



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on September 15, 2016

Obama, Clinton, China, & Wall Street: The “Silk Road” Trade Scheme

“Please join us for The Silk Road Summit — 1st Annual Conference: Exploring Business, Trade & Investment Opportunities on the New Silk Road.” That’s the e-mail invitation from, and the open invitation on the website for, the [Eurasia Center/Eurasia Business Coalition](#) home page. “Multiple initiatives are now converging to galvanize unprecedented investment activity focused on the infrastructure and trade links between Asia and Europe (Eurasia),” the invitation for the September 26 summit in Washington, D.C. continues. “China has taken the initiative in capitalizing new development banks — the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Silk Road Fund — designed to modernize and expand the ancient Silk Road transport web that linked East Asia with the Mediterranean. China’s ‘One Belt — One Road’ concept projects massive infrastructure expansion — on both the traditional land routes plus the Indian Ocean ‘Maritime Silk Road.’”



“This is not a one nation project but involves a synergy of nations throughout Europe and Asia,” the Eurasia Center/Eurasia Business Coalition (EC/EBC) says. “America and Europe’s involvement are a key factor in bringing great technological and corporate resources to help build and develop the new Eurasian Road. Over 1 Trillion Dollars is already slated for development.”

According to the EC/EBC promotion, the trade and development summit will include “participation from representatives of U.S. Government Agencies and the U.S. Congress, Multilateral Development Banks, Corporations and Trade Associations, Policy Centers and Foundations.”

Leapfrogging the TPP/TTIP

In some ways the Silk Road Initiative is an effort to leapfrog over the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), the troubled trade treaties, and build the public-private partnerships that will provide political and economic support for future formal trade agreements in Eurasia. As with the TPP and TTIP, the U.S. involvement in the Silk Road Initiative was a major “achievement” of the Obama State Department under Hillary Clinton’s leadership as secretary of state. After long defending, praising, and promoting the TPP as the “gold standard” of trade agreements, Clinton has flip-flopped and now claims to oppose the agreement she played such a key



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role in drafting. However, she has not had to defend publicly (yet) her role in the huge Silk Road Initiative, which involves enormous potential costs for U.S. taxpayers, as well as devastating impacts on the American job market.

The U.S. State Department page entitled “U.S. Support for the New Silk Road” explains:

The New Silk Road initiative was first envisioned in 2011 as a means for Afghanistan to integrate further into the region by resuming traditional trading routes and reconstructing significant infrastructure links broken by decades of conflict. Today, Afghanistan and its neighbors are leading the way in key areas, creating new North-South transit and trade routes that complement vibrant East-West connections across Eurasia. The region is reducing barriers to trade, investing in each other’s economies, and supporting international development and cross-border projects.

This Obama/Clinton initiative offers the shopworn promise that an “investment” of billions of U.S. taxpayers’ dollars will reap huge future rewards in peace, prosperity, jobs, and business.

“With multiple transitions underway in Afghanistan, the United States and its allies can bolster peace and stability in the region by supporting a transition to trade and helping open new markets connecting Afghanistan to Central Asia, Pakistan, India and beyond,” says the State Department promo. “Countries in the region know they have more to gain economically by working together than by being isolated. Promoting connectivity in a region that is the least-economically integrated in the world is challenging, but the benefits can be transformative.”

Among the Silk Road Initiatives the Obama/Clinton State Department boasts of supporting are various interdependence-promoting energy infrastructure projects of the Central Asia-South Asia (CASA) Secretariat. The State Department notes, for instance:

The U.S. has provided:

- Support for CASA-1000 regional electricity grid, including a \$15 million contribution following the March 2014 World Bank commitment of \$526 million and support for the CASA Secretariat;
- More than \$1.7 billion in support of energy transmission lines, hydropower plants, and associated reforms in Afghanistan since 2010; and
- Adding 1,000 megawatts to Pakistan’s power grid, supplying power to more than 16 million people.

While the vast majority of Americans undoubtedly wish the peoples of Central Asia-South Asia well and would be happy to see the CASA region develop modern electricity generation plants and transmission lines, they would most likely *not* be happy to learn that it is being done at their expense, and under the direction of central planners in Beijing, Moscow, and Washington, D.C. Especially since our own American power grid infrastructure is in a perilous state and in need of massive investment, so much so that the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gives it a scandalous D+ rating. In fact, while the globalists running our government freely spend untold billions of dollars for “infrastructure development” throughout the world, the ASCE warns in its most recent edition of [“America’s Infrastructure Report Card”](#) that our crumbling infrastructure (roads, bridges, ports, canals, dams, levees, power grid, railways, airports, etc.), once the envy of the world, is now a shambles. In fact, it is in dire need of a massive \$3.2 trillion of investment. Where will the capital for investments that enormous come from? Americans with aging equipment and deteriorating infrastructure will find themselves competing (once again) against low-wage developing countries with brand new



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infrastructure and state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities — courtesy of government.

