

## Akramjon Nematov: Trade, economic, and investment cooperation between Uzbekistan and Belarus demonstrates robust and stable growth



Tashkent hosts a roundtable discussion on “Cooperation between Uzbekistan and Belarus – New Horizons and Prospects”, organized by the Institute of Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (ISRS) in partnership with the Belarusian Institute of Strategic Research (BISR).

Addressing the event, ISRS First Deputy Director Akramjon Nematov paid particular attention to analyzing prospects for developing relations between Uzbekistan and Belarus. As the ISRS representative noted, Uzbekistan and Belarus are connected by traditional ties of friendship and partnership, which are only growing more vital yearly.

“Today, there are all the prerequisites to intensify work in this direction. This is the presence of political will, mutual interest, and large untapped reserves for building comprehensive ties”, the expert said.



It was emphasized that Uzbekistan and Belarus celebrated the 30th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations last year. During this period, the parties achieved many positive results.

In this context, Akramjon Nematov noted with satisfaction the positive dynamics of the growth of bilateral cooperation in all areas and the intensive dialogue at various levels.

According to him, thanks to joint efforts, since 2017, trade turnover between the countries has increased almost 3.5 times. For the first time in the history of bilateral relations, it surpassed the half-billion mark (\$620 million). The next target is \$1 billion", the expert emphasized.

Considering the complementarity of the economies of Uzbekistan and Belarus, the expansion of trade and economic cooperation, according to the expert, will remain a key interaction area.

The further development of industrial cooperation and the creation of joint competitive and export-oriented production have excellent prospects.

In confirmation of this, the ISRS First Deputy Director noted an unprecedented increase in joint ventures. Thus, in 2017, the number of enterprises operating in Uzbekistan with the participation of Belarusian capital was 22. Today, their number has exceeded 200, increasing almost 10 times. In turn, more than 100 joint ventures are currently operating in Belarus.

They create new prerequisites for developing industrial and technological partnerships, including through the constant expansion of interregional ties.

In addition, their focus is not only on the Uzbekistan market, but also on promising markets in neighboring countries, South Asian countries, and other regions.

"Further expansion of interaction in this direction could become a key driver of our partnership", Akramjon Nematov clarified.

According to him, there is particular demand for applying general investment opportunities in projects in

agriculture, textile and food industries, pharmaceuticals, livestock farming, and processing of fruits and vegetables.

The most important component of bilateral interaction is the social and humanitarian spheres.

“We see great returns from our joint education programs. Their number has already reached 80”, the expert noted.

According to him, the number of Uzbekistan students studying at universities in Belarus over the past 4 years has increased 5 times from 400 to 2 thousand. This figure indicates the high demand for Belarusian education among Uzbekistan youth.

There are more than 200 cooperation agreements between universities in Uzbekistan and Belarus, within which research work is carried out and experience is exchanged. The Joint Uzbekistan – Belarus Commission for Cooperation in Science is functioning successfully.

54 scientific projects have been implemented in information technology, chemistry, agriculture, and medicine. There are another 30 such joint initiatives at the implementation stage.

A symbol of successful cooperation between the two states in education and science was the First Forum of Rectors of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Belarus, held in 2023, as a result of which the Roadmap for Cooperation was signed.

As Akramjon Nematov stated, deepening cooperation in healthcare also has an essential niche in relations between Uzbekistan and Belarus.

“At the end of last year, the First Medical Forum “Uzbekistan – Belarus Healthcare and Medical Education Days” was held. Following the event, Uzbekistan and Belarus signed over 120 agreements in joint development of medicine”, the expert specified.

Bilateral programs in postgraduate areas and exchange of experience in neonatal surgery, cardiac surgery, and organ transplantation are at the development stage.

“The practice of enhancing collaboration between specific medical centers is being developed”, Akramjon Nematov concluded.

As previously reported, the event was attended by heads of diplomatic missions, leadership, and representatives of expert-analytical, scientific, and academic circles of the two countries.

The Belarusian side was represented by leaders and experts from such reputable research institutes as BISR, the National Centre for Marketing and Price Study, the State University of Transport, Vitebsk State University named after P.M. Masherov, and other institutions.



The heads of ISRS, the Institute of Macroeconomic and Regional Studies, the Information and Analytical Center for International Relations, the Center for Economic Research and Reforms, the Center for the Study of Problems of Transport and Logistics Development, the Uzbekistan Railways JSC, and the Agency of Information and Mass Communications attended the event from the Uzbek side.

**Source**