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DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN KAZAKHSTAN AND UZBEKISTAN
AT THE PRESENT STAGE

Abstract

The article assesses the process of development of relations between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, describes the impact on bilateral relations of current events in international relations. Kazakh-Uzbek relations have a historical character, emphasize the common position between the two countries, the importance of common interests. The author, assessing the prospects for cooperation between the two countries, first of all focused on the influence of external factors. He gave data on the events taking place in modern international relations, analyzed the relations between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in the new conditions. At the same time, it was noted that the development of Kazakh-Uzbek relations affects not only the dynamics of bilateral relations, but also the integration processes in Central Asia as a whole. Analyzing the development of bilateral relations, the author focused not only on the positive aspects, but also on the complex issues that arise in bilateral relations. For example, the most common problems in Central Asia-border, water, and interethnic conflicts-delay the development of bilateral relations. The impact of the coronavirus pandemic on bilateral relations is also currently outlined. Despite the fact that some bilateral projects have been temporarily suspended due to the pandemic, Uzbekistan continues to be active in its foreign policy. An example of how Uzbekistan received observer status in the EAEU in December 2020. As the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted, the EAEU members are the main trade partners of Uzbekistan and the volume of mutual trade turnover is growing. "It is important to use the potential of the two countries, jointly eliminate barriers in trade relations, and mutually form new markets.

Key words: bilateral relations, region, integration, negotiation, development, Central Asia, strategy, foreign policy

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ҚАЗІРГІ КЕЗЕҢДЕ ҚАЗАҚСТАН МЕН ӨЗБЕКСТАН АРАСЫНДАҒЫ
ҚАТЫНАСТАРДЫҢ ДАМУЫ

Аңдатпа

Мақалада Қазақстан мен Өбекстан қарым-қатынастарының даму үдерісіне баға беріп, қазіргі кезде халықаралық қатынастарда орын алып жатқан оқиғалардың, екіжақты қарым-қатынастарға тигізер әсері туралы баяндаған. Қазақстан мен Өзбекстан қарым-қатынастарының тарихи сипатқа ие екендігін айтып, екі ел арасындағы ортақ ұстаным, өзара ортақ мүдденің маңыздылығын ашып көрсетеді. Екі ел қарым-қатынастың даму болашағына баға бере отырып, ең алдымен сыртқы факторлардың әсеріне тоқталған. Қазіргі кездегі халықаралық қатынастарда орын алып жатқан оқиғалардан дерек келтіріп, жаңа жағдайдағы Қазақстан мен Өзбекстан қарым-қатынасына талдау жасаған. Сонымен қатар Қазақстан мен Өзбекстан қарым-қатынастарының дамуы екіжақты қарым-қатынастардың перспективасына ғана емес жалпы Орталық Азиядағы интергациялық процесстерге әсер ететіні аталған. Автор екіжақы қарым-қатынастардың дамуына талдай жасай отыра, тек

жағымды тұстарына ғана емес, екіжақты қарым-қатынастарда туындайтын күрделі мәселелерге де тоқталған. Мысалы, Орталық Азияға жиі кездесетін мәселелер шекаралық мәселе, су мәселесі, ұлтаралық дау-жандалдар екіжақты қарым-қатынастардың дамуын кешеуілдетеді. Сонымен қатар қазіргі уақытта коронавирус пандемиясының екіжақты қарым-қатынастарға тигізер әсері баяндалған. Пандемияға байланысты кейбір екіжақты жобалар уақытша тоқтатылғанына қарамай, Өзбекстан сырты саясаттағы белсенділігін жалғастыруда. 2020 жылдың желтоқсан айында Өзбекстанның ЕАЭО-ға бақылаушы статусына ие болуы оның мысалы. Өзбекстан Президенті Шавкат Мирзиёев атап өткендей, ЕАЭО қатысушылары Өзбекстанның негізгі сауда серіктестері болып табылады және өзара тауар айналымының көлемі артып келеді. "Екі елдің әлеуетін пайдалану, сауда қатынастарындағы кедергілерді бірлесіп жою, жаңа нарықтарды өзара қалыптастыру маңызды.

