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China to host international meeting on Afghanistan

October 25, 2014

The Fourth Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process on Afghanistan will be held in Beijing next week on Oct. 31, sources in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China said.

From Afghanistan, acting foreign minister Zara Ahmad Moqbil Osmani will lead the afghan delegation.

Mr. Osmani and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi will co-chair the meeting, which will be attended by foreign ministers or senior representatives from Afghanistan's neighbors and near-neighbor countries.

The officials have said Pakistani and Iran foreign ministers will also attend the meeting.

The meeting will take place during the new Afghan president Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai's state visit to China, due from Oct. 28 to 31.

It is Ghani's first foreign visit since taking office in September.

The international meeting hosted by China is of great significance as it is the first time for China to host a major international meeting on Afghanistan and also the first such meeting since the formation of Afghan new government, official sources from China foreign ministry added.

The Istanbul Process agreement was reached between China, Russia, Afghanistan and Central Asian countries in 2011, with an aim to present a new vision for regional cooperation for a secure and stable Afghanistan.

Istanbul Process is comprised of 14 members, including Afghanistan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Russia and Turkey and has 28 supporting parties which includes the United States, Britain, the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, China has been a strong supporter of Afghanistan's recovery.

Since 2010, China has increased its economic aid and investment in Afghanistan, notably with announcement by Metallurgical Corporation Of China (MCC) pledging \$3.5 billion to develop Aynak Copper mines.^[5] ^[2] China has the potential to make important contributions to Afghan stability. State-owned Chinese corporations are uniquely risk-tolerant and can help pave the way for future investments. The Chinese also enjoy a more positive relationship with Afghans, making their investments less likely to be targeted for attack by insurgents. These investments can stimulate economic growth that aid money alone cannot.