

Charles Edward Santos

From 1987 through 1989, Mr. Santos was special assistant to Diego Cordovez, the United Nations Under-Secretary General for Special Political Affairs and the Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan responsible for mediating and end to the war in Afghanistan and the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Mr. Santos was responsible for developing relations with internal Afghan political actors and initiating an intra-Afghan dialogue, under the mandate of the Representative of the Secretary-General. He also was a senior political advisor to the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP), which oversaw the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

From 1990 to 1991, Mr. Santos worked as a political affairs officer in the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, first in its analytical branch and later as an ad hoc Special Assistant to its Under-Secretary-General. In this capacity, he work on the utilization of the Military Staff Committee of the Security Council during the first Gulf War as well as the development of closer cooperation with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

From 1992 through 1993, Mr. Santos worked to establish the West Asian Division of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), particularly focusing on peacemaking in the region. Mr. Santos was directly responsible for peacemaking and political issues related to Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

During this period Mr. Santos served as a Political Advisor to the United Nations Special Envoy for Tajikistan, Ismat Kittani, traveling to Islamabad, Kabul and Dushanbe to mediate between Tajik opposition leaders and government officials during the Tajik civil war.

Mr. Santos played a critical role in establishing the “Friends of Afghanistan” made up of the United States, Russia, Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia. He led the effort by organizing and guiding through the General Assembly and Security Council UN resolutions that established the Special Mission to Afghanistan, which resulted in the return of UN peacemaking efforts to Afghanistan after the collapse of the Afghan Government under President Najibullah and the beginning of the Afghan Civil War.

From 1994 through 1995, Mr. Santos became the United Nations Special Mission’s first political advisor and deputy to its head, Mahmoud Mestiri, the former Foreign Minister of Tunisia. During his two years with the Special Mission, Mr. Santos spent most of his time in the region, meeting the leaders of regional countries, canvassing Afghan national and local leaders throughout the country, and negotiating ceasefire and power-sharing agreement between the various Afghan warring factions. He organized the first ever broad-based political meetings under UN auspices, which took place in Quetta, Pakistan in October 1994. This political approach would serve as a template for intra-Afghan meetings in the future. In early 1996, Mr. Santos left the UN and became an

International Affairs Fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations, examining and reflecting on the political dynamics of conflicts in Central Asia.

After departing from the UN, Mr. Santos became a vice-president of the Centgas Consortium. As a member of the executive board of the Central Asian gas and oil pipeline consortium, he was based in Afghanistan and Turkmenistan and traveling extensively throughout the region. Mr. Santos established consortium offices in Afghanistan. He managed relations with all the Afghan factions and Governments of the region. He negotiated support agreements for the pipeline with all the Afghan warring factions. A feat never accomplished before during the civil war in Afghanistan.

Mr. Santos established the Foundation for Central Asian Development (FCAD) in 1997 and was its Chairman. FCAD from August 1997 until July 1998 initiated the Frankfurt-Istanbul-Bonn intra-Afghan dialogue process, which brought together the various groups of the Northern Alliance—Uzbek, Tajik and Hazara communities, independent Afghan leaders and the former king in order to bring together moderate Pashtuns and the Northern Alliance as a bulwark against Taliban extremism. This process later served as the precursor to the Bonn process of December 2001, which established the Afghan Government after the defeat of the Taliban.

Mr. Santos also worked closely with the leaders in Northern Afghanistan through his company to strengthen their economic position, including improving gas transportation to Mazar-i-Sharif by repairing a gas pipeline and the construction of a small oil refinery. These efforts were suspended after the Taliban and Al-Qaeda succeeded in occupying these areas.

Mr. Santos relocated from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to the US in 2000, where he was managing partner of SBS Associates, an energy consulting firm.

He maintained his relationships in the region and assisted efforts to establish a moderate, non-Taliban Afghanistan in the immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001 attacks.

In 2002, Mr. Santos returned to the Central Asian region living in Northern Afghanistan and working through FCAD to increase participation of the Northern peoples, particularly the Uzbek, Tajik and Hazara communities in the democratic political process. He also initiated a series of local conferences in the North to develop a broader awareness of the private sector. He led reconstruction projects that included school and road construction between the cities of Shibergan and Andhoie and the roads in Saripul based on a public and private sector partnership and funded an orphanage in city of Shibergan.

In late 2003, Mr. Santos established Oxiana Capital and Oxiana Energy and raised capital to construct of a small refinery in Saripul, Afghanistan. He managed the project, overseeing engineering, design, procurement, logistics, construction and commissioning of the refinery. The location of the refinery was very remote, close to the oil fields that had been developed during the Soviet occupation. The operational center for the project

was Tashkent, Uzbekistan, where he was based, traveling weekly to the site. The commissioning of the plant occurred by mid-2005.

In late 2007, Mr. Santos began looking at energy opportunities in Central Asia, Africa and East Asia. He believed opportunities in Central Asia, particularly Uzbekistan, were going to emerge in the coming five years. This was based on his recognition that one of the key blocks to energy development—a monopoly of transit routes by Russia was about to be broken by the construction of pipelines to China. He re-established offices in the region and began utilizing his understanding of the region to begin to looking at gas opportunities. This led to his negotiating the Baisun farm-in agreement in mid 2010, closing the transaction the following year. He has also developed a pipeline of other opportunities.

Mr. Santos is considered an expert on Central Asia, particularly Afghanistan and the United Nations peacemaking capacity and has lectured on conflict resolution at various universities, including the University of World Economy and Diplomacy in Uzbekistan, Uppsala University in Sweden, Columbia University, Queens College, and Syracuse University. He has testified twice before Congress on 3 October 2001 and 19 June 2002 and appeared on various television and radio programs (Lehrer News Hour, BBC, CBS, MSNBC, CSPAN and many others). His articles and opinion pieces have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Times* and *The New York Post*, among others.

Mr. Santos has his BA in Biology from Boston College and National College of Chiropractic in Chicago and his MA in Political Science from Fordham University, where he was a Presidential Fellow and graduated with distinction. He was an International Affairs Fellow (IAF) and a Term Member at the Council on Foreign Relations. He was born in Springfield, Massachusetts and grew up in West Hartford, Connecticut.