peoples, paths and places. There is a long history of cooperation across the Himalayas (1); cooperation that took place around the Silk Road where peace, harmony and friendship could thrive (2); such cooperation should be reinforced along the XXI century (the century of Asia); namely in the sectors of energy, water, transportation (3) and education (4).

Nevertheless, as recalled by Huang Renwei (5), there are non-cooperation traps and if those traps are not faced adequately it is difficult to cooperate fruitfully. First, there are political and security issues often associate to land disputes; second, it is not clear what can be done regarding water, energy and commercial capabilities; and, finally, there is still an unknown space of cooperation much beyond the cooperation paradigms of the industrial era; and concludes that, this is the time to share different perspectives on Trans-Himalayan cooperation.

### Conceptualization of Trans-Himalaya Cooperation

According to Li Mingjiang (6) there are various models of regional cooperation that can be adopted to overcome the treats and explore the opportunities of Trans – Himalayan Cooperation: 1) The ASEAN model joint countries that complement each other; it is very much institutionalised through a multitude of meetings and it is recognised in the world forum. 2) The Central Asia Model that moves around the China and Russia Consortium and within which different partners adapt themselves. 3) The One Belt – One Road Model where China takes the lead no matter what India does. 4) The China –ASEAN Model stimulates the participation of local governments; and, as explained by Paulo Casaca (7), the European Model that, to avoid conflict, promotes cooperation around agriculture, trade, water, energy, transport, with a major concern in understanding each other interests.

In which concerns water, energy and commercial capabilities Khalid Radman (8) pointed out that diversity is reflected in society, that humans cannot live in isolation, and that technology reduces time and space and changes peoples' perceptions. Therefore, there is a lot to be

thought and implemented regarding cooperation on water, energy, rail and road networks, trade, software and education.

Nevertheless, the wisdom of cooperation learned from history have to cope with the challenges of future cooperation namely by building a common understanding of security (9), talking and finding a common ground for both peace and cooperation. As stressed by Leela Paudyal (10) the common enemy is mal nutrition and poverty.

### **Cooperation on a New Security Paradigm**

In fact, there is a lot to talk. ISIS is grouping in Afghanistan creating more potential instability and there is a third generation of extremists that create problems within all the countries of the world (11). To deal with these threats there is an urgent need to promote a New Security Paradigm (12), doing a better job in terms of equity, look more carefully on the issues of water (13), eradicating poverty that supports radicalization (14), facing the challenges of instability, climate change, and favouritism (15), cooperate in disaster relief and share experiences (16).

### **Cultural Exchanges and Educational Cooperation**

Today it is possible to look at each other differently. 1) We need to change taboos that classify others; 2) We need to pay attention to food security; 3) We need to be objective. In a survey done to different people from China and Bangladesh there were no major differences regarding attitudes and values related to individualism, indulgence and power dispute; the only difference is that Chinese have more long term perspectives and are more risk takers (17).

With common values and attitudes, it is possible to integrate research with teaching and there are very good capabilities regarding both (18), by establishing a platform for higher education programs (19), by exploring the common culture as catalyst of cultural relations (20), by enhancing the role to the gateways in Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan (21), by exploring cooperation in health and education (22), by sharing history (23) and by stimulating people to people relations (24).

### **Trans-national infrastructural development and economic cooperation**

Trade between India and China is nowadays very limited compared with the XVIII century. In fact, for more than 200 years India changed its interests to the sea and reduced trade and cooperation in the Continent; on the other hand, the rise of maritime empires and coastal areas represented the destruction of most of the internal routes and the isolation of each country regarding their continental neighbours. Before that China and India were complementary, there was a silk and a cotton road, borders were less important than links and time solved the border issues. Actually History and Geography are not the only things that are important and trade is made by humans not territories. Those were the thoughts presented by Ravi Mishram (25).

N <sup>o</sup>	Phrases on South Asia Cooperation
1	There is a long history of cooperation across the Himalayas
2	The XXI Century is the century of Asia
3	We need to find new frontiers of cooperation and recommend the best options.
4	The Himalayans is a difficult land for natural and non-natural reasons.
5	The Himalayans are a source of crucial resources regarding tourism,
6	We must find a ground for peace; the common enemy is mal nutrition and poverty
7	A common understanding of security should be created across the Himalayans
8	Regional cooperation has a crucial contribution for peace and development
9	There is a need for political trust and mitigation territorial disputes
10	Poverty supports radicalization
11	We need to face the challenges of instability, taxes, climate change, and favouritism.
12	Security involves the cooperation on environment, food security and terrorism
13	We should do a better job in terms of equity
14	We should also look more carefully on the issues of water
15	We need to reduce poverty, cooperate in disaster relief, share experiences and data.
16	China, India and Pakistan have water stress issues and waste of water use is increasing
17	We should have a platform to work with higher education programs
18	Tibet is the gateway of China in relation to India
19	We need more cooperation in Heath
20	We need to intensify education, to teach languages and to share common history.
21	It is important to establish people to people relations
22	Between peoples there are no major differences regarding attitudes and values.
23	One of the more important policies for the region is the program one-belt/one road
24	The more important barriers to trade are institutional and not infrastructural.
25	There is not enough understanding of the geological risks of the central road
26	There is the pilgrim's path to improve
27	There is a need to look at all value chain and not only industrial value chains
28	China and India are complementary
29	We can have a league of Universities across the Himalayas
30	We can have a league of health across the Himalayas
31	We can have a league of media across the Himalayas,
32	We can have a league on water management across the Himalayas
33	We need a forum that can implement stability and development in the region
34	We need postgraduate students to do research on Himalayan issues
35	Small actors can help to facilitate cooperation.
36	We need to try a mechanism to increase the effectiveness of our work.

*Table 1: Phrases on South Asia Cooperation*

Notwithstanding this there is some disbelief in India regarding the program one-belt/one road that, although without clear road networks (26), will eventually open Tibet to Bhutan and India to China (27). Furthermore, there is not enough understanding of the geological risks of those roads and some local governments have concerns about the benefits of the

corridors (28). In fact, the more important barriers to trade are institutional and not infrastructural (29) consubstantiated in protectionism, trade taxes and corruption (30).

And yet, there is the pilgrim's path to improve links China with India through Nepal and possibly Bhutan (31) and the Indian government talks about the construction of a community of common destiny (32). All these thoughts were synthesised in 36 short and clear statements (Table 1) that somehow synthesise the main ideas presented in the Fifth China-South Asia Cultural Forum in December 2015 in Chengdu.

