

Egyptian Consul General On Suez Canal Project

The Egyptian Consul General in Houston, Khaled Rady, addressed a meeting of the Schiller Institute on bringing the U.S. into the BRICS process, on Dec. 11. These are his remarks.

I would like to thank the Schiller Institute for giving such a great opportunity to discuss such an important issue related to global growth and development and relation to BRICS and the New Silk Road. I would like also to extend my gratitude to the distinguished speakers today for their valuable influence on this very important subject.

Egypt has undertaken recently very important steps on the path of growth and development, focusing on development projects of new cities and new routes for trade.

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on one of the most important projects which will affect very much the ease of transportation through a new project the Egyptian government has initiated. This is called the Suez Canal Corridor Development Project, or the New Suez Canal [Figure 1].

There are papers full of details on this project available here.



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Khaled Rady, Consul General of Egypt, addressing the Schiller Institute conference in Houston, Dec. 11.

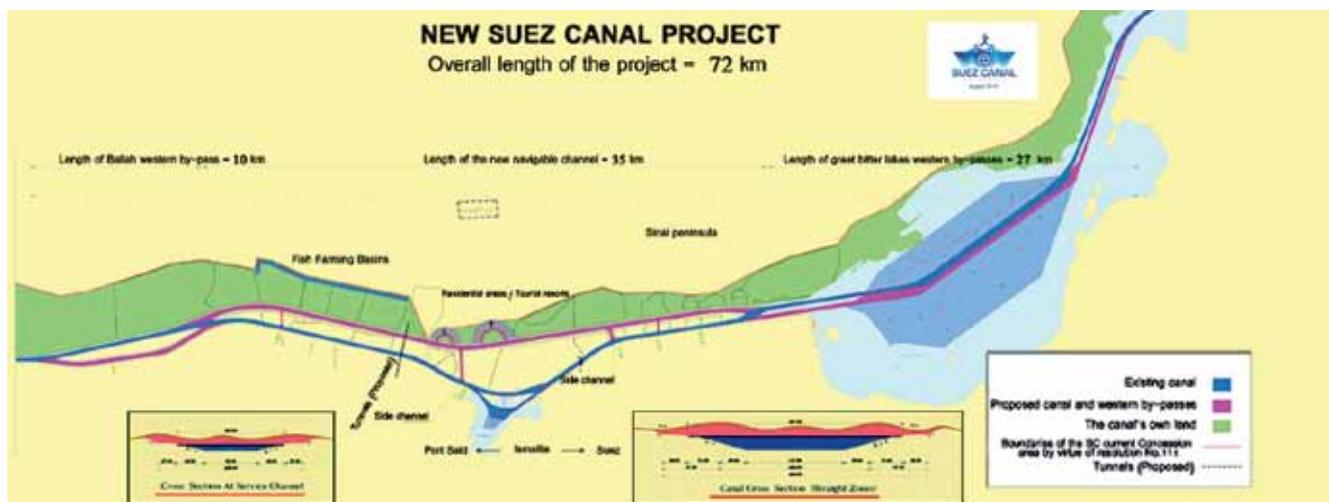
The Project Dimensions

The Suez Canal Authority (SCA) intends to develop the canal by doubling the bypass from kilometer 55 to kilometer 122, to enable ships with a draft of about 66 feet to transit freely in two directions at the same time.

Currently, it is not possible for ships to pass from both sides. So we try to overcome this obstacle by enhancing the ability of the canal to create these shipment capabilities.

The project comprises excavating a new canal between kilometer 58 and 92, with a depth of 24 [meters], widening and deepening the west branches of Ballah, Deversoir, Bitter Lake, Kabrit up to 24 [meters]. Those are names of cities in Egypt; they are in some locations

FIGURE 1



adjacent to the canal. The project includes as well, deepening the depths of those areas.

The plan of implementing the Suez Canal Corridor Development Project includes carrying out 42 projects in general, six of which have top priority. These major projects include:

1. Developing the roads of Cairo-Suez and Ismailia-Port Said into free roads for facilitating transportation and movement between the province's areas and to link it with the capital.

This is the Red Sea and this is the Mediterranean Sea [Figure 2]. The Suez Canal actually connects both from here. The project is to try to double it, and to make the depths deeper as well. There are some lakes, here—we will try as well to deepen these lakes.

2. Establishing the Ismailia tunnel passing through the Suez corridor to link the eastern and western banks of the Suez Canal.

Now we have the Adabiyah tunnel, but I think with the development programs, it's not sufficient. So, we need to complete those tunnels.

3. Establishing a tunnel at southern Port Said under the Suez Canal to facilitate linking the eastern and western banks of the Suez Canal to each other,

4. Developing Nuweiba Port into a free zone. Nuweiba is a port on the Red Sea.

5. Developing Sharm el-Sheikh Airport.

6. Establishing a new water bypass on Ismailia canal up to the site of the water desalination station at the east of the Canal, to support the new development areas.

Other projects will be set up including the establishment of a tunnel under the Suez Canal. It will be the largest of its kind in the Middle East. The tunnel will include four lanes.

Also, the plan envisages setting up two airports, several tunnels, three harbors to serve ships and stations for loading, shipping, repairing, and unloading commodities from giant ships, as well as stations for re-export.

This project will help increase the revenues and accelerate the passage in the navigational waterway, as about 10% of the global trade and 22% of the container trade in the world pass through the Suez Canal. How-

FIGURE 2
The Suez Canal



ever, the Canal's revenues will not exceed the transit fees.

Egyptian Sovereignty

As for the financing of the project, the financing is fully Egyptian. The Governor of the Central Bank of Egypt, the CBE, asserted that the total value of the Suez Canal Investment certificates reached the target: 61 billion Egyptian pounds, without calculating the investment certificates sold by Egyptian Post.

The CBE chief noted that the public offering of Suez Canal certificates was closed after reaching the target amount. A lot of Egyptians tried to get the

bonds of this new project, but all of that was sold in a few days. I received many requests by Egyptians who live here in the States, calling the consulate to try to buy those bonds, but they were already sold.

This was one of the wise and important steps by the Egyptian government, to depend on themselves, on Egyptian capabilities, to finance this project.

This was actually a political message that the people of Egypt support this project and support the government—at an important and critical juncture. We needed a practical proof for the support by the people of this government. So, I think it was a very clear message of how much the Egyptian people support the presence of General el-Sisi and the government.

The Suez Canal Corridor Project will provide a good chance for setting up world logistic hubs.

The project will turn the Egyptian ports to main harbors for transit trade.

Building the 'Heart' Bridge

Let me add, that may we have a World Land-Bridge, but before the land bridge, I think there is the "heart bridge," the feeling bridge; this is what we need. People's feelings and people's hearts, all over the world—this is the real bridge, actually. From East to West, from North to South, the feeling of warmth, hands extended, where we all are for peace.

God bless all of you, and thank you very much for everyone here today, and thank you to the Chinese Community Center for hosting this event, and thank you, Schiller Institute, thank you, everybody.