

PROSPECTS OF RELATIONS OF UZBEKISTAN AND AZERBAIJAN: NEW HORIZONS OF COOPERATION

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Abstract

This article analyzes the current and future directions of cooperation between the states of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. The dynamics of the development of bilateral relations in the political, economic, transport-logistics and cultural-humanitarian spheres and future opportunities are studied on the basis of a scientific approach.

Keywords: Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, economic cooperation, political relations, transport-Logistics , TURKPA, cultural cooperation, strategic partnership.

Introduction

Relations between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan are based on centuries-old historical and cultural commonality. Both countries are working towards strengthening regional cooperation as important geopolitical players in Central Asia and the Caucasus region. In recent years, Uzbekistan's desire to deepen its relations with Azerbaijan has led, in particular, to an increase in bilateral trade and investment, its active participation in strategic transport and energy projects. This article will be devoted to the current state and prospects of relations of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, as well as the scientific analysis of cooperation in various fields.

Main part. Political relations between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan are developing steadily and consistently. The positions of the two states in international politics are similar or mutually supportive on many issues. Regular dialogue and high-level visits between President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev play an important role in strengthening bilateral ties.

In June 2022, an agreement was signed to deepen strategic cooperation between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. This agreement provides for strengthening cooperation in international and regional security issues, expanding relations in the trade-economic and cultural-humanitarian spheres. At the same time, the joint activities of the two countries in different international organizations (UN, CIS, TURKPA, etc.) also represent common interests.



Economic relations between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan have reached a new level in recent years. In the process of economic reforms and industrial development of Uzbekistan, the investment and technological potential of Azerbaijan is of great importance. While Azerbaijan's oil and gas sector is an interesting market for Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan's agricultural products and textile industry are in great demand in Azerbaijan.

One of the promising areas of economic cooperation is industrial cooperation. In 2022, direct trade between the two states exceeded US \$ 500 million. This indicator indicates the presence of great potential for the further development of mutual economic relations. At the same time, the economic cooperation of the two countries is expected to rise to a new level by expanding investment projects in the field of industry and technology in the future.

The strategic objectives of Uzbekistan in regional transport routes can be implemented more efficiently through cooperation with Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's role as a transit state in the Caucasus region and its transport routes through the Caspian Sea provide a convenient opportunity to bring Uzbekistan to the European and Middle Eastern markets. Of particular importance in this process are freight networks through the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway and the Caspian Sea. Uzbekistan is looking to significantly increase its economic capabilities by creating new logistics centers connecting the regions of Central Asia and the Caucasus and expanding transit flows in these directions. These routes are also becoming important transport networks for other countries in Central Asia. Thus, the transport and logistics cooperation between Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan is expected to be one of the main factors in the development of bilateral economic relations.⁴ Cultural and Humanitarian Cooperation. Cultural ties between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan have a long history, which serves to further strengthen friendly relations between the two states. Within the framework of cultural and humanitarian cooperation, many joint projects are carried out. In particular, cultural events, art festivals and literature conferences are held regularly, and the two states contribute significantly to the processes of intellectual exchange. There is also a growing level of educational cooperation. Areas such as student and scientific staff exchange, joint research projects and participation in international grant programs are developing between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. In the future, this cooperation will expand further and become one of the main directions of scientific and cultural cooperation between the two countries. To ensure sustainable development in the future, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan are expected to develop cooperation in the field of technology and innovation. Sectors such as the digital economy, energy efficiency and green technologies can remain a future strategic direction for the two states. Both states intend to expand cooperation in the field of investment and investment.

The economy of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan provides new opportunities for investors. In particular, investment projects in the fields of agriculture, textiles and technology play a key role in strengthening ties between the two states. Cooperation between Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan is also increasing in the transport and logistics sectors. In particular, the volume of freight traffic is increasing through the Transcaucasian transport corridors connecting Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. This line is important for the two countries, increasing Uzbekistan's access to international trade networks. In the energy sector, the cooperation of the two countries is also becoming more and more deep. Azerbaijan is one of the oil and gas supply



countries for Uzbekistan and plays an important role in ensuring the energy security of Uzbekistan. At the same time, large oil companies of Azerbaijan are investing in the energy sector of Uzbekistan. In 2023, a number of energy agreements were signed between SOCAR of Azerbaijan and the governments of Uzbekistan.

Conclusion. The current state of relations between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan shows great potential in various spheres of cooperation. Cooperation in political, economic, transport-logistics and cultural-humanitarian directions not only serves to strengthen ties between the two countries, but also significantly contributes to regional stability and security. In the future, by further expanding this cooperation, relations between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan can conquer new horizons. Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan are historically close in their political, economic, cultural and social relations, and in the years of Independence these relations are also rising to new stages. Both countries are important strategic participants in the regions of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Geographical location, Natural Resources, historical connection and modern interests provide ample opportunities for the development of cooperation between these two states.

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