



## RECCA Young Scholars & Professionals Essay Contest 2015

### Description:

The Sixth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA-VI) will take place in Kabul, from 3 to 4 September 2015. The RECCA-VI presents a unique opportunity for officials, scholars, business leaders from around 70 countries and regional organizations to share ideas on critical regional economic cooperation, including trade & transport, energy, streamlining customs & border crossings, and attracting investment & technical know-how from the private sector. This RECCA event will seek a new vision and strategies for a more effective and inclusive regional economic cooperation to meet new economic development challenges and to build an international consensus around action plans for a select group of regional investment projects and policy priorities, focused on overcoming implementation obstacles and attracting new investment partners.

As a preparatory event, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan hosts an essay contest to share young generation's inspiration in the fields of development and economics. Young people from Afghanistan and across Central and South Asia, Middle East, Far East and Caucasus are invited to consider the concept of "**the Silk Road through Afghanistan**" and submit their innovative ideas by writing essays about the following topics:

1. How can Afghanistan retake its position as a transit and transport hub between Central Asia and South Asia?
2. Role of Afghanistan in Energy Transit & Natural Resource Cooperation
3. How can WTO promote trade in the region?
4. Labor market exchange and employment opportunities in the region
5. How the new Sustainable Development Goals matters in the context of the region
6. Private Sector Development & Business-to-Business Cooperation across Asia and opportunity for Afghanistan
7. Population growth and its future economic implications for the region
8. Investment, employment and economic growth opportunities for Afghanistan

### Recognition and Awards:

The winning essay will be published in the RECCA Academic Forum Manual and the first prizewinner will be invited to participate and speak at the RECCA Academic Forum on 3 September 2015 in Kabul. Travel and lodging expenses will be paid for the trip to Kabul. Besides, the winners will gain financial support as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> Prize, USD1000; 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize, USD700; 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize USD500.

### Criteria for Judging:

- The contest is open to all young scholars & professionals between ages 21 and 35, who are currently studying or completed their studies (Masters or PhD).
- The essay must be written in English only.
- The maximum word count is 2,500 with minimum of 2,000 words not including citations and bibliography. Essays exceeding 2,500 words will be automatically excluded.
- Only one entry per person is permitted. Co-authored essays will not be accepted.
- Copyright of the essays entered will be assigned to the event organizers.
- No revisions to entries are permitted once submitted.
- Essays must be original and not published elsewhere or submitted to other essay competitions.
- Essays must be submitted in Microsoft Word (doc, docx) format only. PDF and other formats are not acceptable.
- A note must be attached to the essay indicating the author's full name, photo, address, university or workplace (if any), date and place of birth, nationality, gender, native language, e-mail, telephone and fax number(s), a short bio (maximum 100 words) and stating the essay's word length.
- Essays must be sent by email to the contacts provided below.

### Essay Submission & Further Information:

- The deadline for submitting essays is Saturday 20 August 2015 at 2359 hours (Kabul time).
- The essays will be read by two anonymous referees who will send their comments to the Directorate-General of Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan. The results will be made public and communicated to entrants by end August 2015.
- Please contact for further information and email your essays to:  
Faheem Hunarwar, Directorate-General for Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan  
Email: [recca@mfa.gov.af](mailto:recca@mfa.gov.af), and copy to [faheem@hunarwar.com](mailto:faheem@hunarwar.com)