### **3 – Q Method Analysis on Attitudes on Trans Himalayan Regional Cooperation**

From what was heard it seems that the time has come for Trans-Himalayan cooperation. Promoting across the Himalayas a league of Universities, a league of Health, a league of Media and an agreement on water sharing. By doing research on Himalayan issues that fosters cooperation and prosperity in the region and across the region. And to promote a cycle of stability, cooperation and sustainable development.

Notwithstanding this, it is important to go beyond the good thoughts and try to understand what are the implicit values and attitudes. To look further into this the 36 phrases presented on Table 1 were classified from -4 (total disagreement) to +4 (full agreement) by researchers based in China, India, Bangladesh and Europe.

The principal component identification of the respondents allowed the creation 5 main types of attitudes on regional cooperation in South Asia: 1) Regional Cooperation for Peace and Development; 2) Effective Cooperation on Research and Education; 3) Effective Cooperation on Health and Education; 4) Cooperation to Reduce Poverty; and 5) Cooperation on Corridors.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Principal Component: Governmental Cooperation for Peace and Development**

The first principal component identified explains 31% of the total variance. The typical stakeholder associated with this component is a young researcher from different countries in the region and around the world.

Two main ideas are supported by this perspective that we named “Governmental Cooperation for Peace and Development”.

On the one hand it defends that regional cooperation should be done to promote peace and development focusing themes that require a strong governmental involvement such as water, territory, poverty and security.

On the other hand, it is a relatively pessimistic perception since it does not agree that most people have similar attitudes, neither that people to people cooperation on education and health can lead to effective cooperation.

In this sense it is quite different from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Principal Component “Effective Cooperation on Research and Education” and from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Principal Component “Effective Cooperation on Health and Education”.

The pessimism implicit in this perspective on South Asia can be associated with the main threats that frightens the region:

- i) Lack of common understanding of security across the Himalayans;
- ii) No political trust and lack of mitigation territorial disputes;
- iii) Environment problems namely related to water stress in China, India and Pakistan;
- iv) Food security;
- v) And, Terrorism.

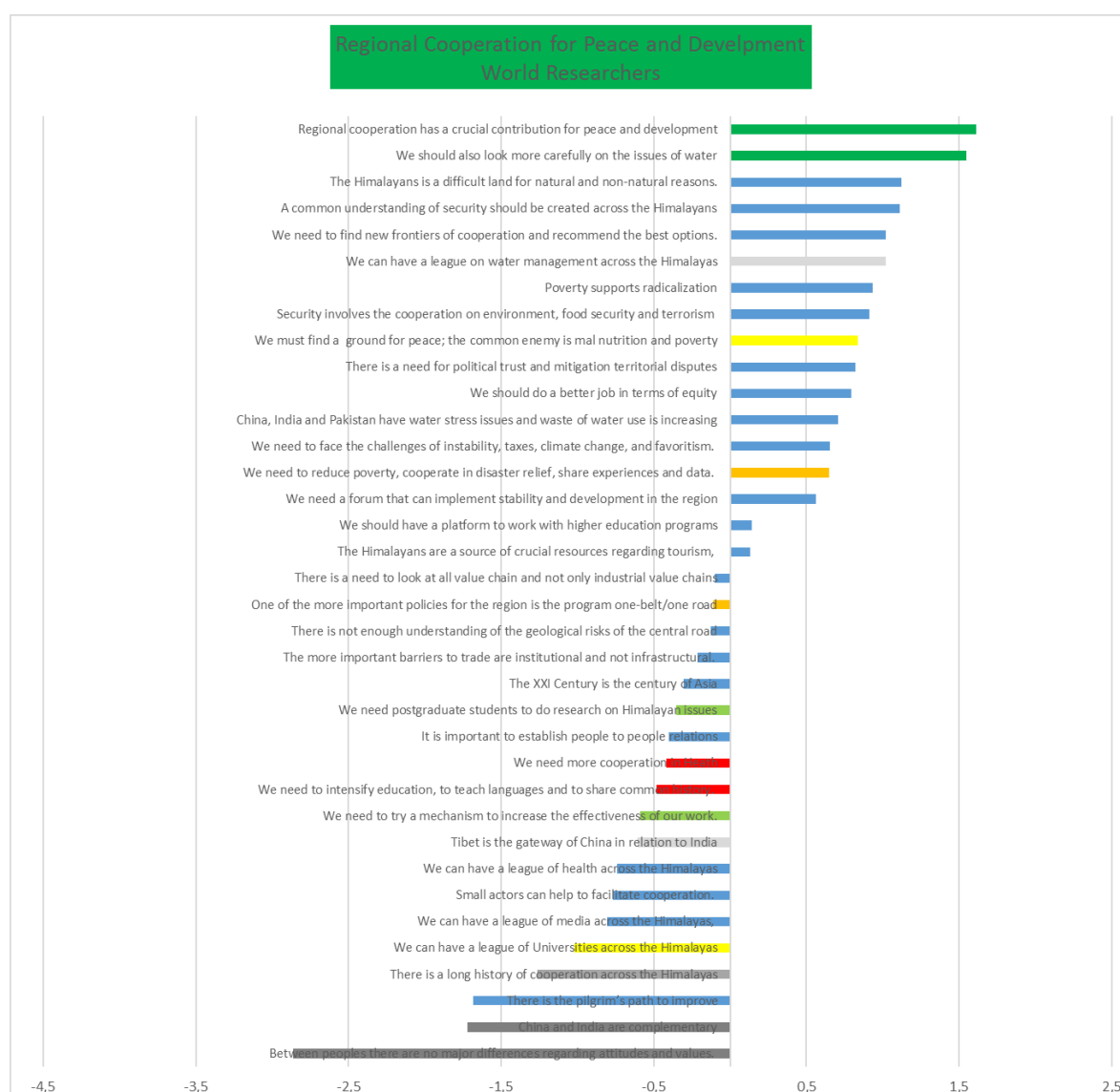


Figure 1: 1<sup>st</sup> Principal Component: Regional Cooperation for Peace and Development



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Principal Component: Effective Personal Cooperation on Research and Education

The second principal component identified explains 15% of the total variance. The interviewees more linked with this perspective are also young researchers but this time coming the Bengal Area, from India and Bangladesh.

The thoughts behind this perspective are expressed in the designation suggested “Effective Personal Cooperation on Research and Education”. The main idea is that there is a lot to know better and that person to person contacts in research and education can be very effective.

This perspective does not take very much into account the issues of malnutrition and poverty and it is strongly against the idea that poverty supports radicalization.

