

## INITIATIVES OF UZBEKISTAN TO PARTICIPATE IN COOPERATION BETWEEN CENTRAL ASIAN STATES

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### ABSTRACT

This article discusses the prudent policy pursued by the Republic of Uzbekistan for the comprehensive development of the Central Asian states, in particular, the initiatives, goals and objectives put forward at the international conference on November 10-11, 2017 in Samarkand under the auspices of the UN on security and sustainable development in Central Asia “Central Asia: common history and common future, cooperation for sustainable development and progress” are based on concrete data, examples and evidence.

**Keywords:** Central Asia, good neighborliness, strategic cooperation, security, stability, development, business diplomacy, transport diplomacy, preventive diplomacy, border diplomacy, water diplomacy, economic cooperation.

### INTRODUCTION

It is known that cooperation between the states of Central Asia as a new stage of development is the result of the policy pursued by President Sh.Mirziyoyev. In particular, the international conference on security and sustainable development in Central Asia under the auspices of the UN “Central Asia: common history and common future, cooperation for sustainable development and prosperity” was held in Samarkand on November 10-11, 2017.

Uzbekistan prepared for the conference in high spirits, and in practice it was worth noting the prestige of the guests who came to the conference. In particular, the conference was attended by foreign ministers of Central Asian countries, heads of influential international organizations such as the UN, the European Union, the

OSCE, the SCO, the CIS, the EBRD, representatives of the diplomatic corps, prominent experts, media and more than 500 participants.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The scientific article used methods of analysis and synthesis, systematic approach, philosophical-logical thinking, philosophical analysis, grouping, expert evaluation and comparison.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Decree No. PF 4947 “On the Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021” entitled “Deep, well-thought-out and practical foreign policy priorities” 5.2. The issue of creating an environment of security, stability and good neighborliness around Uzbekistan is emphasized.[1] In this regard, the President noted that the Central Asian states should more effectively realize their potential on the most pressing and important issues on the basis of good neighborliness and mutually beneficial cooperation, which will benefit all countries, including Central Asian states.

The President put forward six proposals that will serve to turn Central Asia into a stable, economically developed and highly developed region in the near future.

### **The first proposal: “Business diplomacy”**

The President of Uzbekistan stressed the need to create favorable conditions for the development of trade and economic relations and increase trade turnover and strengthen cooperation, and the establishment of a regional economic forum could be a practical step in this direction.

As a result, over the past three years, Uzbekistan's trade turnover with Central Asian countries has been growing from year to year. In particular, it is 144% in 2018, 137.8% in 2019 and 83.3% in August 2020. Today, Uzbekistan has a trade turnover with Central Asian countries worth \$ 2.9 billion, of which Kazakhstan accounts for 60%, Kyrgyzstan for 19%, Tajikistan for 11% and Turkmenistan for 10%. Central Asia accounts for 11.9% of Uzbekistan's world trade. [2]

At the initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev for the first time in Tashkent on March 15, 2019 at the first Central Asian Economic Forum, representatives of the governments of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan discussed issues of further development of economic cooperation, trade and tourism. [3]

### **Second proposal: “Transport diplomacy”**

According to him, it is necessary to make more efficient use of the transit and logistics potential of the region and ensure the rapid development of transport infrastructure.

On September 20-21, 2018, Tashkent hosted an international conference on “Central Asia in the system of international transport corridors: strategic prospects and untapped opportunities”. Bandar Hajar, President of the Islamic Development Bank, Ventsay Zhang, Vice President of the Asian Development Bank, Han Zhu Ham, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Chairman of the CIS Railway Transport Council - Director General of Russia Railways. Oleg Belozyorov, Chairman of the CIS Intergovernmental Road Council Jamshidbek Kalilov, Chairman of the International Road Transport Union Radu Dinescu, Robert Schwartzman, Director General of the International Air Transport Association, also visited the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, South Korea, Japan, Turkey, Russia, Belarus, China, India, Iran, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan. A total of 300 participants from 37 countries, including representatives of 25 international organizations, financial institutions and leading transport companies participated in this conference. [4]

### **The third proposal: “Preventive diplomacy”**

Today, all countries in the Central Asian region face threats of terrorism, religious extremism, transnational crime and drug trafficking. The President of Uzbekistan noted that an effective fight against these threats can be ensured only jointly, within the framework of practical cooperation mechanisms between the countries of the region.

A cooperation program for 2018-2019 has been signed between the Central Asian countries.

The UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia traditionally holds meetings with representatives of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. The meetings will focus on the fight against violent extremism, terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking, as well as economic and environmental issues.

