



## Supreme Leader's Advisor: United States Common Enemy of Iran and China

**OE Watch Commentary:** The accompanying excerpted article on the relationship between Iran and China comes from *MojNews.com*, an outlet supported by the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), which is a political and economic intergovernmental organization founded in Tehran in 1985 to develop links initially among Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the newly independent Central Asian states joined the ECO and while the organization has been unsuccessful in creating the type of common market which the European Union has, it is increasingly supportive of greater political and diplomatic links between Iran, Turkey, Central Asia and China. It is in this context that it has covered meetings between former Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati and a visiting Chinese delegation. Of particular interest are Velayati's discussion of China-Iran ties. While his remarks about the historical legacy of both countries is a staple of rhetoric and a source of pride in Tehran and Beijing, the comments about building a relationship geared against stymieing the United States provide insight into the thinking not only of Velayati, but also Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, to whom Velayati is the top advisor on the topic. While relations are not a zero sum game, Iranian efforts to cultivate China also reflect a historical distrust of Russia and a desire not to become over reliant on Moscow (See: "Iran-Russia Relations," *OE Watch*, July 2016). **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**

*"...the relationship between Iran and China is getting better and deeper every day."*



Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign policy advisor to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Ali\\_Akbar\\_Velayati#/media/File:Ali\\_Akbar\\_Velayati,\\_28\\_January\\_2015.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Ali_Akbar_Velayati#/media/File:Ali_Akbar_Velayati,_28_January_2015.jpg), CC BY 4.0

**Source:** "Rahbateh-i Iran va Chin Mesal Zadani Ast (The Relationship between Iran and China is an Example)," *MojNews.com*, 29 September 2018. <https://goo.gl/1Ae9Ka>

*Ali Akbar Velayati, the assistant to the Supreme Leader for international affairs, in a meeting with Wang Jisi, dean of the School of International and Strategic Studies at Peking University, said, "The history of Iran and China dates back several thousand years, and the relationship between our countries is a historical one. Therefore, we hope very much for the future of relations between the two countries, and relations continue to expand in various dimensions. Referring to the Peking University delegation, he said, "This trip is the fourth time to Iran and, God willing, and we have witnessed changes in these trips." The advisor to the Supreme Leader for international affairs argued that the relationship between Iran and China is an example and noted, "We together have many enemies but America is at their head and, despite America's hostility, the relationship between Iran and China is getting better, deeper and wider every day."*

## Compendium of Central Asian Military and Security Activity

By Matthew Stein

Since Central Asian states gained independence in 1991, new regional military and security alliances have been created (some of which are Russian-led), new military partnerships with non-NATO countries have been established, a number of joint military exercises have been conducted, over a dozen high-profile incidents of violence and civil unrest have taken place, and military installations have been used by foreign militaries. While this activity gained attention, it has not been collectively compiled. A compilation of this activity can serve as a guide for current and future military and security involvement in Central Asia.



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