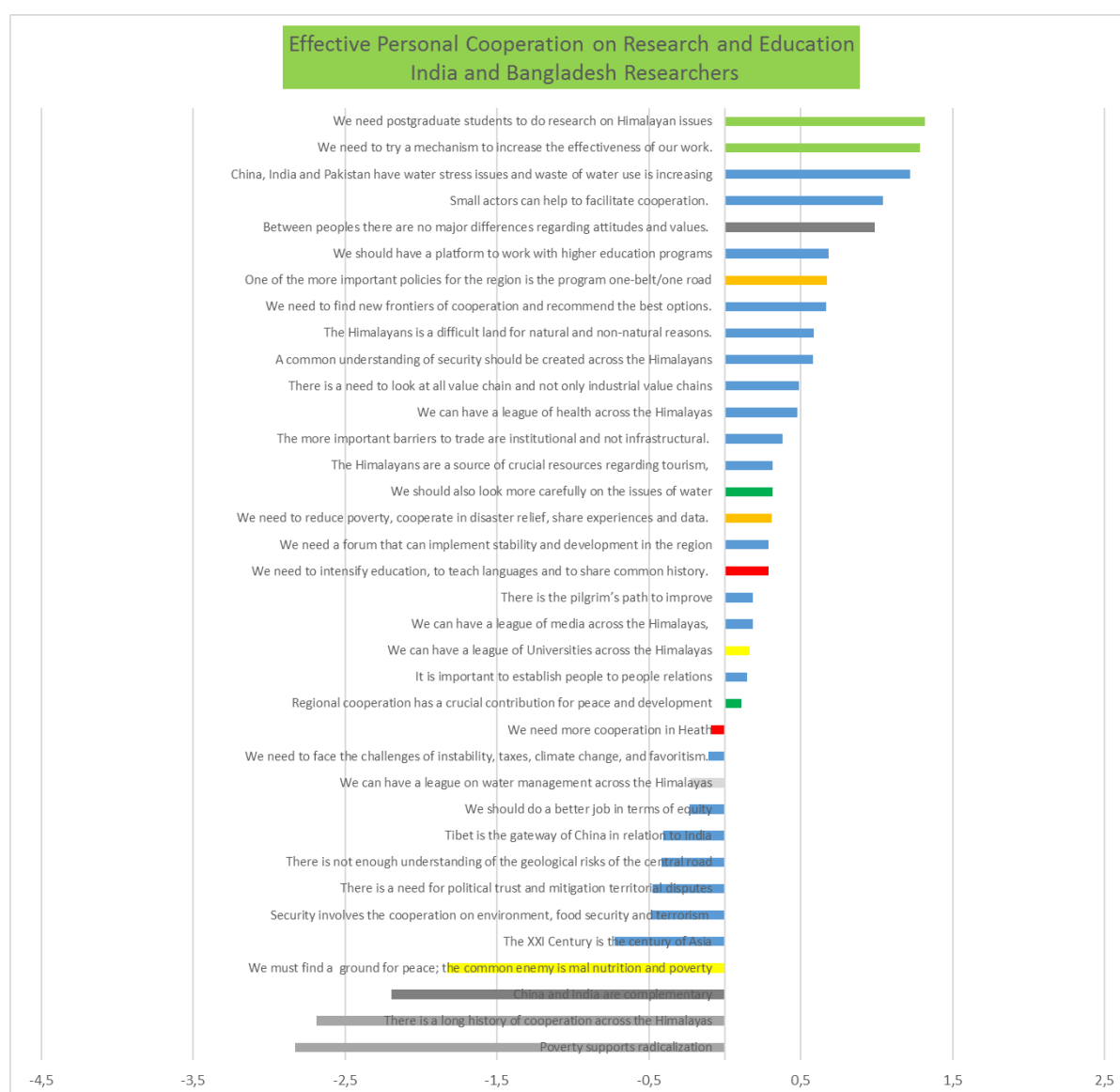


Figure 2: 2<sup>nd</sup> Principal Component: Effective Cooperation on Research and Education



It is an optimistic assessment that assumes that most people have similar attitudes and that better knowledge implies better solutions. Furthermore, it is quite different from the 1<sup>st</sup> Principal Component “Governmental Cooperation for Peace and Development”, because it is not based on governmental initiative, and from the 4<sup>th</sup> Principal Component “Cooperation to Reduce Poverty”.

The optimist embedded in this perspective on South Asia regional cooperation is associated with the thought that there are no major differences on peoples’ attitudes and values.

Nevertheless, according to this perspective, there is not much to expect from the other announced strengths of “the long history of cooperation across the Himalayas”, neither from the idea that “the XXI Century will be the century of Asia”; not even from the denied assumption that “China and India are complementary”.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Principal Component: Effective Sectoral Cooperation

