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## China-Pakistan Economic Corridor; Prospects and Challenges for Balochistan, Pakistan

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### ABSTRACT

Balochistan is rich in natural resource but due to the extremely harsh geographical environment and under-developed civil infrastructure (including roads, energy and water supplies), these natural resources could not have been tapped adequately in the past. With the launch of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (C-PEC), there are ample opportunities for the exploitation of these resources that are expected to pave the way for unprecedented economic activities in Balochistan. From the perspective of natural resources these activities include, but not limited to, development and management of water resource, mining of coal and minerals, exploration of unexplored hydrocarbons, exploitation of dimension stones and construction material, and the establishment of related and subsidiary industries. All these activities require human resource development, better health, and educational facilities especially institution for technical and skill development of masses and most importantly the sustainable development of water resources and reservoirs for drinking, municipal and industrial purposes. In this paper key natural resources of Balochistan are identified in the context of their sustainable use under the C-PEC induced development projects. These include water, minerals, hydrocarbons, shale-gas, and coal. Suggestions are presented for a way forward to take maximum advantage of these resources for revenue generation and for the ultimate benefit to the local communities in Balochistan. A large number of mega projects including development of deep-sea Gwadar port, power generation plants, highway construction, and the establishment of special economic zones have been part of the C-PEC and are already being undertaken. However, it appears that small and medium-sized local industries and production units have not been given due attention. It is proposed here that the local people through local bodies may be identified and matched with relevant Chinese counterparts to develop joint ventures. Most of the areas of production and development identified in this paper are those whose products are already being exported to China through Karachi port. Hence the demand for these products in China is already established and need not any further survey. The products proposed in this paper are considered viable as all kinds of transport for C-PEC shall be passing through a large part of Balochistan where these resources occur naturally.

Keywords. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, natural resources, local communities, Balochistan.

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