The prospects for sustainable and consistent development in Central Asia are closely linked to peace in neighboring Afghanistan. To this end, the President of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev stressed the need to fully support Afghanistan's integration into regional economic processes and make a significant contribution to

the efforts of the world community to ensure peaceful development in Afghanistan. As a result, on August 7-10, 2018, Uzbek officials held talks with the Taliban in Tashkent in order to achieve peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan. Meetings with representatives of the Taliban's political office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan in August 2012 were of special significance. It should be noted that as a result of these meetings, a peace agreement was signed between the United States and the Taliban on February 29, 2020 in Doha, Qatar.

**The fourth proposal: “Border diplomacy”**

Special attention is paid to the speedy and decisive completion of the process of delimitation and demarcation of the borders of Central Asian states.

It is known that Uzbekistan shares borders with all Central Asian countries, the total length of which is more than 7,000 kilometers. In particular, Uzbekistan has 2,356.31 km of borders with Kazakhstan, 1,476.12 km with Kyrgyzstan, 1,296.9 km with Tajikistan, 1,831.49 km with Turkmenistan and 143 km with Afghanistan.

Uzbekistan is constantly negotiating with neighboring countries on delimitation and demarcation of borders. From August 2016 to August 2018, the delegation of the Government of Uzbekistan held 65 meetings with the delegations of the governments of neighboring countries. Including 18 times with Kazakhstan, 28 times with Kyrgyzstan, 9 times with Tajikistan, 9 times with Turkmenistan and once with Afghanistan. [5]

**The fifth proposal: “Water diplomacy”**

In his speech, the President of Uzbekistan stressed the need to address the issue of equitable use of water resources in the region as soon as possible.

Today, due to Uzbekistan's open and constructive policy, we have long opposed the construction of some facilities in neighboring countries, such as Rogun Hydropower Plant in Tajikistan or Kambarata-1, Kambarata-2 in Kyrgyzstan, but today we have no such problems. discarded. We have even expressed our readiness to participate in the construction of the Rogun HPP. We agreed that all facilities to be built in Central Asia should be built taking into account the interests of neighboring countries.

We also have water agreements with Kyrgyzstan. For example, the Toktogul HPP is the largest hydropower plant in Kyrgyzstan. It collects 19 billion cubic meters of water. We will resolve all issues on the basis of mutual interest and mutual respect, [6] - said Deputy Foreign Minister Ilhom Nematov.

Uzbekistan supports the draft UN conventions on the use of water resources in the Amudarya and Syrdarya basins.

Solving even the most acute problems associated with the ecological catastrophe of the Aral Sea requires a concerted effort. Active reforestation of the dried seabed has begun in Uzbekistan. To date, a variety of trees and shrubs have been planted on some 750,000 hectares of the dried-up sea. The government has decided to turn the ecological disaster area into a zone of innovation and investment.

**Sixth proposal: “People's diplomacy”**

We support the continuation of active cultural and humanitarian dialogue, the regular organization of days of culture and various creative events in our countries, the development of exchanges in education and tourism as the most important tool of “people's diplomacy”, - said President Mirziyoyev.

The peoples of Central Asia are united by centuries-old fraternal ties, common history, spiritual and cultural values, similar language and mentality. Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have always leaned on each other like the five fingers of one hand. The sustainable development and prosperous future of our peoples with a common historical heritage cannot be imagined in isolation.

The role of people's diplomacy in improving relations between Central Asian countries is very important. The most important thing here is our culture, it complements each other. 2018 has been declared the Year of Uzbekistan in Kazakhstan. More than 80 cultural and sports events, film days and various festivals were held within the framework of the festival. 2019 was the “Year of Kazakhstan” in Uzbekistan. Similarly, many cultural events were organized. Over the past three years, we have held many cultural events with Tajikistan. The same is true with Kyrgyzstan. [7]

After 2016, when Uzbekistan opened its borders with Central Asian countries, favorable conditions were created for the population living in the border areas. For Milos, more than 20,000 people cross the Tajik-Uzbek border every day, and more than 30,000 cross the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border.

In addition, the Central Asian governments signed agreements on industrial and scientific-technical cooperation, interregional cooperation, mutual encouragement and protection of investments, mutual recognition of educational documents.

On December 19, 2019, the UN General Assembly at its plenary session unanimously adopted a special resolution on “Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Development in Central Asia”. The draft resolution was developed by the Republic of Uzbekistan and supported by all UN member states.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It can be said that the most reliable way to strengthen the atmosphere of friendship, solidarity and stability is the result of the initiatives and efforts of Uzbekistan in the development of the Central Asian region, which is a simple and open human dialogue. Based on this, the following can be suggested:

- The unity of the region can be strengthened by supporting the proposals put forward by the leaders of Central Asia and the leader of Uzbekistan;
- Economic reforms that are beneficial to the region can be implemented and the region can grow and develop together.

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