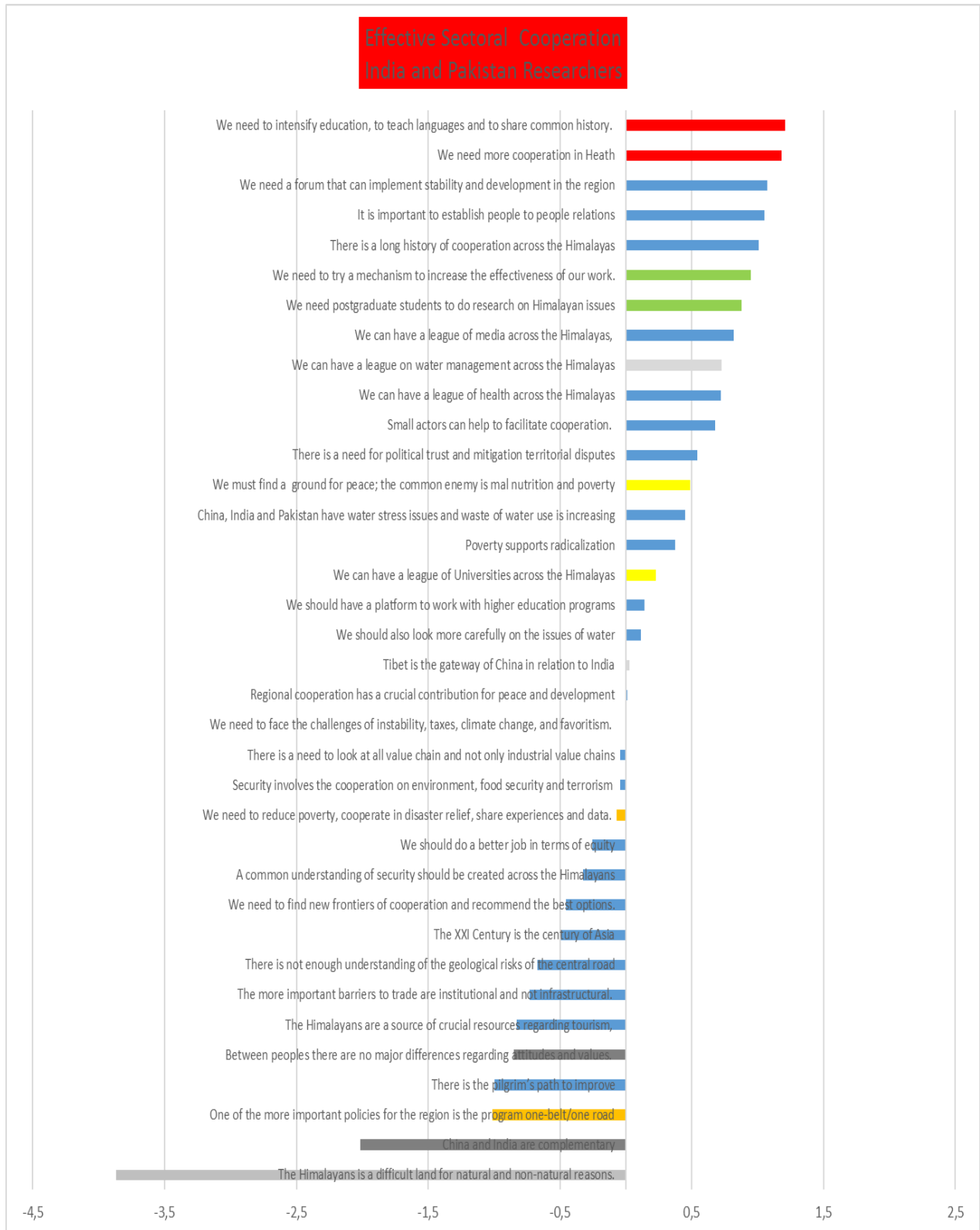


Figure 3: 3<sup>rd</sup> Principal Component: Effective Sectoral Cooperation

The third principal component describes 10% of the total variance and it is defended by a mix of generations the Punjab Area, from India and Pakistan, very much interested on cooperation on Health, Education, Water and Media, sustained by People to People contacts within institutionalised sectoral leagues.

Contrary to the previous perspective (2<sup>nd</sup> Principal Component – Effective Cooperation on Research and Education) this 3<sup>rd</sup> viewpoint (Effective Sectoral Cooperation) assumes that, there is a long story of cooperation across the Himalayans and that poverty feeds radicalism.

The pragmatism implicit in this perspective can be linked with some opportunities suitable to be explored in regional cooperation in South Asia: i) Small actors can help to facilitate cooperation; ii) People to people relations; iii) There is the pilgrim's path to improve; iv) Himalayan Leagues of Universities, Health, Media and Water; v) There is a long history of cooperation across the Himalayas; vi) China and India are complementary<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> One respondent more related with this 3<sup>rd</sup> Principal Component commented that “To promote peace, prosperity and sustainability in the South Asia region, it is very important to make a common platform to collectively work on various issues such as climate change, trade and commerce, health and education, counter terrorism and so on so for... That will go along the creation of a common understanding among the people of the South Asia region; only then the word regional cooperation makes sense and fruitful”.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Principal Component: Cooperation to Reduce Poverty

The fourth principal component identified explains 9% of the total variance. It is mainly a European perspective and the interest of including it is to stress the bias of external thinking. What worries Europeans is peace, poverty and, not surprisingly, the raising importance of Asia in the XXI Century.

The belief shared by this perspective is that human attitudes are quite similar around the world and the available solutions suggested are, not surprisingly, focused on the cooperation between universities, on tourism, but not on the creation of Chinese corridors.

