

FOREIGN POLICY OF UZBEKISTAN AND KAZAKHSTAN: MAIN DIRECTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

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Abstract. This article is devoted to the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan. At present, the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan towards the countries of Central Asia, namely Kazakhstan, is of special interest and discussion among the expert community. And this is no coincidence. Since 2016, after the accession of Sh. Mirziyev to the post of President, the foreign policy of the state began a new stage of development. In the Action Strategy in five priority areas in 2017-2021 and the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026, the President of the country outlined the main foreign policy priority - Central Asia, thereby setting the goal of creating a belt of good neighborliness and mutually beneficial cooperation, stability and harmonious neighborhood in the region. The author of the article considers the main directions of foreign policy at the present stage of development, noted in a separate direction of the Strategy, focusing on and analyzing the main achievements in the relationship between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan, by applying methods such as historical, comparative and content analysis. These methods allowed the author to fully analyze and identify the main factors contributing to the strengthening and development of friendly relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. The main purpose of this article is to analyze the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan and summarize the results achieved by Sh. Mirziyev in cooperation with a neighboring state. The author came to the conclusion that Uzbekistan, being an equal subject of international relations, pursues an active foreign policy at the regional level, develops and strengthens mutually beneficial relations with the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Keywords: Republic of Uzbekistan, Republic of Kazakhstan, foreign policy, Sh.Mirziyev, foreign policy priorities, national interests, Strategy, geopolitics

Basic provisions

The Republic of Uzbekistan pursues an open, mutually beneficial and constructive foreign policy based on the national interests of the country. The modern foreign policy of the republic is built taking into account the dynamically changing situation in the world and the region, as well as large-scale internal transformations in the country.

One of the main tasks of the foreign policy activity of Uzbekistan is the formation of a belt of peace, stability and security around the country. In this regard, the main priority of the foreign policy direction is the development and strengthening of friendly, good neighborly and mutually beneficial relations with the states of Central Asia. [1].

Introduction

Uzbekistan is the most populous country in Central Asia. It is noteworthy that the majority of the population is young, accounting for more than 60 per cent of the

total population. It should be noted that Uzbekistan occupies a favourable geopolitical position in the centre of the Central Asian region, which contributes to mutually beneficial cooperation with the Central Asian countries. However, the State did not always have friendly relations with its neighbours. I. Karimov's approach in this regard was very conservative, which was reflected in his decisions. With the arrival of the new President, significant changes have taken place in the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Unlike his predecessor, Sh. Mirziyev started a multi-pronged policy process with an emphasis on cooperation with Central Asian countries, strengthening the position of an important regional player. The new President outlined his foreign policy vision in the Strategy for Action in five priority areas in 2017-2021, where a whole section was devoted to Uzbekistan's foreign policy. The main priority direction of foreign policy Sh. Mirziyev identified the countries of Central Asia and this is expected, as the observance of friendly neighborly relations between the states is important for the development of the country. The continuation of the policy of establishing relations with the neighbors continues in the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy for 2022-2026. The Strategy envisages joint development of the Strategy for Regional Cooperation for Central Asia, continuation of the annual regular Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia and active participation in them, etc. [2] Despite the already existing pool of sources on this topic, the author intends to expand the source base on the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Description of materials and methods

In the course of writing the article were analyzed both primary and secondary sources: scientific articles published in scientific publications and analytical portals, legislative documents, analytical notes and official statements of heads of states and politicians, speeches, interviews, messages of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In carrying out the article, the author used traditional methods of research - comparative, historical, content analysis, which contributed to the analysis of the foreign policy of the state, priorities of its foreign policy and the identification of the main indicators, achieved during the presidency of Sh. Mirziyev.

Results

The main objective of the foreign policy activity of the Republic of Uzbekistan is to consolidate the independence and sovereignty of the State, strengthen its place and role in the international arena, and create a belt of security and stability around the country; active promotion of national interests of the republic. In a short period of time Sh. Mirziyev has given a new impetus to relations with the countries of Central Asia, especially with the Republic of Kazakhstan, having solved a number of important issues that have arisen under the first President of Kazakhstan. The new President has raised Uzbekistan's relations with its neighbouring State to a high level of strategic and alliance partnership, which is particularly important in the midst of the ongoing geopolitical transformation.

