



Outcomes of the 4th CAREC Think Tanks Development Forum

Khalid Umar

Head of Strategic Planning | Coordinator Think Tanks Development Forum

24–25 September 2019 | Tashkent, Uzbekistan

What drives the CAREC Think Tanks Network (CTTN).....

CAREC 2030 defines CAREC Institute's role as a leading center to providing knowledge solutions. CI is expected to perform this role, among others, by:

- **Building formal links with academia and think tanks in the region to make best use of local knowledge.**

CI 2018-22 Strategy identifies *Promoting Partnership and Networking* as one of the key Strategic Objectives. CI achieves this strategic objective by:

- **Closely cooperating with member countries, international organizations, universities, think tanks, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and private sector.**

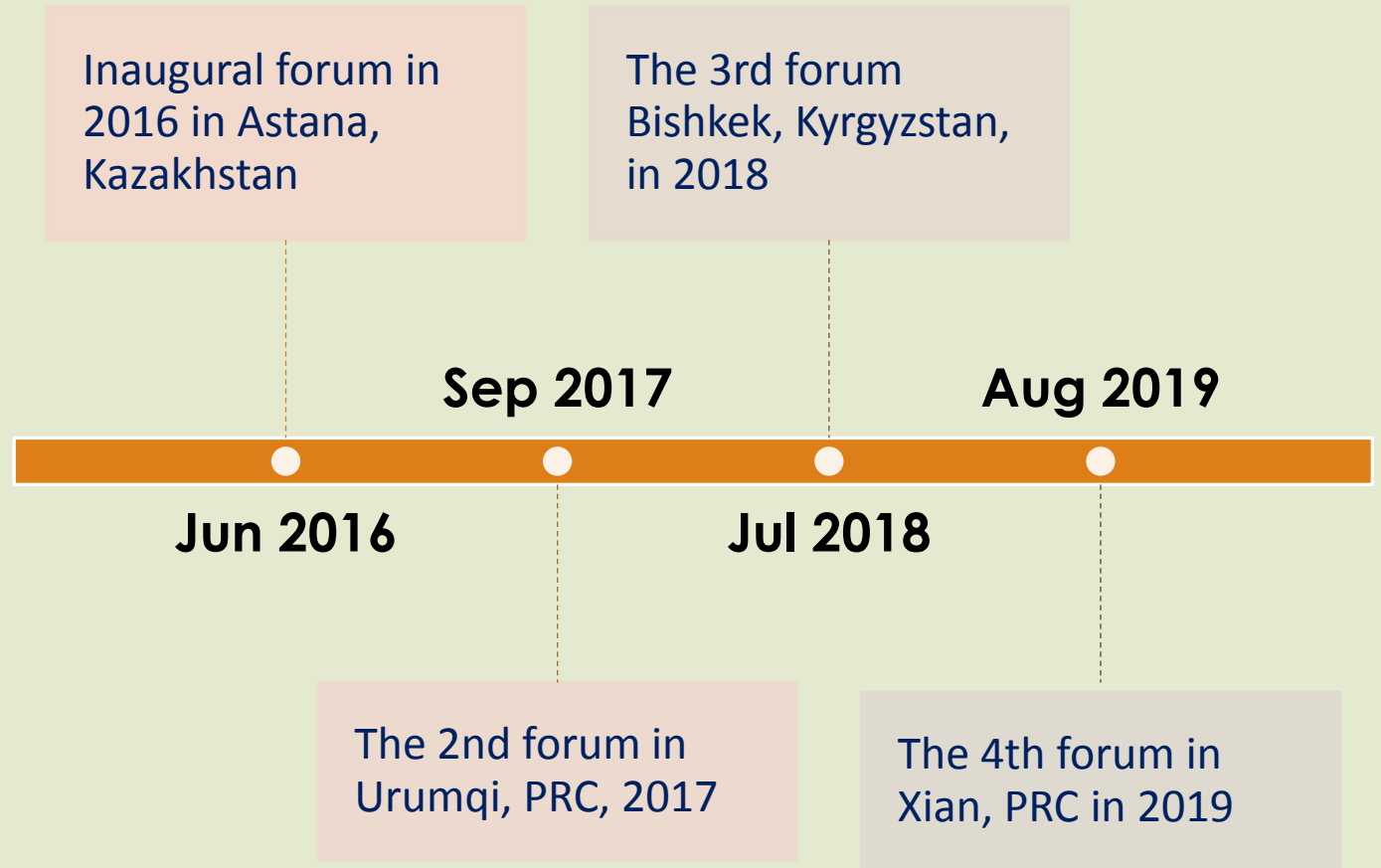
Establishing the CTTN

- **Leading think tanks** from the CAREC member countries agreed to establish the CAREC Think Tanks Network (CTTN) during the second CAREC Think Tanks Development Forum (CTTDF) in **Urumqi, People's Republic of China (PRC), in 2017**
- The **“Urumqi Declaration”** became the founding document of the CTTN. As of now, numerous prominent think tanks and universities representatives from 11 countries of the CAREC region are members.
- The CTTN promotes the regional economic cooperation by **enhancing systemic regional knowledge sharing**, fostering policy research and knowledge solutions.