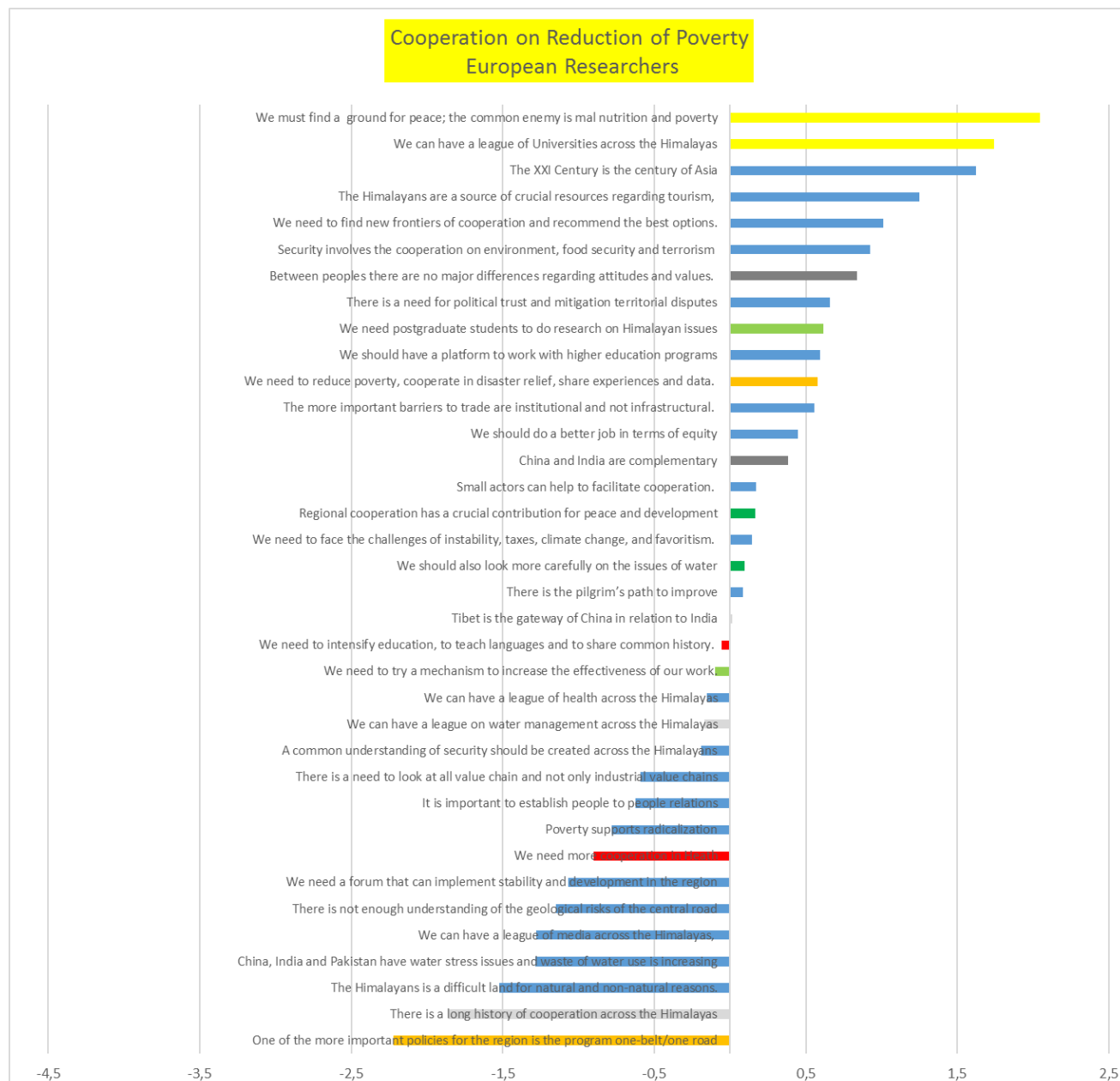


Figure 4: 4<sup>th</sup> Principal Component: Cooperation on Poverty Reduction

### 5th Principal Component: Cooperation on Corridors

The fifth principal component identified explains 7% of the total variance. It is largely a Chinese point of view focused on road and train corridors across Asia and avoiding to address cooperation in water related issues or to look at Tibet as a gateway between China and India. The belief is that road and train corridors will help to reduce poverty, to mitigate territorial disputes and to promote peace and development.

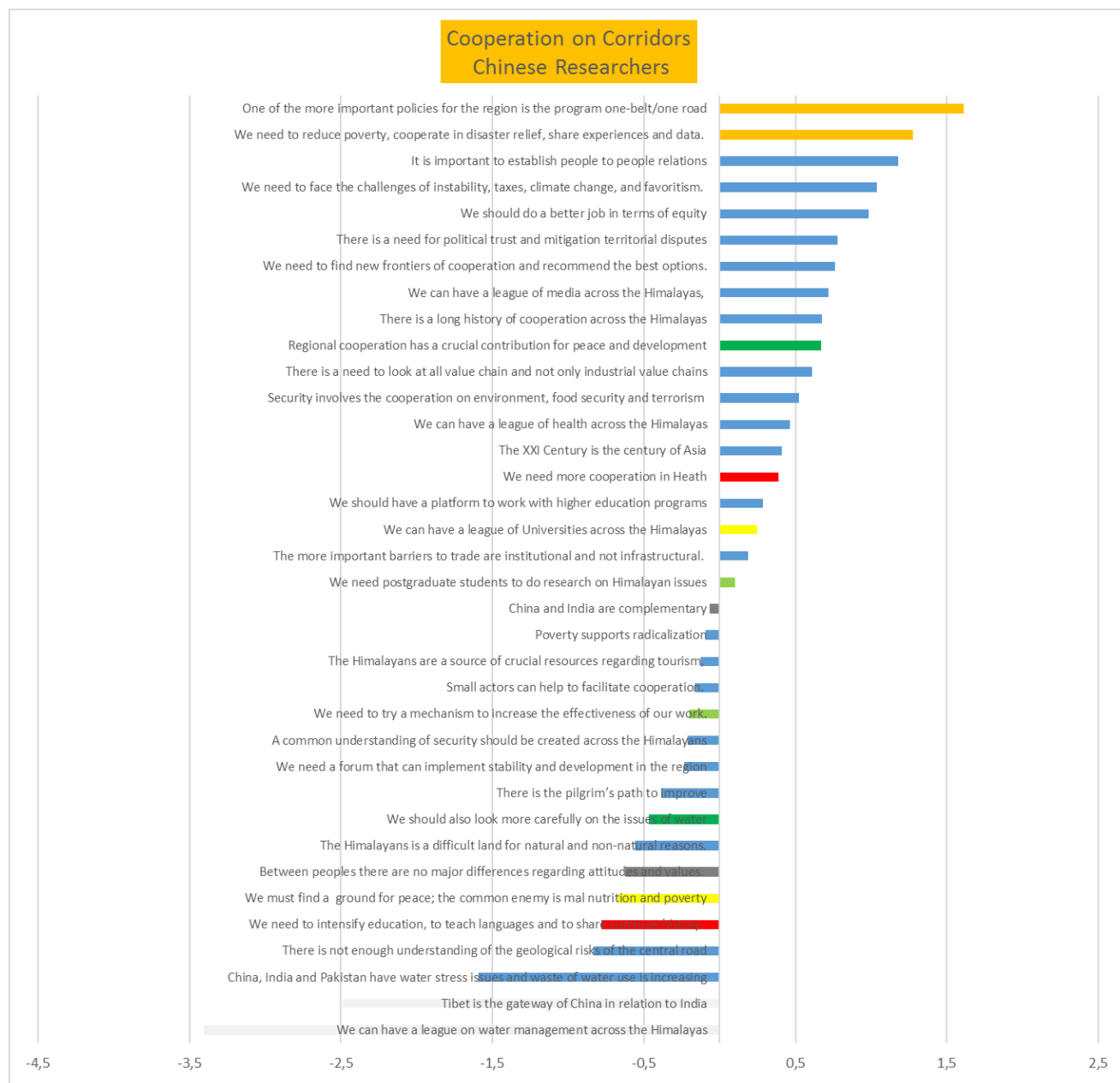


Figure 5: 5<sup>th</sup> Principal Component: Cooperation on Corridors

## 4 – Cooperation strategies

Most of the strengths highlighted are timeless but controversial. The idea that there is a long history of cooperation between spaces that complement each other and that there can and increasing cooperation due to the on-going dynamism of China and India is not perceived by the world researchers of Perspective 1 (Governmental Cooperation for Peace and Development) and by the Bangladesh and India Researchers of Perspective 2 (Effective Cooperation on Research and Education). Only Perspective 3 (Effective Sectoral Cooperation) agrees with those strengths that are greatly accepted by Europeans and Chinese in Perspectives 4 and 5.

Those timeless strengths can be pragmatically addressed by sectoral regional cooperation on education, research, health, media and water (Perspective 2 and 3) or by sectoral external cooperation associated to western tourism and higher education (Perspective 4) or on Chinese trade corridors (Perspective 5). All this, complemented by suitable local urban governance, can relativize concerns on equity and poverty that, sooner or later, may be solved by the on-going economic dynamism stimulated by the opportunities of sectoral cooperation.

