

Can Turkmenistan cooperate with Central Asian countries? An analysis of aviation network of Central Asia.

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This article utilizes aviation data and networks in contemporary Central Asia to examine international relations between Central Asian countries. Turkmenistan has been regarded as a part of the Central Asia in the literature due to its historical identity, legacy of the Soviet Union and geographical proximity. Turkmenistan has avoided regional governance and integration and kept its distance from other Central Asian countries. However, Turkmenistan's recent participation in two Central Asian summits in 2018 sparked much anticipation in the media for more cooperation among Central Asian countries in upcoming years.

This article questions the possibility of new Central Asian cooperation initiatives including Turkmenistan. It argues that, despite the recent dramatic advances in regional cooperation in politics, the lack of integration with Turkmenistan will hinder a multilateral "5-stans" cooperation network. While it is clear that other four Central Asian countries have developed regional cooperation and integration since the failure of Central Asia Cooperation Organization, according to empirical data, Turkmenistan is still an outlier from other Central Asian countries. In addition, the article argues that Turkmenistan has a distinctively different pattern of international connectivity from those of other Central Asian countries. As a result, it concludes that without a sudden development of cooperation between Turkmenistan and other Central Asian countries, a new regional cooperation system is not likely to emerge, and the recent summits will only remain a political or rhetorical action such as Treaty of Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone (Treaty of Semipalatinsk).

This article is based on 2-year international flight GPS logs departing from Central Asian airports. Data will be analyzed through network analysis to illustrate a clear picture of the current interstate connections in the region.

\*Keywords

Central Asia, regional cooperation, international relations, Turkmenistan, aviation network

## Introduction

Central Asian countries have opened a new atmosphere of cooperation. Leading by leaders of Central Asian countries including the former President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev and Shavkat Mirziyoyev who succeed the long-reigned President of Uzbekistan Islom Karimov in 2016, five "stan" countries tried to organize regional cooperation governance once again. Central Asian summit was hosted in March 2018 at Nursultan or Astana for the first time in ten years, and a roundtable discussion of Central Asian leaders on the Aral Sea was convened in August 2018 at Turkmenbashi. The new regime of Kazakhstan, incumbent Kazakhstani president Kassym-Jomart Tokaev, still wants to start intra-Central Asian cooperation. Therefore, someone can expect that there will be a chance to develop integration in Central Asia soon.

However, it is notable that there wasn't any meeting among Central Asian leaders yet in this year. Although they promised to assemble before 2019 Norouz last year, they just took a rain check instead. It doesn't mean that Central Asian countries don't want to group within Central Asia. These five countries altogether launched a new partnership with European Union early this year, and had several meetings in 5+1 system with Republic of Korea, United States, and Japan. This situation is not unfamiliar to Central Asian countries. Their previous cooperation like Central Asian Union, Central Asian Economic Community, and Central Asian Cooperation Organization were dissolved mainly because Central Asian countries were not keen to work within the region. As a result, someone also can predict that these five countries will not have a summit shortly.

This article raises fundamental questions about the cooperation among five Central Asian countries. Is the whole Central Asian cooperation possible to create? Especially, will Turkmenistan participate in the new governance? Turkmenistan has been regarded as a part of the Central Asia in the literature due to its historical identity, legacy of the Soviet Union and geographical proximity. Nevertheless, Turkmenistan has avoided regional governance and integration and kept its distance from other Central Asian countries. However, Turkmenistan's recent participation in two Central Asian summits in 2018 sparked much anticipation in the media for more cooperation among Central Asian countries in upcoming years. In order to answer the questions, this article reviews previous regional cooperation among Central Asian countries and current conditions.

This article argues that, despite the recent dramatic advances in regional cooperation in politics, the lack of integration with Turkmenistan will hinder a multilateral "5-stans" cooperation network. According to empirical data, while it is clear that other four Central Asian countries have developed regional cooperation and integration since the failure of Central Asian Cooperation Organization, Turkmenistan is still an outlier from other Central Asian countries. In addition, the article argues that Turkmenistan has a distinctively different

pattern of international network from those of other Central Asian countries.

This article utilizes aviation networks in Central Asia as an alternative approach to demonstrate how much Central Asian countries are linked with others. The increasing trans-national movement and flow in the globalized world is a popular subject of contemporary studies in international relations. Central Asia also experiences a rise of human inbound and outbound as a result of tourism and migration (World Bank, 2018; United Nations Migration Stock, 2017). Unfortunately, statistics of international movement are not provided by each Central Asian country. However, private companies can collect aviation logs, making them the only open and public observations to follow-up current human traffic of Central Asia.

