

Developing Practical Cooperation through Science

Turkmenistan has been actively engaged within the framework of the NATO Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme since 1993.

The NATO SPS Programme enables close collaboration on issues of common interest to enhance the security of NATO and partner nations by facilitating international efforts to meet emerging security challenges, supporting NATO-led operations and missions, and advancing early warning and forecast for the prevention of disasters and crises.

The current SPS Key Priorities include:

- *Counter-Terrorism;*
- *Energy Security;*
- *Cyber Defence;*
- *Defence against CBRN Agents;*
- *Environmental Security;*
- *Security-related Advanced Technology;*
- *Border and Port Security;*
- *Human and Social Aspects of Security.*

Additionally, the SPS Programme helps to promote *regional security* through scientific cooperation among partners. The programme also helps to *prepare* interested eligible nations for NATO membership. SPS activities often have a high *public diplomacy* value.

TURKMENISTAN

Turkmenistan is an active partner with the SPS Programme. Below are some examples of ongoing and completed activities led by scientists and experts from Turkmenistan and NATO countries under the framework of the NATO SPS Programme.

Cooperative Activities

EXPANSION OF THE ACADEMIC AND EDUCATIONAL INTERNET COMMUNICATION SYSTEM IN TURKMENISTAN

A network infrastructure grant (NIG) was awarded in 2008 and expanded internet connectivity to several academic centres in Ashgabat and medical colleges in other regions of the country. The grant also included the adequate training of Turkmen researchers in using the established network [ref. 983409]. *This activity was led by experts from Turkmenistan and Germany.*



THE SPS PROGRAMME IS OPEN TO ACTIVITIES WITH TURKMENISTAN

The SPS Programme is open to all projects with Turkmenistan, in line with the political guidance from Allies in the form of the 2012 SPS Key Priorities and the 2013 Overarching Guidelines, as well as Turkmenistan's national priorities.

DISTANCE LEARNING FOR SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT FOR TURKMENISTAN

This networking project followed on previous projects with the aim of knowledge-sharing and capacity-building among Turkmen engineers in charge of systems management for energy and utilities such as oil, gas and water. Teachers from European institutes carried out the training of approximately a dozen Turkmen trainees from different institutions, largely via internet-based distance-learning technologies. The training included real-world applications, followed by the implementation of a pilot project in cooperation with a Turkmen state enterprise. [ref. 983411]. *This project led to the cooperation of experts from Turkmenistan with German and Turkish experts.*

VIRTUAL SILK HIGHWAY

Turkmenistan, along with the rest of the countries of Central Asia, has benefited since 2002 from internet connectivity at academic institutions and universities, provided through the SPS “Virtual Silk Highway” initiative. The connectivity was initially delivered via satellite, but has been switched to a system based on fibre since 2010. In addition, networking infrastructure grants from SPS have contributed to the improvement of Turkmenistan’s National Research and Educational Network (NREN), through the provision of networking equipment and information technology to universities and academic institutions. These and previous projects have enabled academicians and young scientists to have easy access to the World Wide Web and the possibility to exchange large documents and datasets with their local and foreign counterparts.



Satellite for internet connectivity
© Copyright NATO

In addition, researchers can sign up to distance learning programmes and set up video conference facilities. This helps promote collaboration and integrates local institutes in the international scientific community. The initiative came to a successful conclusion in August 2003. [ref. 978777]. *SILK was a key high-profile SPS project.*



The NATO Science for Peace
and Security Programme