Think Tanks Forum

A journey through time



The 4th Think Tanks Forum: Thematic focus

Theme

“Trading for Shared Prosperity”

Forum Topics

- Global Trade Frictions
- Impact of Technology on Trade and policy implications for CAREC countries
- Readiness of CAREC countries for embracing E-commerce

The 4th Think Tanks Forum: Key Messages

- **Increase investments** in infrastructure and connectivity, scale up support to SMEs, and extend support to regional value chains
- **Invest in tourism** development and expand cross-border tourism given the diverse cultural heritage of the region
- **Intensify regional trade and investment cooperation** through completing negotiations on regional trade initiatives
- **Gear up** for benefitting from PRC's likely expansion of trade and investment with BRI countries

The 4th Think Tanks Forum: key Messages

- **International cooperation** is imperative to harmonize laws and revamp existing taxation frameworks in member countries for seamless cross-border
- **Increase investment** on the provision of ICT infrastructure (affordability and access), introduce legal, regulatory and institutional reforms to promote in-country and cross-border e-commerce
- **Improve logistics** and delivery infrastructure and intensify regional efforts for modernizing and harmonizing standards and regulations
- **Draw lessons** from global and regional success stories, particularly from Chinese experience of alleviating poverty through using e-commerce platforms for agricultural products

The 4th Think Tanks Forum: key Messages

Revamping the CTTN and the Forum

- **Initiate joint research** programs involving 2-3 think tanks and covering at least two countries
- **Exchange of professionals/researchers** among CTTN members with the support of CAREC Institute
- **Initiate branding campaign** for CTTN members for their research output
- **Expand participation** – invite private sector, parliamentarians, and design a special session for development partners engaged in the CAREC region
- **Establish interactive** online platform (website) for CTTN to share data, information and knowledge
- **Involve of CTTN members** in forum theme, topic and venue selection



The 4th TTF Key Messages

Actions & Way forward

Research Grants Program

- Awarded to **five researchers** on following topics:
 - Assessing participation of CAREC countries in **global and regional value chains**
 - Study of **cross-border tourism value chains** between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan
 - The **impact of sanitary, phytosanitary**, and quality-related standards on the trade flow between CAREC countries and Georgia
 - Opportunities and challenges for **agri-food trade** between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan
 - Building **bankable and viable regional cooperation** programs based on trust

Second round to commence in December 2019

Visiting Fellowship Program

- ▶ **ADB Vice President** Mr. Shixin Chen announced launching of a three-month long Visiting Fellowship Program at the CAREC Institute in Urumqi, PRC, to
 - ▶ **Foster a research environment** and deliver new insights on topics consistent with **CAREC 2030 strategy** priority clusters
- ▶ Fellows will be selected from **all member countries of ADB**, particularly those who have an interest in comparative inter- and intra-regional studies

CTTN Talk Series

The CAREC Institute plans to launch the CTTN Talk Series where different CTTN members will be invited to Urumqi to:

- **Showcase their research findings**, answer pertinent questions emerging from the Institute's knowledge sharing and networking activities,
- **Draw parallels** and contribute value-added research products to the existing body of knowledge.
- **Two think tanks** from CTTN will be invited to CI headquarters each quarter
- **Criteria and guidelines** to be developed

Expand Participation

- CI had **invited development partners** especially 5 CAREC Program Partners (in addition to ADB)
- Regional offices of **WB, IMF and UNDP** attended the 3rd TTF in Bishkek
- CI invited the **private sector** in the 3rd TTF
- Going forward, in the 5th TTF CI is considering to **arrange a session for development partners** to learn about their research needs for the region
- Invited four **non-CAREC think tanks** in 4th TTF
- Considering **inviting parliamentarians** in the future

Establishing Interactive Platform

CTTN Website & Blog

<https://www.carecinstitute.org/carec-think-tank-network/>

Contents

- CTTN Background
- Annual Think Tanks Development Forum
- Agenda, participants, presentations, forum reports
- CTTN Members' Profile
- Members' Research
- Secretariat Information

Theme, Topics and Venue Selection

- CI to initiate the process of theme and topics selection well in advance by
 - **Directly approaching** all CTTN members with a list of themes and topics consistent with CAREC 2030 agenda
 - **Creating a link on website** for CTTN members with a dropdown menu for potential themes and topics
- During the forum CI requested for **partners for jointly organizing** the forum with CTTN members
 - Received **four offers** from think tanks from Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan and Afghanistan

Thank you!