There are several reasons that why analyzing flight network is a suitable method of transportation for travelers in Central Asia. First, due to a lack of transportation infrastructure, other transportation methods are not as available as the number of scheduled flights in the region. For example, in September 2018, airplanes flew directly between Tashkent and Bishkek twice per week, while trains ran only once. While most of ordinary people ride a bus to move around Central Asia, high profiles such as officials and businesspeople take an airplane to go other country. Second, air travel route means a diplomatic tie between two countries. Direct flight between Tashkent and Dushanbe was revived after 15 years of suspension in 2017 due to conflict between Uzbek and Tajik government.

### **History of Central Asian cooperation**

All five Central Asian countries tried to construct their own regional multi-functional organization in early 1990s. First summit was held in June 1990. Leaders of five soviet Stans assembled at Alma-Ata. In that summit, they discussed economic, technologic, ecological and cultural cooperation between Central Asian countries. Acknowledging geographical proximity and common origin, they promised to meet annually. Second summit was held in August 1991 at Tashkent. In this summit, leaders of Central Asia and Azerbaijan reaffirmed what they discussed in 1990. Leaders of Central Asia met thirdly just before the eve of Soviet Union. In this time they didn't covered cooperation between Central Asia., but they measured impact of dissolution of Soviet Union and creation of Commonwealth of Independent States. After their independence from Soviet Union, in January 1993, leaders of five countries met at Tashkent to discuss their own regionalism based on common identity. They agreed two agendas in that summit. They decided to call themselves "Central Asia(Центральная Азия)" instead of "Middle Asia and Kazakhstan(Средняя Азия и Казахстан)", to establish interstate council to solve security and diplomatic problems, to use Russian ruble instead of their own currency, and to organize common market and customs. As result, Central Asian countries created Central Asian Union in 1994.

However Central Asian Union was not well operated for a couple of reasons. First, each country launched its own currency, so economic integration process between Central Asian countries was interrupted. Second, due to civil war in Tajikistan, other countries reserved the accession of Tajikistan in Central Asian Union. Third, Turkmenistan started to refuse ratifying any alliance and regional cooperation, because it claimed permanent neutrality. Therefore, initially Central Asian Union was consisted of three countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan. In March 1998, Tajikistan finally joined Central Asian Union as its civil war ended, but still Turkmenistan didn't take part in cooperation.

Just after Tajikistan joined Central Asian Union, four countries changed the name of organization to Central Asian Economic Community. It's because they tried to focus on economic issue rather than security and political issue. However, economic situation in Central Asia became complex in late 1990s and early 2000s and Central Asian Economic Community became weaker. First, Kyrgyz Republic's accession to WTO in 1998 undermined custom and common market system developed by Central Asia. In order to avoid loss in common market, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan had to change their trade policy to Central Asia. Creation of Eurasian Economic Community in October 2000 also changed atmosphere around Central Asia. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan initially joined Eurasian Economic Community, so most functions of Central Asian Economic Community overlapped with the ones of Eurasian Economic Community, which was led by Russia.

In February 2002, Central Asian countries changed their organization to Central Asian Cooperation Organization. In this time, they sought multifunctional governance like Central Asian Union. However, Central Asian countries chose bilateral relation with US or Russia and other regional cooperative options like Shanghai Cooperation Organization to solve regional security and economic problems. Central Asian Cooperation Organization became nominal when Russia and Uzbekistan joined Eurasian Economic Community. All members of Central Asian Cooperation Organization were members of Eurasian Economic Community, and Eurasian Economic Community was much more effective than Central Asian Cooperation Organization. Finally, Central Asian countries decided to merge into Eurasian Economic Community in January 2006.

