

TURKISH PORTS IN MARITIME
SILK ROAD(MSR)
BY
IRSA SHAFIQ



Background

- China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) and Maritime Silk Route(MSR) is known as the revival of ancient silk trade routes. OBOR and MSR aims to enhance connectivity between countries of the Eurasian landmass, through infrastructure development, people-to-people exchanges, increased trade, joint investment projects in technology and social welfare sectors.
- Through newly established and modernized routes, the travel time will decrease between China and Turkey for trade transport from 30 days to 10 days, and it is expected to create a \$21-trillion trade cycle. The two countries also aim to boost bilateral trade to \$100 billion by 2020.

Strategic Importance of Turkey

- Turkey has a unique trans-continental geographic location, which allows it to serve as a central exchange or transit point for China to Europe through land and sea routes. Turkey also provides easy access to three major seas i.e. Black sea, Mediterranean sea and the Aegean sea.
- Under Middle Corridor of One Belt & One Road(OBOR), Turkey and China will be linked via the Caspian Sea and Central Asian countries. This line is a safe and economical route that complements existing lines on the east-west axis.

OBOR & MSR Map



Turkish Ports

The Turkish port sector is moving into a new phase of growth as the country seeks to position itself as a leading regional shipment logistics centre.

At present there is no hub port in Turkey but the intention is to establish three port hubs, one in the Black Sea, one in the Aegean and one in the Mediterranean region.

For this purpose Turkey is strategically upgrading the capacity of its major ports.

Kumport Terminal (Port of Ambarli)

The port is located in Istanbul or Marmara sea region. This port is the key transit point to enter Europe. As part of integrating Turkey in MSR the notable investment so far is made in Kumport terminal by a consortium of COSCO (China Ocean Shipping Company), China Merchants Holdings International and China Investment Corporation.

Approximately **USD \$940 million** are invested to buy a 65% stake at the Kumport Terminal.

Mersin Port

This port is located on the north-eastern coast of Mediterranean Sea at Mersin (in southern Turkey). With the capacity of handling 22 million tones of cargo annually (in average). Mersin International Port is the second largest port in Turkey.

It has rail link and easy access to the major national highways. The railway infrastructure within the Port of Mersin is one of the best in Turkey. Mersin international port has all the capacity and modern equipment to be integrated in MSR.

Filyos Port

Filyos Port is set to become Turkey's third largest port upon completion by the end of 2017. The total development cost is **USD 154 million**. Several other infrastructure projects are lined-up to make the region an industrial zone.

The port will provide a gateway to the Anatolian lands from the eastern Black Sea. The 3,000-meter-long port will have a loading and unloading capacity of 25 million tons per annum, and will be backed by a road and rail network.

Çandarlı Port

The port is located in North of İzmir city and give access to Aegean sea. It is closest to Greek port Piraeus and it can be used as an alternate in the region.

Candarli Port have a depth of 40 meters, large enough to accommodate ships up to 200,000 tons, which makes it a favorable option for carrying containerized products from Istanbul and the Marmara region to Europe.

Northern Aegean Candarli Port is expected to assume a central role in the naval trade between Asia and Europe.

But it still need more infrastructural up-gradation.

Limak Terminal- İskenderun

- Limak Port Iskenderun is situated at the north-east of Mediterranean Sea, in the city of Iskenderun. Privatized in 2011. Operated by Limak company.
- The Limak terminal is bigger than other terminals of Iskenderun port. It is frequently used for transit loads to Middle East such as to Syria, Iran and Iraq. . The port is connected to trading centers by the national railway system and state highways.
- The port is advantageous for receiving container ships passing through the Suez and providing easy access to the North African markets, Iran and the land routes of OBOR.

Conclusion

- All of these options have significance in trans-continental shipment, and they can create significant value for the MSR's prospects and Turkey's shipping industry.
- Turkey is not a global shipping giant however due to its significant geographical location Turkey can play an integral part in MSR.

Map