Nevertheless, the treats of terrorism are there and they are difficult to address without a common understanding of a new security across the Himalayans, or without a better knowledge about the interactions between spatial justice and regional growth, or without a better approach to water issues, poverty and favouritism.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Strengths</i></b></p> <p><i>There are no major differences on peoples' attitudes and values</i>  <i>There is a long history of cooperation across the Himalayas</i>  <i>The XXI Century is the century of Asia.</i>  <i>China and India are complementary.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Weaknesses</i></b></p> <p><i>Mountains are difficult for natural and non-natural reasons.</i>  <i>The common enemy is mal nutrition and poverty.</i>  <i>Poverty supports radicalization.</i>  <i>We should do a better job in terms of equity.</i>  <i>There is instability, taxes, climate change, and favouritism.</i>  <i>The more important barriers to trade are institutional.</i>  <i>Our work is quite ineffective</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Opportunities</i></b></p> <p><i>New frontiers of cooperation and New Security Paradigms</i>  <i>The Himalayans are have crucial resources on tourism.</i>  <i>Cooperation is a crucial contribution for peace and development</i>  <i>Tibet is the gateway of China in relation to India</i>  <i>Small actors can help to facilitate cooperation.</i>  <i>People to people relations</i>  <i>The program one-belt/one road</i>  <i>There is the pilgrim's path to improve.</i>  <i>All value chains have opportunities.</i>  <i>Himalayan Leagues of Universities, Health, Media and Water</i>  <i>A forum that can implement stability and development in the region</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Threats</i></b></p> <p><i>Lack of common understanding of security across the Himalayans</i>  <i>No political trust and lack of mitigation territorial disputes</i>  <i>Environment problems</i>  <i>Food security</i>  <i>Terrorism</i>  <i>Water stress in China, India and Pakistan.</i></p>

*Table 2: SWOT Analysis of Trans-Himalayan Cooperation*

There are two implicit strategies for the different actors across the Himalayans.

The first one is more passive and it is based on the timeless resources of region assuming that those capabilities will be naturally potentiated by the on-going dynamism of India, China and all the East. This strategy does not consider the threats of terrorism that are fuelled by inequality, poverty, stress of water and energy instability.

The second strategy is more active and tries to explore the existing cooperation opportunities:

- a) the opportunity to develop the Himalayan countries and regions associated with the creation of Trans-Himalayan corridors defended by the Chinese;
- b) the opportunity to promote sectoral cooperation on health, education and media;
- c) the opportunity to implement effective projects on tourism (religious and mountain), on water and on energy;
- and d) the opportunity to design, evaluate and implement effective policies to reduce poverty.



## References

1. Luo Zhongshu, *Executive Deputy Secretary, Sichuan University, China.*
2. Anna Baloch, *Pakistani Consul General to Chengdu, Pakistan.*
3. Malesh Kumar Maskey, *Nepalese Ambassador to China, Secretariat, Nepal.*
4. Ma Xiaoming, *Director, Cultural Exchange Department, China.*
5. Huang Renwei, *Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, China.*
6. Li Mingjiang, *Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.*
7. Paulo Casaca, *South Asia Democratic Forum. Europe.*
8. Khalid Radman, *Director General, Institute of Policy Studies, Pakistan.*
9. B.R.Deepak, *Jawaharlal Nehru University, India.*
10. Leela Mani Paudyal, *Nepal Minister's Office, Nepal.*
11. Wang Xu, *South Asian Studies Centre, China.*
12. Lu Yang, *Tsinghua University, China*
13. Liu Siwei, *Institute for South Asian Studies, Sichuan University. China*
14. Sayed Mahadi Munadi, *Centre for Strategic Studies, Afghanistan.*
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16. Gu Lisheng, *Institute for Disaster Management and Relief. Sichuan University. China.*
17. Yang Weiming, *Bengali program, China Radio International, China.*
18. Tirtha Raj Khanija, *Tribhuvan University, Nepal.*
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22. Rajiv Kumar Jha *Jiaotong University. Nepal*
23. Yin Xi'nan, *Institute for South Asia Studies, China.*
24. Liu Jiwei, *SAWCCAD, China.*
25. Ravi K. Mishram, *Jindal Global University, India.*
26. Sun Lizhou, *Southwest University of Political Science and Law, China.*
27. Ma Jiali, *China Economic Forum, China.*
28. Sun Yong, *Sichuan University, China.*
29. Tomaz Dentinho, *South Asia Democratic Forum, Europe.*
30. Shen Kaiyan, *Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, China.*
31. Di Fangyao. *Xizang Minzu University, China.*
32. Wen Fude, *Institute for South Asia Studies, China.*

**Annex 1: Notes from the presentations****2015-12-15 – 9H00 – 10H00 – Opening Session.**

- a) *Luo Zhongshu, Executive Deputy Secretary, CPC Sichuan University Committee*  
*China has a long history of exchange and culture. The University of Chengdu is trying to exchange students with South Asia and has created scholarships for students coming from South Asia.*
- b) *Ma Xiaoming, Director, Cultural Exchange Department, Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.*  
*There is a long history of cooperation across the Himalayas. We are facing terrorism, ethnic conflict and environmental problems. The program Belt and Road can launch a new period of cooperation in energy, culture, infrastructure that could be crucial to build peace. Three suggestions: 1) Cultural Exchanges especially for teen age students; 2) Create a Platform of Mutual Understanding; 3) Accreditation of University courses.*
- c) *Malesh Kumar Maskey, Nepalese Ambassador to China Executive Deputy Secretary, CPC Sichuan University Committee*  
*The XXI Century is the century of Asia. We are going out of the colonial past that divide us. Now we can have cooperation in many areas: energy, water, transportation... The Everest is the biggest mountain that was difficult to reach but was reached. Cooperation for Development also deserves an effort. Nepal is ready to increase trans-Himalayan cooperation.*
- d) *Anna Baloch, Pakistani Consul General to Chengdu*  
*We live in an interesting time where everybody can be at each other time. In the past there was cooperation around the Silk Road where peace, harmony and friendship could thrive. We need to connect the past with the future, Buddhism and Islam. Cooperation will be redefined by our region and we need a new model to approach it. We need to find new frontiers, identify and recommend the best options.*
- e) *Huang Renwei, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.*  
*The Himalayans is a difficult land for natural and non-natural reasons. There are two non-cooperation traps. One non-cooperation trap is between the major powers; China and the United States and many people have doubts about the possibility of a long term cooperation. The second non-cooperation trap is between China and India where India is in a Satus Quo and China is emerging. If we do not face these traps it is difficult to cooperate but both China and India are finding more space or cooperation. There is more cooperation than confrontation but there is still land in dispute. It is very important to reduce the differences and there are three crucial issues that deserve attention: 1) how will the major powers interact with each other? 2) What will happen with the geopolitical barrier between India and Pakistan? (We do not need to take this historical weight) 3) what can do in the Himalayan regarding water resources? (We do not need to follow the rules of the industrial era, the model should be new). We have the pilgrim's routes. There are technical obstacles*

*regarding communication but there are new technologies and all these obstacles can be overcome. We should use this time to share our views.*