Discussion

Under I. Karimov, Uzbekistan was quite isolated from regional affairs. This inevitably affected relations with neighbouring countries, created difficulties in developing a common algorithm for solving regional issues, began to accumulate regional problems and increased tension in the region. Foreign policy of Sh. Mirziyev served as a trigger for new ideas and intensive integration into Central Asia. Over the years, the dynamics set by the president is only growing. The main strategic priority of the Republic of Uzbekistan is the strengthening of trustful and friendly relations with neighbouring States, for which integration and joint solution of pressing problems of ensuring stability are necessary, and achieving sustainable development in the region.

In 2017, Sh. Mirziyev initiated the annual Presidential Consultations. In total, 4 meetings were held, 5 meetings are planned in September 2023 under the chairmanship of Tajikistan. Such meetings have a positive impact on the relations of the states in the region, as they are open to constructive and open discussion of topical issues of cooperation in the region and solution of common problems.

Border disputes, as well as water problems, have often led to tensions between States. After the transit of the authorities in Uzbekistan, the process of delimiting the borders of the Republic of Uzbekistan with neighbouring States has almost been completed, and water issues have also been speedily addressed.

The first strategic ally of Uzbekistan in Central Asia is Kazakhstan, the largest country in Central Asia. Since S. Mirziyev came to power, the number of meetings and telephone conversations between Astana and Tashkent has increased dramatically. Sh. Mirziyev made his first visit as President to Kazakhstan in March 2017, during which the leaders of the states adopted a Joint Declaration on further deepening the strategic partnership and strengthening good neighborliness, signed documents and agreements worth more than \$800 million. The state visit of Sh. Mirziyev to Astana in December 2021 immediately after the inauguration is also proof of the improvement of relations. Leaders of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan discussed a wide range of issues of bilateral strategic partnership, including key aspects of political, trade and economic, investment, transport and transit, cultural and humanitarian cooperation. Special attention was paid to ensuring stability and security in the region, as well as interaction through multilateral structures. [3]

Industrial and economic integration

The leading place among industrial cooperation and economic integration between the republics is occupied by the spheres of transport and communications, mechanical engineering and agricultural production. Due to the sale of fuel, agricultural products, textiles, transport equipment, trade between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan is gaining momentum. Wheat, oil, cars, ores are mainly exported. Bodies, engines, spare parts for cars, grapes, etc. are sent to Kazakhstan from Uzbekistan.

The number of joint ventures is increasing every year. To date, more than 1,200 enterprises with the participation of Kazakh capital operate in the Republic of Uzbekistan, 14 representative offices of Kazakh companies are accredited, in Kazakhstan, in turn, there are about 200 enterprises with the participation of the

Uzbek side. The level of mutual trade is increasing every year. The dynamics of trade between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Dynamics of trade between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, 2016-2022

thousand US dollars							
Years	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
General turnover	1 898 909,9	2 055 743,1	2 919 610,1	3 334 976,9	3 005 765,9	3 910 536	5 000 000
Export	945 023,7	1 057 579,0	1 352 167,8	1 392 964,9	908 419,8	1 172 114,6	3 500 000
Import	953 886,2	998 164,1	1 567 442,3	1 942 012,0	2 097 346,1	2 738 421,4	2 500 00
Note - Compiled by the author based on sources [4]							

At the end of 2022, the trade turnover reached a record \$5 billion, thus showing an increase of 29.8% compared to the previous year. In the near future, it is planned to increase the trade turnover to \$10 billion. Kazakhstan has taken one of the first places among trading partners in Central Asia, which confirms the importance and interconnectedness of the two economies.