## **Review the Central Asian cooperation**

Previous literature has often studied why there isn't any remarkable intra-Central Asian organization. As Spechler<sup>1</sup> said 'pathology' of non-cooperation in Central Asia, researchers have argued three reasons that why Central Asian countries failed to make their own regionalism. First, trans-border conflict and rivalry for regional dominance disrupted cooperation. In this perspective, researchers highlight Soviet legacy as origin of various regional problems. Regional hegemony competition between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan<sup>2</sup>, water management conflict, and unsolved delimitation and disputed territory between parties were main issues that hindered regional cooperation. Second, due to lack of economic development and interdependence, confidence, and connectivity between each other, Central Asian countries had no advantages to operate own regional organization. Rather, they chose alternative or dominant strategies like Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Eurasian Economic Community. Third, foreign policies of all Central Asian countries were not focused on regional cooperation. Rather, each country maintained its unique characteristic such as Eurasianism of Kazakhstan, pragmatism of Uzbekistan, and permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan. While Kazakhstan has maintained regional cooperative policy, Uzbekistan changed its foreign relation partner and strategies several times, making it hard for other countries to predict its diplomatic preference. Although Central Asian countries tried to appeal common identity for regional cooperation, they rationally chose their foreign strategies. In conclusion, there were more bad conditions and atmosphere for cooperation among Central Asian countries.

Recently, many obstacles reviewed in the previous paragraph seemed to be resolved. Mirziyoyev supported regional integration and opened Uzbekistan to not only worldwide but also regional countries. Trade and movement of people between Central Asian countries clearly increased than 10 years ago. While there are still unsolved water, border, and territory disputes, it is true that Central Asian countries except Turkmenistan are closer than ever.

## **Turkmenistan: hermitic country in Central Asia**

Nevertheless, Turkmenistan is still not close to other neighboring countries. Since its declaration of permanent neutrality in 1992, it withdrew previous regional security initiatives such as Collective Security Treaty Organization, because it claimed neutrality for all alliances. However, Turkmenistan was not fully isolated in international stage. Economic Cooperation Organization is the only regional cooperative organization that Turkmenistan joined, while it enjoyed its neutrality status in the United Nations. It is unclear that what kind of criteria does Turkmenistan have for regional cooperation, but it refused to join Central Asian Union or Commonwealth of Independent States.

While other four Central Asian countries tried to develop economic relations and interdependence within region recently, Turkmenistan is still outlier of Central Asia. According to Table 1 about data of International Monetary Fund, net exports of four Central Asian countries to other Central Asian countries were gradually increased from 2016 to 2018, but only net exports of Turkmenistan didn't show growth. Exports of Tajikistan to Central Asian countries skyrocketed in recent three years, mainly because foreign relation between Uzbekistan has been improved dramatically. It was 56.72 million dollars in 2016, but it was almost quadrupled, 224.01 million dollars in 2018. Meanwhile, exports pattern of Turkmenistan in recent three years show somewhat interesting. While exports to Uzbekistan grew, exports to Kazakhstan rapidly diminished from 202.26 million dollars to 12.17 million dollars. Data of net imports from Central Asian countries also shows that Turkmenistan doesn't have close economic ties with others. As Table 2, Turkmenistan bought 132.92 million dollars from other Central Asian countries, while the second least imports in last year marked 678.31 million dollars. Tajikistan imported 908.45 million dollars from Central Asia, and it is nearly a quarter of its net imports from the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Spechler, Martin C., 2001, "Regional Non-cooperation in Central Asia: a Pathology", in NATO Security and Stability Colloquium, 267-274.

<sup>2</sup> Bohr, Annette, 2003, "Regional Cooperation in Central Asia: Mission Impossible?", Helsinki Monitor 3, 254-268.; Olcott, Martha Brill, 2010, "Rivalry and competition in central Asia", Eurasia Emerging Markets Forum 2010, 1-25.

Table 1. Exports, FOB to partner countries within Central Asia

Exports, FOB to partner countries				US dollars, millions			
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>Turkmenistan</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Kyrgyz Republic	437.22	490.32	569.81	Kazakhstan	202.26	41.66	12.17
Tajikistan	371.87	458.72	521.95	Kyrgyz Republic	4.11	0.44	1.32
Turkmenistan	69.10	55.12	86.65	Uzbekistan	120.01	99.46	225.73
Uzbekistan	925.20	1,245.76	1,637.54		<b>326.38</b>	<b>141.56</b>	<b>239.22</b>
	<b>1,803.40</b>	<b>2,249.92</b>	<b>2,815.95</b>				
<b>Kyrgyz Republic</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>Uzbekistan</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Kazakhstan	151.15	266.19	237.03	Kazakhstan	876.60	991.31	1,354.91
Tajikistan	21.84	24.29	47.09	Kyrgyz Republic	114.14	169.10	332.75
Turkmenistan	5.70	4.89	3.19	Tajikistan	43.40	75.35	141.85
Uzbekistan	125.07	146.29	158.53	Turkmenistan	55.83	53.18	35.56
	<b>303.76</b>	<b>441.66</b>	<b>445.83</b>		<b>1,089.97</b>	<b>1,288.93</b>	<b>1,865.07</b>
<b>Tajikistan</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>				
Kazakhstan	13.74	20.01	20.45				
Kyrgyz Republic	4.57	6.09	48.85				
Uzbekistan	38.41	58.33	154.71				
	<b>56.72</b>	<b>84.43</b>	<b>224.01</b>				