### **2015-12-15 – 10H00 – 11H00 – Conceptualization of Trans-Himalaya Cooperation.**

1. *Khalid Radman, Director General, Institute of Policy Studies, Cooperation Across Himalayas: Significance, Areas of Concerns and Way Forward*  
*Diversity is reflected in society and humans cannot live in isolation. With connectivity each individual is magnified. And so we communicate across mountains and oceans. Technology reduces time and space and changes our perceptions. The Himalayans are a source of crucial resources regarding water, tourism, minerals,...but there is also a dispute over water resources and the recede of glaciers associated with climate change will affect many rivers and related water conflicts. The issue is still not solved and it is urgent to address them. The conflict on Kashmir is also related to water.*
2. *Leela Mani Paudyal, Nepal Minister's Office. China, a Tigger for South Asian Economy*  
*After Europe Colonial Power Asian cultures declined. The hegemony of the United States is now decreasing. China is the largest manufacturing country in the world. Middle class is the major driver of economic growth because income elasticity is more than one. India and China will pass Europe and the United States in a decade. There is a need to have a meritocratic society and invest in education as a catalyst for innovation. How it is possible to sustain this development when regions are disconnected? There is a need to modernize trains, to set aside problems, to find a common ground, to create mutual trust. There are complementarities. We cannot talk about peace in isolation; we must find a common ground for peace; our common enemy is mal nutrition and poverty. The Himalayan cannot be a barrier. We can grow together.*
3. *B.R.Deepak, Jawaharlal Nehru University*  
*Building Trans-Himalayan Economic and Security Community: Opportunities and Challenges.* i) *Historical Perspective- Himalayans were not a barrier. We had people to people exchanges along the Silk Road and a Dialogue between China and India since 1500 years BC.* ii) *One Belt – One Road is a process of globalization in this part of the world. China adopt this idea; India did not; Russia has its own agenda regarding globalization; if we do not adapt to each other we will lose the opportunity.* iii) *What things need to be addressed? The difficulty from India can be understood because there are issues related to security and therefore a common understanding of security should be created. There are many issues to be addressed: water and energy; software and education; rail and road networks.*
4. *Paulo Casaca, South Asia Democratic Forum. The Merits of Regional Cooperation: The Himalayas Conundrum.*  
*There are many issues that deserve regional cooperation in the Himalayas: water, energy, transport, ... The major focus should be in understanding each other. Europe had terrible wars along the XX century and the adoption of regional cooperation under the framework of European Union has had a crucial contribution for peace and*

*development. This experience can be shared with South Asia cooperation and there are very promising cross border cooperation between Bangladesh and India that can be shared with cross border experiences that are occurring in Europe.*

5. *Li Mingjiang, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. China-Asean Subregional Cooperation: Implications to Trans-Himalaya Cooperation.*

*We must look at trade flows and what is happening in ASEAN countries because there are spill over effects from trade and there is a need for political trust and mitigation territorial disputes. What kind of model can be taken in Trans-Himalayan relations?*

*1) The ASEAN model gathers countries that complement each other, it is very much institutionalised with 1000 meetings and are recognised in the world forum. 2) The Central Asia Model is going well driven by China and Russia Consortium and where different partners have to adapt. 3) The One Belt – One Road where China takes the lead no matter what India does. 4) Last come the China –ASEAN approach that stimulates the participation of local governments. If the aim is to create potential development areas in the Himalayas it should be thought at school and University level.*

#### **2015-12-15 – 11H00 – 12H00 – Political and Security Cooperation.**

6. *Sayed Mahadi Munadi, Centre for Strategic Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs o Afghanistan.*

*Exploring cooperation across the Himalayns. In Afghanistan there is low level of development, there is an attraction for terrorism and it is the less integrated region of the world (there is not a common rail or road). China needs to do more in terms of security because China cannot raise without South Asia security. Poverty supports radicalization.*

7. *Khadga K.C., Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.*

*Energy insecurity in Nepal: Trans-Himalaya Partnership between Nepal and India. Security involves everything (health poverty, democracy, cultural identity,...). We need to have more relations with the Northern neighbour and we need to face the challenges of instability, taxes, climate change, and favouritism.*

8. *Wang Xu, South Asian Studies Centre, Beijing University.*

*Security Situation in South Asia and Regional Cooperation against Terrorism. 1) General overview: after Pakistan military intervention there was 47% decrease of terrorist acts; we have seen good progress but there is a turbulent bases. 2) ISIS grouping in Afghanistan is creating more potential instability. 3) There is a third generation of extremists that create problems within countries. There are other ways to deal with terrorism. We should do a better job in terms of equity. We should also look more carefully on the issues of water.*

9. *Lu Yang, Tsinghua University.*

*Non-traditional security and China SAARC cooperation: the Indian Burden. Security involves the cooperation between countries, environment, food security and terrorism. The question is to know whether China can conduct a cooperation in non-traditional*

*security area South Asia with different religions, diverse geographies. Security involves many investments. In SAARC there are more observers than members and security is excluded. The focus in non-traditional security.*

10. Gu Lisheng, Institute for Disaster Management and Relief. Sichuan University  
*Towards a Secured Region and Tenacity Development.*  
*There is a need to reduce poverty, cooperate in disaster relief, share experiences, share data bases.*
11. Liu Siwei, Institute for South Asian Studies  
*Secularization of Water Resources in Himalayan Region: Implication for Regional Cooperation.*  
*There are many rivers and many glaciers in in the Himalayans but China, India and Pakistan have water stress issues and waste of water use is increasing in India. With climate change most glaciers will disappear and the water cycle will be largely transformed. We should also look at the importance of water.*

**2015-12-15 – 14H30 – 15H30 – Cultural Exchanges and Educational Cooperation.**

12. Tirtha Raj Khanija, Tribhuvan University.  
*Academic cooperation between Nepal and China. Tribhuvan University has 436781 students in Nepal. There are annual courses but we are trying to introduce semester unit. We integrate research with teaching and there are very good capabilities regarding research in herbal domains.*
13. Li Jian, China Wet Normal University.  
*Higher Education Cooperation: New Dynamics for Common Development of China and South Asia. China is doing cooperation with development countries but not with South Asia countries. There is a need to change the patterns of thinking. There are not enough teachers. There are not specific Chinese language teachers. It is urgent to provide more assistance. We need not to disperse our energy and should focus on essential projects. We should have a platform to work with higher education programs.*
14. Dipak Sarkar, World Culture Net. Nepal.  
*Buddhist culture and Sino-South Asian cultural exchange. This is the space of Bhutan. They are the catalyst of cultural relations. Bhutan is useful for world peace.*
15. Niu Zhifu, Xizang Minzu University.  
*Conceptualizing future if TAR-South Asia Science and Technological Cooperation: A Perspective from the Translation and Transmission of Kalachara Tantra. Tibet is the gateway of China in relation to India. Cooperation in Astrology, Philosophy. India has an advantage and Pharmaceuticals and there is no cooperation in this field. We need to clarify what we have in common.*
16. Rajiv Kumar Jha Jiaotong University. Nepal  
*On trans-Himalayan Educational Cooperation. I would like to talk about cooperation in Health. People need a good hospital and a good school. How can we train more and more young people?*
17. Yin Xi'nan, Institute for South Asia Studies, China.



