2021 eCAMCA Panel 2: U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan: What Does it Mean for the Region?

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Afghanistan is an organic part of Central Asia and a critical strategic lynchpin. The United States is removing its forces there amidst dire warnings from virtually all observers and allies about what this will mean ? not just for the Afghan economy, its recent political and social progress, and for human rights there ? but for Afghanistan's very existence as a viable state. Beyond this, if America continues to see Afghanistan as a stand-alone issue, unattached to the fate of Central and South Asia, its strategic engagement with the region as a whole may lose its geopolitical foundation. What would this mean for the individual countries of Central Asia, and what kinds of strategic choices will they now likely entertain? Will it strengthen or weaken prospects of regional coordination and cooperation? The American presence has had a restraining effect on other powers in the region ? China. India, Pakistan. Russia, and Iran. How will they now respond to the changed realities? And, finally, what might America's role be in the rest of Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Afghan withdrawal?

Moderator: Michael Doran, Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

Speakers:

Dr. Omar Sharifi, Country Director, American Institute of Afghanistan Studies; Assistant Professor of Social Sciences, American University of Afghanistan; CAMCA Network Member

Ikram Sehgal, Chairman, Pathfinder Group; Chairman, Karachi Council on Foreign Relations

Amb. Gautam Mukhopadhaya, Senior Visiting Fellow, Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi; former Ambassador of India to Afghanistan (2010-2013)

Alex Vatanka, Director of Iran Program and Senior Fellow, Frontier Europe Initiative, Middle East Institute

Iskander Akylbayev, Executive Director, Kazakhstan Council on International Relations; CAMCA Network Member

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