Түйін сөздер: екіжақты қатынастар, өңір, интеграция, келіссөздер, даму, Орталық Азия, стратегия, сыртқы саясат

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РАЗВИТИЕ ОТНОШЕНИЙ МЕЖДУ КАЗАХСТАНОМ И УЗБЕКИСТАНОМ НА СОВРЕМЕННОМ ЭТАПЕ

Аннотация

В статье дана оценка процессу развития отношений Казахстана и Узбекистана, рассказано о влиянии на двусторонние отношения происходящих в настоящее время событий в международных отношениях. Казахстанско-узбекские отношения имеют исторический характер, подчеркивают общую позицию между двумя странами, важность общих интересов. Автор, оценивая перспективы взаимодействия двух стран, в первую очередь остановился на влиянии внешних факторов. Привел данные о событиях, происходящих в современных международных отношениях, проанализировал отношения Казахстана и Узбекистана в новых условиях. Вместе с тем отмечено, что развитие казахстанско-узбекских отношений влияет не только на динамику двусторонних отношений, но и на интергационные процессы в Центральной Азии в целом. Анализируя развитие двусторонних отношений, автор остановился не только на положительных моментах, но и на сложных вопросах, возникающих в двусторонних отношениях. К примеру, наиболее часто встречающиеся в Центральной Азии проблемы пограничный, водный, межнациональные конфликты задерживают развитие двусторонних отношений. Также в настоящее время изложено влияние коронавирусной пандемии на двусторонние отношения. Несмотря на то, что некоторые двусторонние проекты были временно приостановлены из-за пандемии, Узбекистан продолжает свою активность во внешней политике. Пример того, как Узбекистан в декабре 2020 года получил статус наблюдателя в ЕАЭС. Как отметил Президент Узбекистана Шавкат Мирзиёев, участники ЕАЭС являются основными торговыми партнерами Узбекистана и объемы взаимного товарооборота растут. "Важно использовать потенциал двух стран, совместно устранять барьеры в торговых отношениях, взаимно формировать новые рынки.

Ключевые слова: двусторонние отношения, регион, интеграция, переговоры, развитие, Центральная Азия, стратегия, внешняя политика

Introduction.

Kazakh-Uzbek relations are developing in accordance with the Treaty of Eternal Friendship of October 31, 1998 and the Agreement on Strategic Partnership of June 14, 2013. The legal framework of bilateral cooperation includes more than 100 documents covering almost all spheres of interstate cooperation. Over the past period, bilateral relations have acquired a regular character. In particular, the countries have constantly supported each other in the international political arena. At the same time, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have implemented a number of specific measures within the framework of the UN, SCO, CIS, Islamic Cooperation Organization, and the International Fund for the Protection of the Aral Sea [1].

Results and discussion. Trade and economic cooperation is the main indicator of the level of fraternal relations. In this area, a solid legal base has been created, numbering more than 50 interstate, intergovernmental and interdepartmental documents. The general terms of mutual trade between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are determined by the provisions of the Protocol on the procedure for the application of the Agreement on the CIS Free Trade Zone dated October 18, 2011 between its parties and the Republic of Uzbekistan (signed on May 31, 2013 in Minsk).

Friendly relations and cooperation have especially strengthened in the last quarter of the last century. Cultural ties between the two countries expanded and developed. The announcement of 2018 in the Republic of Kazakhstan as the Year of Uzbekistan, 2019 - The Year of Kazakhstan in Uzbekistan has become a historic event.

Since 2016, relations between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have risen to a qualitatively new level. An open discussion of problematic issues, a sincere desire to solve them, the establishment of new relations based on mutual respect and trust, allowed us to raise cooperation to a new stage. Here it is necessary to especially note the visit of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M. Mirziyoyev to Kazakhstan on March 22-23, 2017. As a result of negotiations, the two heads of state signed trade agreements and investment agreements totaling \$ 1 billion [2].

Thus, the development of relations between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan is one of the most important aspects of international relations in Central Asia.

A new era of relations in Central Asia is dawning, and rapidly. The thaw began when the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, after being elected, went to the neighbors. I would like to note that there have not been presidential flights from Tashkent to the capital of Kyrgyzstan for 17 years.

After Mirziyoyev came to government, bilateral relations between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan began to develop. But it cannot be said that no measures were taken to improve bilateral relations. There was a very long break in relations between the countries in terms of attempts to create a single regional space. There were five or six projects to unite the countries of Central Asia to address a certain category of joint issues. Unfortunately, most of these projects have remained on paper.

2005 was the last attempt. At the same time, they actively raised the topic of creating an International Water and Energy Consortium. But at that time, perhaps, one of the main obstacles to regional interaction was Uzbekistan, which then took a tough stance towards Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan on border issues, water issues, and the fight against extremism and terrorism.

What is happening now is, of course, an important historical stage. But, on the other hand, grievances, frictions, conflicts that have accumulated in the region for many years cannot be quickly resolved. In this case, according to political scientist Dosim Satpayev, a win-to-win policy is needed, when the two sides, interacting, understand that in the end both will emerge victorious [3].