*Two way perception between China and India: some basic characteristics. How to reduce the negative factors? The two countries have sufficient space for cooperation, In 1962 they turn their back to each other. To reduce the negative factors there is the need to: 1) to intensify education, 2) to establish more language disciplines; 3) To share the history of both countries.*

18. Liu Jiwei, SAWCCAD.

*Sino-Indian Public Diplomacy: present situations, challenges and countermeasures. It is important to establish people to people relations. Look at media reports, exchange research*

19. Yang Weiming, Bengali program, China Radio International.

*On Cross Cultural Communication between China and Bangladesh. Today, within one belt one road program, it is possible to look at each other differently. 1) We need to change tabus that classify others; 2) We need to pay attention to food security; 3) We need to be objective. In a survey done to different people from China and Bangladesh there were no major differences regarding attitudes and values related to individualism, indulgence, power dispute,...; the only difference is that Chinese have more long term perspectives and risk takers.*

**2015-12-15 – 16H00 – 17H00 – Trans-national infrastructural development and economic cooperation.**

20. Ma Jiali, China Economic Forum

*Some considerations on Trans-Himalayan Transportation Corridor. One of the more important policies for the region is the program one-belt/one road that will open Tibet to Bhutan and India. But in India there is some disbelief in the program and there are many geophysical problems to overcome.*

21. Tomaz Dentinho, South Asia Democratic Forum.

*Regional Cooperation in South Asia. Issues and Questions on Trade Corridors. The more important barriers to trade are institutional and not infrastructural. It is crucial to root the routes across the Himalayas.*

22. Sun Yong, Sichuan University.

*On South Asia land transportation system. There is not enough understanding of the geological risks of the central road. There are also some difficulties regarding social issues and some local governments have concerns about the benefits of the corridors.*

23. Di Fangyao, Xizang Minzu University.

*Border trade between TAR (Tibet) and South Asia: Conceptualization a China-Nepal-Bhutan Economic Corridor. The central corridor across the Himalayas is probably the more easy to conceptualize once the fast connection between Coastal China and Tibet is implemented. There is the pilgrim's path to improve.*

24. Wen Fude, Institute for South Asia Studies.

*Structural Transformation of Indian Industry: Opportunities and Challenges to OBOR Initiative. The Indian government wants to build a community of common destiny. China and India can share experiences. There are religious issues, terrorism, laws and regulations, deployment of labour force. But this is the time..*

25. Shen Kaiyan, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.  
*An Analysis to Investment Climate in India. The Belt and Road program is a Chinese Initiative. We do not know yet a lot about the Indian programs that could complement that initiative. There are taxes, corruption and protectionism. Still India is a large market, English speaking with man manufacturing and IT skills. There is a need to look at all value chain and not only industrial value chains.*
26. Ravi K. Mishram, Jindal Global University, India.  
*India- China Trade: Past and Present. Trade between the two countries is very limited compared with the XVIII century. 1) For more than 200 year India changed its interests to the sea and reduced trade and cooperation in the Continent. 2) There was the rise of maritime empires and coastal areas and most of the internal routes were destroyed. 3) India played little attention to neighbours. 4) China and India are complementary, there is a silk and a cotton road. 5) Borders were less important than links and time will solve the border issues. 6) History is not the only thing that is important. 7) Trade is made by humans not territories. 8) There is a lot of potential on Indian Eastern regions<sup>5</sup>.*
27. Sun Lizhou, Southwest University of Political Science and Law.  
*China-Pakistan Cooperation in Himalaya Region. Looking at the available maps there seems to be no corridors throughout Tibe<sup>6</sup>t.*

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<sup>5</sup> Wolfgang-Peter Zingel commented this thought writing that “We know that in the first half of the 15th century China's admiral Zheng He roamed the Indian Ocean with a mighty armada and reached the shores of southern Africa and may be he even went beyond. But soon thereafter, the Chinese Emperor ordered his fleet to be burnt and China stayed away from the seas for centuries. If not, Portugal might have faced more competition when it started to control the shores of the Indian Ocean. That Indians shunned the 'black waters' used to be common wisdom, but that perception has been more and more rejected in recent years. It is difficult to imagine how the strong Indian cultural influence in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia would have been possible without sea trade. This already had come to an end, when Vasco da Gama reached India. Thereafter, Portugal controlled the sea trade between India and China to some extent, and was later joined by the Dutch and the East Indian Company. But I am not convinced that trade ‘between the two countries is very limited compared with the XVIII century’ etc. The 18th century saw the collapse of the Mogul Empire and the decay of once 'Golden' Bengal. If the author refers to Stephen F. Dale's 2009 article in Modern Asian Studies: Dale refers to pre-European times and trade exchange with Xinjiang, i.e. the route that Chinese Buddhist monks took on their way to the sources of Buddhism in India. Quantities traded via this land route must have been limited”.

<sup>6</sup> Wolfgang-Peter Zingel commented this thought saying that “there are corridors across the Himalayas and Tibet, like the old Hindustan-Tibet Road along the Sutlej river and various roads/paths connecting Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan with Tibet and every day we hear of another grand scheme of building roads and railway lines in the region”.



**2015-12-15 – 17H30 – 18H00 – Concluding Session.**

1. *Pakistan*  
*We can have a league of Universities across the Himalayas, a league of health, a league of media, a agreement of water sharing.*
2. *India*  
*We need a forum that can implement stability and development in the region that can guide policies and promote collaborative participation.*
3. *China*  
*We need postgraduate students to do research on Himalayan issues to promote cooperation and prosperity in the region and across the region.*
4. *Afghanistan*  
*China need a stable and developed South Asia and small actors can help to facilitate cooperation.*
5. *Nepal*  
*The development of all the Himalayan region is an essential aspect of the trans-Himalayan cooperation.*
6. *Singapore*  
*Since each country has institutes focusing the region we need to try a mechanism to increase the effectiveness of our work.*

*Thanks for the participants from all the countries. All participants were very honest in proposing their points of view. We had the opportunity to express ourselves and were very interested in others views. This is just the beginning of our collaboration. We should have an international vision on Trade and Cooperation since trade helps cooperation, security and development.*