In April 2021, on the border of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, the construction of the International Center for Trade and Economic Cooperation "Central Asia" was started, and in May 2023, Astana and Tashkent signed a Roadmap to accelerate the construction of the ICPC "Central Asia", the construction of which will contribute to deepening cooperation in agriculture, including increasing mutual trade in the agro-industrial complex and the food industry, as well as further developing industrial cooperation.

Cultural and humanitarian cooperation

Relations between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are developing not only in the trade and economic sphere, but also in the cultural and humanitarian sphere. 2018 in Kazakhstan was proclaimed the year of Uzbekistan, and 2019 - the year of Kazakhstan in Uzbekistan. In this regard, various cultural events were held on the territory of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, for example, concerts, exhibitions, performances, festivals. This testifies to the mutual respect between the fraternal peoples. This is also evidenced by the "Declaration between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan on allied relations" signed in December 2021, which brought the relationship of states to a completely new level. The priority area of cooperation is also the sphere of transport and transit traffic. Tourism between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan is growing. Residents of Kazakhstan acquire tourist vouchers to Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara and other historical cities, where they get acquainted with the original culture and traditions of the Uzbek people. Tourists from Uzbekistan prefer to visit sacred places, for example, Turkestan, and the megacities of Astana, Almaty, the resorts of Burabay, Balkhash, etc.

The sphere of education is developing dynamically: memorandums are concluded between the higher institutions of the states (more than 50

memorandums), there is an exchange of students and teachers to increase the level of professionalism and exchange of experience. In 2023, there were more than 15 thousand students from Uzbekistan in Kazakhstan.

In addition, it is planned to open three Kazakh universities in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Negotiations are underway to open branches of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University and M. Auezov South Kazakhstan University in Tashkent. In turn, the opening of the Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Agricultural Mechanization Engineers is planned in Taraz city. The opening of branches of Kazakh universities in Uzbekistan and branches of Uzbek universities in Kazakhstan is an important breakthrough in relations between the two states in terms of mutual projection of what is called “soft power”.

Regional Security

The integration of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan plays a significant role in the security of the region. An example of this is the Declaration between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan on allied relations signed in December 2021, which took the form of the Treaty on Allied Relations. "Allied relations between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan are built on the basis of comprehensive cooperation, trust, equality and mutual consideration of national interests, mutual respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of state borders, as well as conscientious fulfillment of mutual obligations," the Treaty says.[2] The agreement provides for close cooperation in the field of security, that is, in the event of a threat to one of the republics, the other side guarantees comprehensive support, including military, if necessary. In addition, the parties undertake not to participate in any blocs or alliances, and also refrain from participating in any actions directed against the other side. At the same time, states are making efforts to promote the settlement of regional conflicts by peaceful means/through negotiations on the basis of generally recognized norms of international law, and above all, respect for and ensuring the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of states.[5] In the current realities, in the context of global geopolitical turbulence, we believe that this was a necessary step for even greater regional integration.

Conclusion

Thus, having made a brief analysis of the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in relation to the Republic of Kazakhstan, it can be said with confidence that since 2016, the relationship between the two states has reached a completely new high level. The leaders of the states resolved such issues as water use, delimitation and demarcation of state borders between Uzbekistan, use of transport communications, crossing state borders. Industrial and economic cooperation, the cultural and humanitarian sphere, and the sphere of regional security are actively developing. Undoubtedly, the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan meets

the national interests of both states. To date, the leaders of the states have laid a solid foundation for prosperity and mutually beneficial cooperation and integration.

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ЎЗБЕКСТАН МЕН ҚАЗАҚСТАННЫҢ СЫРТҚЫ САЯСАТЫ: НЕГІЗГІ БАҒЫТТАР МЕН ЖЕТІСТІКТЕР