Now there is an attempt to revive the initiatives that once existed. And the most interesting thing is that it was Shavkat Mirziyoyev who proposed to hold this meeting in Kazakhstan. It was Mirziyoyev who made several important statements in 2017, when there was an international conference in Samarkand. He then proposed to create an Association of Heads of Border Regions of Central Asia. And he said that politicians should create favorable conditions for work, and no one should interfere with business when it starts working in the border regions: we need to quickly establish contacts with each other.

If they move from words to deeds, at least on cross-border cooperation, this will already be a great breakthrough. And then - by the method of gradual development, as other countries did.

More than two years have passed since the transit of power in Uzbekistan due to the passing away of the first president of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov. This period, without a doubt, was filled with new content, which manifested itself in both the domestic and foreign policy of Tashkent.

First of all, the new leadership of the country, as if heeding the rule of life that close neighbors are better than distant relatives, radically revised its regional policy in Central Asia, giving a new impetus to the development of relations with neighboring countries.

Kazakhstan occupies a special role in this list, since all the years of independence of both republics there was a latent and not officially recognized competition for influence in the region between the leaders of the two largest Central Asian states in terms of population and economic potential.

More than once in the history of relations between the two states, Uzbekistan, represented by its President I. Karimov, opposed Kazakhstan's initiatives. In particular, in April 2008, during his visit to Astana, Nursultan Nazarbayev put forward "the idea of creating a union of Central Asian states." The

President of Uzbekistan did not accept this idea, arguing that the economies of the states of the region are diverse and regional integration can cause even greater damage.

It is no coincidence that with the death of I. Karimov and the coming to power of Shavkat Mirziyoyev, a representative of a younger generation of politicians, who was not burdened with apparatus experience in the governing bodies of the CPSU, relations between the two countries entered a new, more productive and mutually beneficial stage of cooperation in almost all areas. [4].

The state visit of President Sh. Mirziyoyev to Kazakhstan in March 2017 (it should be noted that the second visit after Turkmenistan as the head of the Republic of Uzbekistan) opened a new page in relations between the two states. According to experts, he (as, in principle, all subsequent visits within the Central Asian region), demonstrated the Uzbek leader's persistent desire to radically restructure regional policy, based primarily on the economic interests of the republic, the needs of the population, and simply positions of common sense.

The republics have signed about 200 bilateral documents in various spheres of cooperation. The main ones are the agreement on eternal friendship between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan (1998) and the agreement on strategic partnership (2013).

According to the head of the department of economics of the Russian Institute of the CIS countries, Doctor of Economics Azy Migranyan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have good potential for the further development of economic cooperation. Both countries have significant resources and are able to significantly increase the volume of mutual trade.

The Russian economist also considers promising joint initiatives of Tashkent and Nur-Sultan within the framework of the Chinese project "One Belt - One Road" using the transit potential of countries and the most efficient industries [5].

In general, as both Uzbek and Kazakh experts believe, there are great opportunities for expanding economic relations between the two countries. For example, Uzbekistan has significant export reserves to Kazakhstan of cars and trucks, buses, agricultural machinery, finished textiles, electrical and light industry products, building materials, glass, etc. For its part, Kazakhstan can expand the range of products supplied to Uzbekistan, including rolled metal, ferroalloys, wood, timber. The countries have significant potential for expanding cooperation in such areas as agriculture, light and heavy industry, construction, mechanical engineering, transport communications, oil and gas industry, etc.

The priority area of mutually beneficial cooperation between states is also the sphere of transport and transit traffic. One of the key issues is the preservation of mutual tariff and non-tariff preferences in transit and delivery of goods, for example, from Uzbekistan to Russia through Kazakhstan or from Kazakhstan to various Asian countries through Uzbekistan. A significant increase in the transit indicators of the two countries is expected in connection with the launch of a number of new international communication projects that will link Central Asia with other regions.

It is obvious that the constant dialogue and expansion of trade and economic ties between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan meet the strategic objectives and national interests of both states, which, moreover, have a solid contractual base. And there is every reason to believe that in the context of the growth of general conflict potential in the world and negative processes in the world economy, relations between Tashkent and Nur-Sultan will be even closer and more productive in the future.

In addition, some experts now consider Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan as two leaders in Central Asia. For example, according to political analyst Dosim Satpayev, as the experience of the European Union and, in principle, the experience of any other regional blocs shows, there should always be locomotive countries. In the EU, these are France and Germany. In Central Asia, such countries could be Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan [3].

