



# Central Asian Countries on the Path of Regional Cooperation

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## ABSTRACT

In this article, the opinions of the peoples of Central Asia about the need for mutual economic, political and cultural relations are described. The reason is that the peoples of this region have always lived together. These processes are developing more rapidly in recent times.

## Keywords:

Central Asia, Pamir, Tangritog, Mejlis, religious beliefs, traditions, folklore, Astana, summit, transport and communication, infrastructure, "green economy", transit "hub".

## Introduction

Since ancient times, the culture and economic relations of the peoples of Central Asia have acquired a unique individuality by combining the great cultural elements of the West and the East, and this process has been serving as a basis for further development. The region is adjoined by favorable fertile valleys and oases, marshy rivers, deserts, steppe hills, high mountains of Pamir and Tangritog, and these factors create opportunities for the formation of farming, herding, mountain tribes and peoples' economic style and unique cultures. Strong economic relations, ethnic and linguistic unity of the peoples of Central Asia did not allow them to live separately from each other. For centuries, our forefathers lived in this vast region based on what kind of harmony and values, today, so to speak, history and life, nature itself invites us - all the peoples of Central Asia - to live in the same spirit of friendship and cooperation" [1;10].

The settled farming and nomadic peoples of Central Asia have established close relations

with each other even though there are many differences. Religious beliefs, customs, folklore, common moral norms in the way of life led to the formation of cultural commonality in these peoples. Relations that have been going on for thousands of years are being revived again in recent times, we can clearly see this situation in the post-independence period of the Central Asian countries. The First President of Uzbekistan I.A. Karimov, "Any nation, no matter how small it is, is a fragment of humanity, and the disappearance of its language, cultural and other characteristics of any national unit leads to the impoverishment of culture and science on earth, as well as individual opportunities. Therefore, preservation of each ethnic group and the people belonging to it should be the most important goal, and this goal is primarily the duty of the state in every population that includes these ethnic groups"[2;73-74].

Central Asia is located in a favorable geographic, geostrategic and geoeconomic area. More than 74 million people live here.

Their history and culture, economy and infrastructure of our countries are connected. We understand that the mutual rapprochement and expansion of cooperation between the countries of this region is a process that cannot be reversed as it is the demand of this time. It is based on a firm decision and is an expression of the will of the peoples living in this area. As an example, we can cite the consultative meetings of the leaders of the Central Asian countries.

In 2017, the initiative to hold consultative meetings of the leaders of the Central Asian countries was put forward by the President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev. As a result, the first summit was held on March 15, 2018 in Astana, Kazakhstan. It was attended by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarboev, the President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan Sooronbai Jeenbekov, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon and the head of the Mejlis of Turkmenistan Akja Nurberdiyeva. The first President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarboev, emphasized at the first meeting that regular holding of such summits and solving our problems together is the initiative of our President Sh.M. Mirziyoyev. "Today, in the context of globalization, the preservation of the nation is becoming a global problem. Because that process increases the risk of people (nations) in "small" and less developed countries joining large and developed countries and the people (nations) living in them. In such circumstances, having one's own state becomes important in protecting countries from this danger" [3;77]. When President Shavkat Mirziyoyev took office, he emphasized the importance of close cooperation with neighboring countries. This is how the consultative meeting of the leaders of the Central Asian countries was organized.

At the meeting in Astana, the President noted that this day marks the beginning of a new page in the long-standing good neighborly history of the peoples of Central Asia. Recently, the cooperation of our country with neighboring countries is growing rapidly. The volume of trade of our country with

neighboring Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan increased by more than 20 percent. Also, there are still great opportunities that we can use for the welfare of our peoples. Opinions were heard on the fact that the development of cooperation between our countries in trade, economy, transport-communication, cultural-humanitarian spheres, security and stability issues is the demand of the present time on the basis of mutual trust and interest.

The holding of the second Consultative meeting held in Tashkent once again clearly confirmed the commonality of interests, the readiness of our countries to open dialogue and make joint decisions on the most urgent issues of regional development. The presidents of all Central Asian countries participated in the summit. A number of important initiatives were put forward at the summit. This is, first of all, the development of trade-economic and investment relations. It is important to make full use of the competitive advantages of our region, which has a large market and is rich in natural raw materials and human resources. For this purpose, the President proposed to organize an investment forum of Central Asian countries in Tashkent, to hold annual meetings of heads of trade and industry chambers.

The second important direction - is to strengthen the interdependence of the region in terms of transport and realize the transit potential. It was emphasized that the transport system of Central Asia should provide continuous communication within the region using the modern logistics infrastructure that is being created, as well as effectively serve the ever-increasing transit flows.

Thirdly, it was noted that it is necessary to expand cooperation in the field of energy, taking into account the long-term interests of the region, Uzbekistan is ready to implement joint projects to increase the share of renewable energy sources and create a modern energy infrastructure.

The President suggested the development of mutually agreed approaches to solving the problems of water use, and emphasized the importance of coordinating the efforts of the

countries of the region to help achieve peace, national reconciliation and economic recovery in Afghanistan. In particular, the volume of trade between Uzbekistan and Central Asian countries has doubled in recent years, and the number of joint ventures has increased by four times. With joint efforts, the legal formalization of the borders is about to be completed, the full operation of about sixty crossing points has been ensured, and visas have been canceled. Business and interregional relations, transportation, cultural and humanitarian exchanges are expanding.