However, while the Silk Road scheme may spell loss for most Americans, the EC/EBC tells U.S. corporations that this “Project of the Century” can spell big gains for them, if they jump on board now.

“This new economic push to link the countries of Eurasia by high-speed rail, expanded trucking routes, and modernized air and seaport facilities will open up huge investment opportunities, drive technology assistance programs, and generate a proliferation of new manufacturing and service industries in all the countries in-between,” says the EC/EBC sales pitch. “The 4,000-mile original caravan road linked ancient Chinese, Indian, Persian, Arabic, Greek and Roman civilizations and was later popularized by the Italians with Marco Polo’s trade initiatives with the Emperor of China. The modern Silk Road nations comprise a population of 3 Billion and a market that is unparalleled in both scale and potential.”

“The Eurasia Center/Eurasian Business Coalition will provide an overview of the extraordinary opportunities that are becoming available to countries, companies and individuals to become a part of what is arguably the Project of the Century,” the EC/EBC invitation says. “This event will allow you and your colleagues to interact with those officials and business representatives from China, India, Kazakhstan, and many other New Silk Road nations who are actively seeking contact with American companies, both large and small, to open communication channels and expedite trade, direct investments, and a wide range of business opportunities. There will be executives and representatives from U.S. corporations, and officials from U.S. Government agencies involved in trade promotion and overseas project financing. The Silk Road will allow for a deeper penetration of this vast market by US companies, many of which are not yet familiar with these regions and the new opportunities they offer.”

Among the topics to be covered at the summit is a program on “Multilateral Project Financing for New Silk Road Projects,” which will cover financing through Communist China’s new [Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank \(AIIB\)](#), the [joint Russian-Chinese Silk Road Fund](#), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the U.S. government (EX-IM Bank, OPIC, TDA).

The Eurasia Center/Eurasian Business Coalition lists as its current and/or past corporate members/sponsors: 3M Corporation; the Boeing Company; U.S. Department of Commerce; Caterpillar; Cisco Systems; Citibank; Arthur Andersen; Dechert LLP; Ernst & Young, LLP; United Technologies; the Ford Motor Company; the Coca-Cola Company; General Electric; ConocoPhillips; the Intel Corporation; Lockheed-Martin; PepsiCo; Coors; DuPont; Goodyear; Research International, USEC Inc.

Pratt House-White House Silk Road Axis

As usual for any major international venture, the real driving force behind the Silk Road Initiative is not the White House in Washington, D.C., but Pratt House in New York City, the headquarters of the [Council on Foreign Relations \(CFR\)](#), the globalist cabal that has operated as the actual government of the United States — through both Republican and Democratic administrations — since at least the World War II era. Hillary Clinton famously confirmed the organization’s operational direction of the State Department during one of her public appearances before the CFR, in which she congratulated the council for opening its new Washington, D.C. offices so that she wouldn’t have to go all the way to the council’s “mother ship” in NYC “to be told what we should be doing and how we should think.” (A video of this Clinton address to the CFR can be [viewed here](#)). When it comes to the Silk Road Initiative, as with virtually all other significant policy decisions, Clinton’s State Department was obviously following CFR directions on “what we should be doing and how we should think.”



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The CFR not only has been the thought leader in promoting the Silk Road Initiative through studies, articles, op-eds, briefings, and interviews, but also the actual operational leader by virtue of the fact that its members have hands-on control of the State Department (as well as many other top-level Cabinet posts). Hillary Clinton and her successor at State, John Kerry, are not official CFR members, but this recent break with tradition has been, no doubt, a deliberate choice made to avoid the growing public controversy over the council's control of the State Department and other executive branch departments. However, although they are not themselves CFR members, both Clinton and Kerry have long been intimately tied to it, directly, philosophically, and familiarly (Clinton's husband, Bill, and daughter, Chelsea, and Kerry's wife, Teresa, are members). Among the CFR hands on deck at State pushing the Silk Road "investment" narrative have been William J. Burns and Fatema Sumar.