Not as leaders in the region, because no one recognizes our leadership, but as locomotives that will initiate joint projects, finance them somewhere, because these countries have more funds than Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. How France and Germany do it in the EU. If our countries are such a good duet, then, I think, the entire region can be "pulled up" for common projects without trying to demonstrate any ambitions, such as a struggle for leadership and so on.

On the issue of the leadership of the two countries, the Kazakh international specialist, professor at the Kazakh-German University Rustam Burnashev says Central Asia as a region has not yet been formed. Moreover, countries such as Russia and China are quite active here. Can we say in such a situation that Kazakhstan or some other Central Asian country is the leader here? Moreover, in his opinion, after the "closure" of regional integration projects in the early 2000s, there is no talk of any leadership in Central Asia.

Accordingly, there is no competition for this status either. At the very least, Uzbekistan does not unequivocally strive for this, possibly honorable, but completely meaningless status, - noted Mr. Burnashev [6].

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, integration processes in the world have slowed down. This also influenced the Kazakh-Uzbek relations.

Now the main task of the authorities in Nur-Sultan and Tashkent is to save their own economies. However, the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev, even before the introduction of quarantine and a sharp drop in world oil prices, set the task of developing a new economic course. And COVID-19 forced the authorities to take emergency measures to support the national economy. If we list the steps taken by the government of Kazakhstan, then, first of all, it should be noted the allocation of large funds through the budget and development institutions to support business. President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev enjoys fame abroad as a reformer who is liberalizing the economy inherited from Islam Karimov. However, even before the coronavirus shock and falling hydrocarbon prices, skeptics pointed out that the high-profile undertakings of the new president were not always carefully worked out.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the daily life of Kazakhstanis. As a global phenomenon, it could not but affect the sphere of international relations. In an interview with *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mukhtar Tleuberdi spoke about the results of the work of diplomats in 2020, which is difficult for the whole world. According to Mukhtar Tleuberdi, 2020 was also one of the most difficult years for Kazakhstani diplomacy [7]. Coronavirus has made adjustments to the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: the main emphasis was placed on helping our citizens who find themselves outside the country under conditions of national quarantines, on adapting the mechanisms for implementing foreign policy in crisis conditions and holding international events in an online format.

The global lockdown and quarantine measures have created certain difficulties for the work of diplomats. Many international events were postponed until the epidemiological situation improved, but most of them moved to a distance format. The so-called digital communication began to develop actively, which made it possible to continue working to promote the interests of our country. At the same time, Kazakhstan's foreign policy has remained unchanged: we continue to pursue a constructive, balanced and multi-vector foreign policy with an emphasis on firmly promoting and defending national interests in the international arena.

Indeed, 2020 is significant for us also because President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev approved a new Foreign Policy Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2020-2030. For the first time, the horizon of foreign policy planning has been extended to 10 years with adaptation to constantly changing external conditions.

In 2020, movement around the world was limited, and the international community has to adapt to new conditions. Even the jubilee, 75th session of the UN General Assembly was held in a virtual format.

Kazakhstan continued to effectively promote its interests on international platforms. Central Asia is a strategically important area in Kazakhstan's foreign policy. Today, an intensive political dialogue has been established between our countries at various levels, and stable economic, cultural and humanitarian ties have been built. In connection with the pandemic, operational interaction was organized between our countries in the provision of transit corridors for citizens returning to their homeland, as well as the unhindered transit of cargo carriers. In addition, the authorities of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan plan to simplify the rules for crossing the state border for tourists. This was stated by the Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Aziz Abdukhakimov. According to him, the parties are working on joint tourist routes. One of such "tourist corridors" will be the route from the Arystan-Baba mausoleum in the Turkestan region of Kazakhstan to the Zangi Ata mausoleum in Tashkent [8].

Despite the sanitary and epidemiological crisis, interaction developed dynamically within the framework of regional integration associations in Central Asia. The most significant event in the EAEU was the adoption of the Strategic Directions for the Development of Eurasian Economic Integration until 2025, and within the CIS, a key document of cooperation between the member states for the long term was adopted - an updated version of the Concept for the Further Development of the Commonwealth. In addition, Uzbekistan became an observer of the EAEU in December 2020.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the development of the Kazakh-Uzbek attitude not only affects the dynamism of bilateral relations, it also affects the interaction processes in Central Asia. The new dynamics of cooperation are already bearing fruit. In Central Asia, trade has noticeably increased, air, road

and rail routes are being opened, checkpoints are being modernized, and infrastructure projects are being implemented. Intraregional economic ties are being strengthened, borders are being coordinated, and issues of rational use of water resources and ecology are being jointly resolved.

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