The search for a mutually acceptable solution to the critical issues of water use and the complex water and environmental problems of the region requires mutually agreed approaches within the countries. In order to attract innovative technologies, implement the principles of "green economy", eliminate desertification and adopt other complex measures, the President of Uzbekistan proposed to effectively use the possibilities of the Trust Fund for the Aral Bay region under the auspices of the UN. The most important priority task - is to ensure regional stability and security, for which it is necessary to create working mechanisms for operational cooperation of law enforcement agencies and special services of countries to face modern threats and dangers on a large scale. Afghanistan is an integral part of our region. It is in our common interest to help this - country to take firm steps towards peace and development. Since the beginning of mankind, conflicts, conflicts, wars and massacres have been taking place between people, nations and peoples in one form or another [4;117]. It is necessary - to follow the basic principles of solving the problem by political means. First of all, it consists of non-violence, cease-fire, dialogue and compromise. In addition, it is very important to implement important infrastructure and social projects in Afghanistan, as well as to develop coordinated approaches aimed at actively involving this country in regional trade and economic relations. It was reported that the issues of eliminating trade barriers, further

strengthening of industrial cooperation, modernization of energy infrastructure and expansion of transit opportunities of the region were discussed at this meeting.

On August 6, 2021, the third consultative meeting of the leaders of the Central Asian countries was held in the "Avaza" national tourist zone in Turkmenistan. The next meeting organized in "Avaza" was very important and meaningful. Here, the role of consultative meetings of the leaders of the Central Asian countries in the formation of a new political environment is incomparable. Regular high-level meetings serve to fully realize the unique potential of the region. It was noted that today's reality demands decisive steps to form a new model of economic cooperation in Central Asia. It is important to identify new growth points, new "drivers" of long-term development. It was noted that it is necessary to expand trade within the region, and it is important to eliminate existing obstacles in order to transition to a full-fledged free trade regime. Long chains of added value can be created through industrial cooperation, innovation and the development of digital technologies. For this purpose, it was emphasized that it is necessary to encourage direct contacts between entrepreneurs and regions of these countries, to regularly hold investment and economic forums.

Effective use of the transport and transit potential of Central Asia corresponds to the common strategic interests of the countries of the region. A well-developed and integrated transport system is capable of becoming an important transit "hub" of the Eurasian continent. In this regard, President Sh.M. Mirziyoyev called to ensure that the existing transport corridors and infrastructure, including Caspian Sea ports, large cross-border logistics centers, operate at full capacity. In addition, Uzbekistan stated that it intends to use the opportunities of the "Termiz-Mazari Sharif-Kabul-Peshowar" trans-Afghan corridor and the "China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan" road and railway. Today, we are moving on the path of innovative development aimed at radical renewal of all spheres of state and public life.

It's not for nothing, of course. Because in today's fast-paced world, who wins? The state that relies on a new idea, a new idea, and innovation will win" [5]. Due to the influence of national economies and population growth in the region, energy security issues are becoming increasingly important. In this regard, it is necessary to continue the efforts to form a common energy space, in which special attention should be paid to the rapid introduction of "green" energy and energy-efficient technologies.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the problems of providing the population with food products have become acute in the conditions of the pandemic. Some regions of the world are experiencing rising prices and shortages of staple foods. It serves to define specific directions and joint programs for increasing the production of food products and their quality control, including delivery to the world market.

At the meetings, it is emphasized that environmental problems should always be in the center of attention. It is necessary to expand the scope of cooperation in this regard, to take all measures to mitigate the consequences of the Aral Sea catastrophe. Another factor that serves to bring our peoples closer together is the tourism sector. It is important to actively use additional incentives to increase the exchange of tourists within the region.

The fifth consultative meeting of the leaders of the Central Asian countries was held in Dushanbe. At the meeting, the issues of further expansion of multilateral cooperation in the region, including the development of political dialogue, the promotion of joint programs and projects in the fields of trade, investments, transport, energy, agriculture and ecology, the activation of cultural and humanitarian exchange, and measures against modern threats and risks in the field of security was discussed. At the end of the event, the following documents were accepted:

- Joint statement on the results of the fifth Consultative meeting of the leaders of the Central Asian countries;

- Agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan on general directions of youth policy;

- Agreement on strengthening the interdependence of road transport in Central Asia;

- Regulation on the Council of National Coordinators for Consultative Meetings of the Heads of Central Asian States.

### Conclusion

A "roadmap" to support health and well-being in Central Asia 2022-2025. These adopted documents are considered very important and necessary for Central Asian countries in the current globalization period. Because lagging behind the processes of globalization has a negative impact on the development of countries. In the broad sense of globalization, if we refer to the process of economic convergence of nations, integration, and the formation of a single world economic space, it can be said that globalization has occurred throughout human history, although this process has not always been stable [6; 452-454].

We are closely connected by common history and culture, one holy religion, similar mentality, spiritual and moral values and traditions, and inseparable friendship. All this should serve as a solid foundation for our mutually beneficial cooperation aimed at unifying the potential of the Central Asian countries for the prosperity and development of our peoples.

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