Source: International Monetary Fund

Table 2. Imports, CIF from Central Asian countries in 2018

Imports, CIF from Partner countries(2018)		
US dollars, millions		% of CA
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	<b>1400.27</b>	<b>4.34%</b>
<b>Kyrgyz Republic</b>	<b>678.31</b>	<b>14.06%</b>
<b>Tajikistan</b>	<b>908.45</b>	<b>24.60%</b>
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	<b>132.92</b>	<b>5.29%</b>
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	<b>2057.92</b>	<b>11.89%</b>

Source: International Monetary Fund

Table 3. Visa-free regime among Central Asia (ordinary passport)

From \ To	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyz Rep.	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Kazakhstan		90 days	30 days	for some region	30 days
Kyrgyz Rep.	Unlimited		Unlimited	X	60 days
Tajikistan	Unlimited	Unlimited		X	30 days
Turkmenistan	for some region only	X	X		for some region only
Uzbekistan	90 days	60 days	30 days	5 days transit	

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of each country.

Visa-free regime among Central Asia also shows that Turkmenistan is not close to other Central Asian countries. As Table 3, citizens of four Central Asian countries except Turkmenistan are exempt from visa when they visit Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. However, most citizens of Turkmenistan need a visa to enter other Central Asian countries, and most citizens of others also need a visa to enter Turkmenistan. Visa fee of Turkmenistan is not cheap. For single entry, Turkmenistan requires 40 dollars up to one month and 30 dollars for each additional month. Even worse, there are only two consular office of Turkmenistan in Central Asia at Nur-Sultan and Aktau to issue a Turkmenistan visa, and there is no embassy in Tajikistan.

To sum up, it is not easy to make regional cooperation among all five Central Asian countries. While Turkmenistan looks like similar to Central Asia and is always regarded as a part of Central Asia because of geographical proximity and shared culture and history, it doesn't have close tie with other Central Asian countries. In addition to this section, this article will check data of aviation network in Central Asia that Turkmenistan is somewhat isolated from other Central Asian countries.

## Method

This article uses twenty-four-month international departures of Central Asian airports from June 2016 to May 2018. To collect data, this article referred three website: Airportia.com (<http://airportia.com>); Flightradar24.com (<http://www.flightradar24.com>); Planespotters.net (<http://planespotters.net>). Whereas previous literatures about aviation network were based on schedules given by airline companies, this article used actual flight records. Every airplane has an automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast (ADS-B) system to emit and receive signals to communicate with ground stations such as air traffic controls and other aircrafts. These signals have various information including latitude, longitude, and altitude of the current location, call signs, and registered number of aircraft. According to these data, status such as route, cruising speed, and departure and arrival of airplane can be calculated. There are several websites that offers airplane flight logs for publics, and this article is based on the database provided by Flightradar24.com. This database includes all traceable flight record in the world, maximum 730 days ago. During data collecting work, cancelled schedules, detours, and sudden return cases were filtered for accurate analysis.

Data for this article were analyzed with only international route of Central Asian countries. From June 2016 to May 2018, there were 95,012 logs from 34 airports to 93 destinations. This research also found 49 airline companies operated 322 routes in the period from Central Asian cities. To limit the scope of data to intra-Central Asia, there were 8,040 logs from 9 airports and 10 airline companies operated 23 routes in the period. This article tries to look the level of network of countries and cities

This article uses social network analysis to investigate different aspect of current international relations. Social network analysis is a strategy for examining relationship between actors or nodes in structure. According to Hafner-Burton et al.,<sup>3</sup> network analysis permits to conceptualize and measure structure of international relations and to investigate multi-leveled relations of structures and agents. Network approach is appropriate in this research, because this article challenges a common stereotype that international relations of Central Asia are dominated by Russia. Social network analysis enables to consider connectivity between players first, while earlier literature of international relations of Central Asia focused on the role and behavior of each country. While network analysis is popular among contemporary social scientists, studies on Central Asia using network approach are focused on internal clan politics of each country or terrorist link, rather than international relations.

