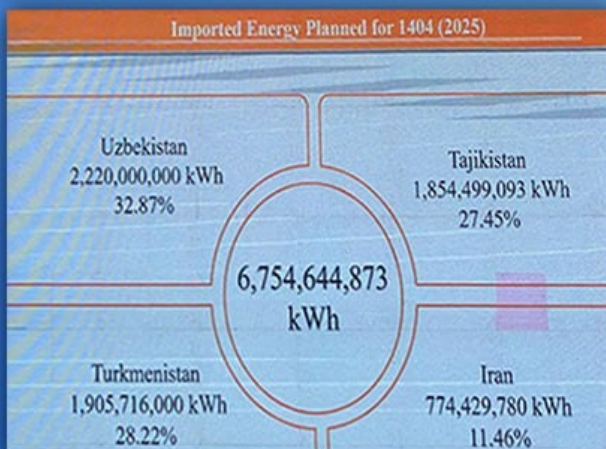


ISRS delegation took part in a conference in Afghanistan



On September 6-7 this year, in Kabul, a delegation of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (ISRS), headed by First Deputy Director Akramjon Nematov, took part in the international conference “Attracting Investments and Supporting the Electric Power Sector”.

The event, organized by Afghanistan's state energy company Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), brought together representatives from 22 countries. Among them were the leadership and specialists of the Afghan government, the energy ministries of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, as well as experts from international organizations, in particular the United Nations, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

Speaking at the event, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs of the Government of Afghanistan Abdul Ghani Baradar said that energy is an important sector and serves as the basis for the development of the country's economy. At the same time, he particularly emphasized that "his country has significant potential in hydro, wind and solar energy. Effective use of these resources will not only make Afghanistan self-sufficient in electricity supply, but will also allow it to become an exporter in this direction."

In this regard, he called on foreign countries to begin implementing joint projects in the energy sector in order to ensure sustainable economic development.

Supporting this view, Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs Abdul Salam Hanafi also noted the importance of developing the energy sector for the restoration of the Afghan economy. He said that “today the country requires 3,500 megawatts of energy. This figure will increase to 6,000 megawatts by 2032. However, the total volume of electricity currently available to Afghanistan – both produced and imported –

is only 1,300 megawatts." In this regard, A. Hanafi called on the countries of the region to intensify cooperation with Kabul in this area.

"Afghanistan seeks constructive interaction with the world, not hostility." In this regard, to ensure sustainable development, the country needs specific economic and infrastructure projects," he is convinced. This will open up opportunities for restoring the Afghan economy and involving Kabul in regional ties.

In turn, the head of DABS Abdul Bari Omar emphasized that "Afghanistan's doors are open to all foreign investors.

In this context, it was noted that the Central Asian countries make a huge contribution to energy security, covering about 90% of Afghanistan's imported electricity, amounting to more than \$6 billion. Of this total, Uzbekistan accounts for 32%.

During the conference, the Uzbek delegation headed by the Minister of Energy Jurabek Mirzamakhmudov signed mutually beneficial contracts and large investment projects worth a total of \$250 million, which provide for the expansion of existing and construction of new substations, and the laying of new power transmission lines.

Among them are the construction of the Surkhon-Puli-Khumri 500 kV power transmission line, the expansion of the Dashti-Alvan and Argandi substations, and the extension of the 220 kV power transmission line to the Sheikh Mesri substation with its modernization. Their implementation is planned for the next 18 months.

In general, it was noted that the implementation of these projects will contribute to energy security. This, in turn, will give impetus to the formation of new industrial capacities and create jobs. In the long term, deepening energy ties will strengthen Afghanistan's integration into regional ties.

During his stay in Kabul, a meeting was held with DABS CEO A. Omar. He noted that "Uzbekistan is a good neighbor with whom bilateral cooperation is steadily developing. Afghanistan is interested in comprehensive deepening of cooperation with Tashkent."