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Аңдатпа. Бұл мақала Өзбекстан Республикасының сыртқы саясатына арналған. Қазіргі уақытта Өзбекстан Республикасының Орталық Азия елдеріне, атап айтқанда Қазақстанға қатысты сыртқы саясаты сараптамалық қоғамдастық арасында ерекше қызығушылық пен көптеген пікірталастарды тудырады. Және бұл кездейсоқ емес. 2016 жылдан бастап Ш. Мирзиеев президент қызметіне кіріскеннен кейін мемлекеттің сыртқы саясатында дамудың жаңа кезеңі басталды. 2017-2021 жылдардағы бес басым бағыт бойынша іс – қимыл стратегиясында және жаңа Өзбекстанның 2022-2026 жылға арналған Даму стратегиясында ел президенті сыртқы саясаттың басты басымдығы-Орталық Азияны белгілеп, сол арқылы өңірде тату көршілік пен өзара тиімді ынтымақтастық, тұрақтылық пен үйлесімді көршілік белдеуін құру мақсатын қойды. Мақала авторы Стратегияның жекелеген бағытында белгіленген сыртқы саясаттың қазіргі даму кезеңіндегі негізгі

бағыттарын қарастырады, тарихи, салыстырмалы және контент-талдау сияқты әдістерді қолдану арқылы Өзбекстан Республикасы мен Қазақстан Республикасы арасындағы қарым-қатынастардағы негізгі жетістіктерге назар аударады және талдайды. Бұл әдістер авторға Өзбекстан Республикасының Қазақстанмен достық қарым-қатынасын нығайтуға және дамытуға ықпал ететін негізгі факторларды толық көлемде талдауға және анықтауға мүмкіндік берді. Осы баптың негізгі мақсаты Өзбекстан Республикасының сыртқы саясатын талдау және Ш.Мирзиёевтің көрші мемлекетпен ынтымақтастықта қол жеткізген нәтижелерін шығару болып табылады. Автор Өзбекстан Халықаралық қатынастардың тең құқылы субъектісі бола отырып, өңірлік деңгейде белсенді сыртқы саясат жүргізеді, Қазақстан Республикасымен өзара тиімді қатынастарды дамытады және нығайтады деген қорытындыға келді.

Тірек сөздер: Өзбекстан Республикасы, Қазақстан Республикасы, Сыртқы саясат, Ш. Мирзиёев, сыртқы саясаттың басымдықтары, көп ғасырлық, Стратегия, геосаясат

ВНЕШНЯЯ ПОЛИТИКА УЗБЕКИСТАНА И КАЗАХСТАНА: ОСНОВНЫЕ НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ И ДОСТИЖЕНИЯ

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена внешней политике Республики Узбекистан. В настоящее время особый интерес и многочисленные дискуссии среди экспертного сообщества вызывает внешняя политика Республики Узбекистан в отношении стран Центральной Азии, а именно Казахстана. И это не случайно. С 2016 года после вступления Ш. Мирзиёева на пост Президента внешняя политика государства вступила в новый этап развития. В Стратегии действий по пяти приоритетным направлениям в 2017-2021 годах и Стратегии развития Нового Узбекистана на 2022-2026 года президент страны обозначил главный приоритет внешней политики – Центральная Азия, тем самым поставил цель - создать пояс добрососедства и взаимовыгодного сотрудничества, стабильности и гармоничного соседства в регионе. Автор статьи рассматривает основные направления внешней политики на современном этапе развития, отмеченные в отдельном направлении Стратегии, акцентируя внимание и анализируя основные достижения во взаимодействии между Республикой Узбекистан и Республикой Казахстан, путем применения таких методов как исторический, сравнительный и контент-анализ. Данные методы позволили автору в полной мере провести анализ и выявить основные факторы, способствующие укреплению и развитию дружеских отношений Республики Узбекистан с Казахстаном. Основной целью данной статьи является анализ внешней политики Республики Узбекистан и подведение результатов, достигнутых Ш.Мирзиёевым в сотрудничестве с соседним государством. Автор пришел к выводу, что Узбекистан, будучи равноправным субъектом международных отношений, проводит активную внешнюю политику на региональном уровне, развивает и укрепляет взаимовыгодные отношения с Республикой Казахстан.

Ключевые слова: Республика Узбекистан, Республика Казахстан, внешняя политика, Ш.Мирзиёев, приоритеты внешней политики, национальные интересы, Стратегия, геополитика

Статья поступила 20.06.2023