The main concept of network analysis that will be crucial in this research is centrality. Centrality is one of characteristics that a network contains. The more ties or paths in the network are connected to specific actor or node, the more centrality is measured. There are three types of centrality most calculated: degree, closeness, and betweenness. Degree centrality of a node depends on how many paths the node has with others directly. Closeness centrality of a node is defined by distance between this node and others, and the less length between nodes, the more likely to be a center. Betweenness centrality of a node means how many times the node is passed by shortest links to reach other nodes.

The centralities focused on in this article are degree and eigenvector centrality. Eigenvector centrality of a node is calculated by the centrality of other nodes connected with the node I want to identify, as well as the number of paths that the node has. Because this article focuses on how much Central Asian countries are linked with other countries directly, no matter how much time is spent, degree and eigenvector centrality is utilized to analyze, rather than closeness centrality. In addition, since this article analyzes with only international flight records, which are inevitably concentrated to a few hub cities, it is unnecessary to use betweenness centrality.

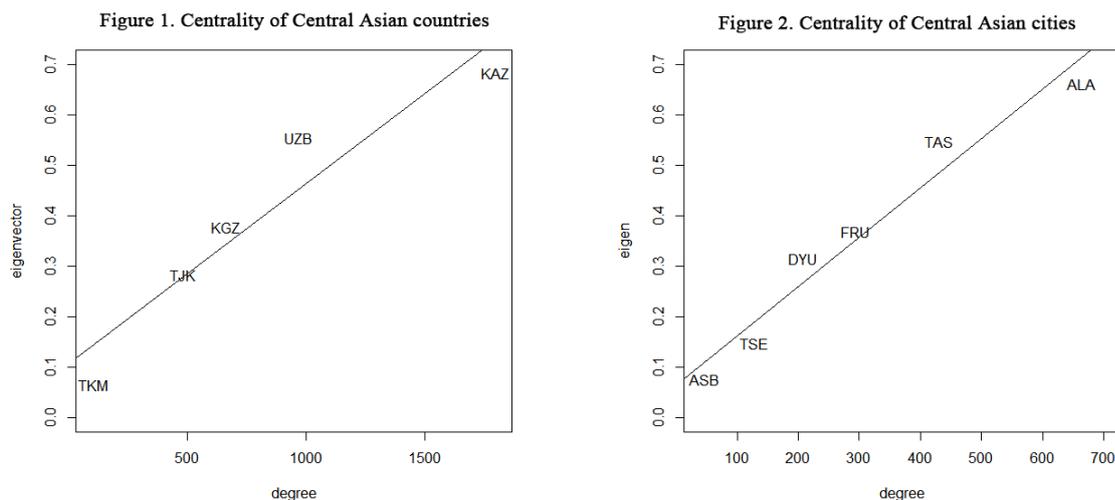
## Analysis of aviation network of Central Asia

According to collected intra-Central Asia aviation data, 44.18% of flights (3552/8040) departed from Kazakhstan, and 37.13% of flights (2985/8040) departed from Almaty, which was the busiest airport in the two-year period. 1950 flights (24.25%) departed from Uzbekistan and Tashkent, since Tashkent was the only airport that had intra-Central Asia airline route in the period. 17.06% (1372) and 11.87% (954) of flights departed from Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan respectively. Only 212 flights (2.64%) departed from Ashgabat and

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<sup>3</sup> Hafner-Burton, E. M., et al., 2009, "Network analysis for international relations", *International Organization*, 63(3), 559-592.

Turkmenistan. While Almaty was the only city that connected every capital of Central Asia, there was only one regular route between Turkmenistan and Central Asia: Almaty-Ashgabat. That means there are no international route between Turkmenistan and Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Figure 1 and Figure 2 show both calculated centralities with intra-Central Asia data. These figures show similar result which descriptive statistics do. As Figure 1, Kazakhstan, from which about 44% of flights departed, marks the highest degree centrality and eigenvector centrality, and it is followed by Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. In the scope of city level (Figure 2), Almaty is the most important node in the network. According to data, although the capital of Kazakhstan is Nur-Sultan, former Astana, still Almaty is the hub of intra-Central Asia. In reality, Nur-Sultan is not a significant node as much as Bishkek and Dushanbe. Turkmenistan and Ashgabat score the lowest in both degree and eigenvector centrality, because they are the least connected with other Central Asian countries. In conclusion, these figures indicate that Turkmenistan is not close with other Central Asian countries, as other empirical data show.



