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**Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity
(including indigenous, minority and regional language names)**

**Maritime Silk Road or Spice Road
(Cultural and Civilizational opportunities)**

Submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran**

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Maritime Silk Road or Spice Road

(Cultural and Civilizational opportunities)

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Roads are the very first communication devices among humans. Researchers see roads as starting point of civilization and urbanization. One of the most prominent and historical roads which connects Asia to Europe, is known as Silk Road.

Silk Road was not just a way for transit commodities and capital but also act as the main factor of civilizational and cultural communication between countries of Silk Road.

Silk Road term was first used by German geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen, in the middle of 19th century. Reason for that naming was trade of silk as the most important and eminent, most expensive and lightest commodity which was used to be transit on this road.

Moreover we must know that the “silk” word at this term does not mean that only there was silk trade on this road. Other commodities like spices, tea, chinaware, paper and precious stones had been transferring through this route.

Through silk and other commodities’ trade, there have been close cultural and commercial relations between Iran, India, China and Romans. After arising some problems and big drought in Silk Road, some merchants thought that they must trade by maritime routes. Transport of spices was really more convenient by maritime routes than land roads. This maritime road was known as Maritime Silk Road that is best known as Spice Route.

Based on Islamic, Iranian, Chinese and European resources and documents, Spice Route was a prosperous maritime route that was like a cultural bridge among these civilizations, having big role at conveying culture and civilization.

Increasing maritime power of China, Iran and India resulted in development and expansion of this route. Many of naval fleets were transiting from Persian Gulf ports like Lenge, Siraf, Hormoz, Basra and Kish to China ports, especially Guangzhou, Quanzhou and Jianguo.

Spice Road was specifically intended to convene trading and commerce, but that was not the only achievement of this route. It also shaped a bridge that was mean of communication between nations and countries at the fields of cultural interactions.

On the one hand , commercial and economic effects of Spice Road , and on the other hand, cultural impacts of it , prepared substructure for affinity and proximity of nations and offered a successful and firm model for compromising and meeting necessities of multilateral interactions.

Customs and traditions of nations of Asia and Europe was carried interchangeably through Spice Route .By expanding and increasing number of big and prosperous ports, languages and ethnics mixed to shape and transmit new cultures.

Nowadays, by means of resurrection of this road, we can reduce tensions and suspicions and also build respectful relations among nations.