"A more interconnected region can serve as a driver of economic development and as an anchor of peace and security," said Deputy Secretary of State William J. Burns (CFR) in an [USAID presentation](#). "The most important — and perhaps most transformational — step we can take is to build a regional energy market linking existing transmission lines and large supplies of hydropower and natural gas in Central Asia with 1.6 billion energy-hungry consumers in South Asia." Burns, who was Clinton's deputy and close confidante/advisor at State, has recently gone on to become president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which, along with the CFR, the Brookings Institution, and the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, has been among the premier promoters of global "convergence" and world government for much of the past century. Among the stellar lineup of presidents preceding Burns at the Carnegie Endowment is the infamous communist traitor [Alger Hiss](#) (a CFR member), one of the top Soviet agents in our State Department who, as FDR's advisor, changed the course of history, consigning millions of human beings to Stalin's gulags and designing and establishing the communist-dominated United Nations.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Fatema Sumar (CFR) has [said](#): "We have a long-term commitment to Afghanistan and Central Asia. It is no longer an Afghanistan military commitment, but it is a political commitment, an economic commitment, a development and diplomatic commitment. It's telling that the United States is working with its partners to advance opportunities to promote long-term, sustainable economic growth in the region."

Marc Grossman (CFR) provides many details of the evolution of the Silk Road Initiative amongst the CFR foreign policy elites in a *Yale Journal of International Affairs* [article](#), noting that "Secretary Clinton announced the U.S. vision — a 'New Silk Road' — at a speech in Chennai, India on July 20, 2011."

Over a career spanning three decades, Grossman held top slots at State (under secretary, assistant secretary, ambassador, special representative) and helped carry forward many of the CFR's globalist programs. In his *Yale Journal* piece mentioned above, he also details some of the key roles played in the region setting up the Silk Road agenda by his fellow CFR members: Henry Kissinger, Richard Holbrooke, Robert Hormats (Goldman Sachs, Kissinger Associates, Trilateral Commission, Brookings), Robert Blake, Mitchell Reiss, Thomas R. Nides, et al. Like his former co-worker at State, William Burns, Grossman has moved on, rewarded for his years of CFR yeoman service with a sinecure as vice chairman of The Cohen Group, the high-powered business consulting and lobbying firm of former Defense Secretary William Cohen (CFR).

Over at the CFR itself, the organization, institutionally, has been developing and promoting the Silk Road Initiative through a number of studies, conferences, briefings, etc., as is [evident from their website](#). One of those studies is the May 25, 2015 "CFR Backgrounder" entitled, ["Building the New Silk](#)



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[Road,](#)” which says regarding “the U.S. vision” for the project:

For the United States, the New Silk Road refers to a suite of joint investment projects and regional trade blocs that have the potential to bring economic growth and stability to Central Asia.

Following the surge of thirty thousand additional troops into Afghanistan in 2009, which President Barack Obama’s administration had hoped would lay the groundwork for complete withdrawal a few years later, Washington began to lay out a strategy for supporting these initiatives through diplomatic means. These plans emphasized the need for Afghanistan to build an economy independent of foreign assistance.

As then-Deputy Secretary of State William Burns outlined in a major 2014 policy address, a centerpiece of the U.S. strategy has been building a regional energy market for Central Asia. More than 1.6 billion consumers in India, Pakistan, and the rest of South Asia are increasingly demanding energy supplies of the kind that Kazakhstan or Turkmenistan, with their hydropower and natural gas reserves, are capable of providing.

A crucial next phase will be connecting private-sector investment and entrepreneurship in Afghanistan and Pakistan, says former Ambassador Marc Grossman, who served as the U.S. Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan from 2011 to 2012. Grossman points to the potential for export industries like Afghani fruit and Pakistani cement that are currently restricted by trade barriers.

The Obama administration has been pursuing a deceptive dual course with regard to the Silk Road Initiative, pretending that its course is at odds with Beijing’s similar plans for the CASA region. Hence the administration’s criticism of Communist China’s launch of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). But that was merely for public show, part of the scripted China bashing aimed at promoting the TPP as a counterweight to China’s increasing dominance of the Pacific Rim. However, as we have repeatedly shown (see, for instance, [here](#) and [here](#)), the TPP planners have intended all along to bring China and Russia into the TPP in the near future. The Silk Road Initiative is a further extension of that scheme. Former Treasury official C. Fred Bergsten (CFR) is but one among the policy elites that is actively campaigning for the administration to openly embrace and work with communist China’s new megabank, the AIIB. In a piece for the *Financial Times*, Bergsten (director emeritus of the Petersen Institute for International Economics, an important sister organization to the CFR) calls on the United States to join and “bless” the AIIB efforts and accept the dictatorship’s “constructive global leadership.” He writes: “The US should reverse course. It should join the bank and persuade Congress to provide the small amounts needed to fund a minority share. It should bless the desire of its friends in Asia and Europe to join, to help counter any untoward Chinese actions. And it should encourage the World Bank and the other current multilateral lenders to co-operate closely with the new institution. The AIIB initiative can then play a positive role in the world economy and capitalise on China’s growing willingness to exercise constructive global leadership.”

The Silk Road Summit should be viewed as a major step by the Obama administration to implement that CFR vision of U.S.-China convergence, as enunciated by Bergsten.

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