**Figure 3. Numbers and Percentage of flights from Central Asia (Top 10)**

	KAZ(39221)				KGZ(14911)				TJK(12770)				TKM(7943)				UZB(20167)			
1	RUS	12879	32.84%	RUS	9092	60.98%	RUS	9958	77.98%	TUR	2380	29.96%	RUS	11130	55.19%					
2	TUR	4565	11.64%	TUR	2488	16.69%	KAZ	797	6.24%	RUS	1322	16.64%	KAZ	1617	8.02%					
3	CHN	3438	8.77%	KAZ	1016	6.81%	TUR	512	4.01%	UAE	879	11.07%	TUR	1559	7.73%					
4	UAE	2828	7.21%	CHN	816	5.47%	UAE	502	3.93%	IND	798	10.05%	KOR	1015	5.03%					
5	UKR	2154	5.49%	UAE	504	3.38%	CHN	482	3.77%	GER	657	8.27%	CHN	764	3.79%					
6	UZB	1610	4.10%	MGL	313	2.10%	IRI	113	0.88%	GBR	523	6.58%	IND	630	3.12%					
7	GER	1557	3.97%	IND	302	2.03%	GER	104	0.81%	BLR	386	4.86%	UAE	558	2.77%					
8	BLR	1095	2.79%	UZB	259	1.74%	KGZ	90	0.70%	CHN	374	4.71%	ISR	341	1.69%					
9	GEO	1066	2.72%	TJK	97	0.65%	IND	75	0.59%	THA	286	3.60%	THA	336	1.67%					
10	KGZ	914	2.33%	AFG	23	0.15%	AFG	68	0.53%	KAZ	212	2.67%	KGZ	266	1.32%					

Figure 3 shows how individual country is connected with all other foreign countries, and which country is significant destination for Central Asian countries. According to the Figure 3, Russia, Turkey, China, United Arab Emirates, and Kazakhstan were important destinations for Central Asian countries. Especially, Russia is remarkable. During two years, more than 9,000 flights departed from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to Russia. In Kazakhstan, about one-third of total flights headed to Russia from June 2016 to May 2018, and the percentage of total flights exceeded a half in other three countries. In other word, Russia maintained significant influence over Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, and many people move between Russia and these four countries.

However, data of Turkmenistan indicate that it has a different pattern of international connectivity from other countries. According to data, Russia was not a primary destination of Turkmenistan, and there were just 1322 flights and 16.64% of total flights that departed to Russia from Turkmenistan in the period. Instead of

Russia, Turkey was the main destination of Turkmenistan and almost 30% of flights headed to Turkey. Turkey was placed within top third in the table though. Kazakhstan is not a main destination for Turkmenistan as well. More than 5% of flights from other Central Asian countries flights were bound for Kazakhstan, but only 2.67% of flights from Turkmenistan went to Kazakhstan. So we can infer that, although Turkmenistan was a part of Soviet Union before, presence of Russia as well as Central Asia in Turkmenistan is somewhat seemed to be diminished.

Overall, aviation data indicate that Turkmenistan is very far away from other Central Asian countries although it shares border with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Turkmenistan is neither well nor similarly connected as neighboring countries do. Kazakhstan is the core link of Central Asian network, but still Turkmenistan has a weak relation with Kazakhstan. This situation asks Central Asia about possibility of cooperation that is it practicable to cooperate with scarcely integrated country.

## **Conclusion**

Central Asian summit in 2018 was a big event for Central Asian countries because it refreshed the atmosphere of Central Asian regional cooperation after 12 years of dissolution of Central Asian Cooperation Organization. However, there are too many evidences that Turkmenistan is currently not even close enough to call it neighborhood or a part of Central Asia. Although five 'stan' countries are proposing a community based on common identity, it will not be practical if there isn't sufficient interdependence. As a result, it concludes that without a sudden development of cooperation between Turkmenistan and other Central Asian countries, a new regional cooperation system is not likely to emerge, and the recent summits will only remain a political or rhetorical action such as Treaty of Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone (Treaty of Semipalatinsk).