

The dynamics of Uzbek-Turkish relations reflect pragmatism, mutual trust and a focus on concrete results.



The First Deputy Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Akramjon Nematov shared this assessment, commenting on the results of President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev's visit to Turkiye.

According to him, the official visit of the Uzbek leader to the Republic of Turkiye, which concluded on January 29, 2026, should be viewed not only as another event on the bilateral political calendar, but above all as an important milestone in the institutional strengthening of Uzbek-Turkish relations. Its results convincingly confirmed that the interaction between Tashkent and Ankara, which was largely fragmented just a few years ago, has reached a qualitatively new level – the level of a comprehensive strategic partnership based on pragmatism and mutual benefit.

The personal role of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev in shaping this new quality of relations deserves special mention. His proactive policies and strategic approach have enabled bilateral cooperation to reach a systemic level, where pragmatism is combined with a long-term focus on sustainable development. Thanks to the President's initiative, visits and cooperation programs have become regular and institutionalized, and the agreements reached have begun to be implemented with clear planning and measurable results, strengthening trust between the countries and creating a reliable platform for economic, humanitarian, and technological ties.

Thus, the current visit's program, which included talks in narrow and expanded formats, as well as the fourth meeting of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council, demonstrated a high level of political trust and the maturity of the bilateral dialogue. While such meetings were previously held sporadically, today the Strategic Cooperation Council functions on a regular basis, ensuring the continuity of decisions and overseeing their implementation. Symbolically, the key events took place on the eve of the holy month of Ramadan and the 30th anniversary of the Treaty of Eternal Friendship and Cooperation, underscoring the

value-based and historical foundation of the partnership.

Of fundamental importance is the fact that Uzbek-Turkish cooperation is currently characterized by constructive and pragmatic mutual approaches, and is being built as an open partnership model focused on ensuring shared security and sustainable development. This is reflected in the finalization of the "4+4" format, which brings together coordination across foreign policy, defense, and law enforcement agencies. Unlike previous consultation mechanisms, this format is practical in nature and allows for a systemic response to cyber threats, cross-border crime, and other unconventional challenges.

The economic dimension of the partnership demonstrates sustained positive momentum and a high degree of complementarity. In recent years, mutual trade has more than doubled, reaching \$3 billion by the end of 2025, compared to just \$1.5 billion at the beginning of the decade. The goal set by the heads of state to increase trade turnover to \$5 billion is supported not by mere declarations, but by a real investment portfolio of approximately \$9 billion. The number of enterprises with Turkish capital has also increased significantly: while there were previously hundreds, today over 2,100 such companies operate in Uzbekistan, demonstrating growing business confidence and the formation of a solid material foundation for the strategic partnership. The need for further advancement of projects in industry, agriculture, social protection, and other priority areas was emphasized, including by expanding the list of goods covered by the Preferential Trade Agreement.

In preparation for the visit, new priority areas of industrial cooperation were identified, which will be implemented under a separate program. Compared to previous stages of cooperation, which focused primarily on trade and construction, the current emphasis is on joint production, localization, and export-oriented industries. Particular attention is paid to developing cooperation in tourism, theater festivals and cultural weeks, joint production of historical films, and the restoration of cultural heritage sites, reflecting the expanding humanitarian component of the partnership.

It is particularly noteworthy that the agreements reached are directly aimed at addressing the structural challenges of Uzbekistan's national development. The development of the Middle Corridor and the cooperation in transport and transit enshrined in the corresponding protocol are aimed at overcoming the country's geographic isolation and diversifying external logistics routes. Compared to traditional routes, these solutions reduce delivery times and increase the resilience of supply chains. Agreements on industrial cooperation, the management of special economic zones, and the creation of joint clusters contribute to reducing the economy's reliance on raw materials and fostering high-value-added production. The transfer of technological competencies, including nuclear safety and digitalization, should be viewed as an element of sovereign modernization, not technological dependence.

A fundamentally new stage has been the expansion of cooperation to the regional level. The intention to organize visits by delegations from all regions of Uzbekistan to Turkiye reflects the transition from a centralized model of interaction to a more flexible, decentralized partnership architecture. While interregional contacts were previously limited, the Action Plan for 2026–2027 envisages the formation of sustainable partnerships between the regions of the two countries, the launch of joint projects, and the development of a portfolio of local initiatives. Significant potential for implementing advanced Turkish practices in agriculture, horticulture, healthcare, and medical tourism has also been noted.

The military-technical cooperation sector deserves special attention. Compared to previous years, when interaction was limited to consultations, the signed agreements provide for deeper cooperation in military medicine, personnel training, and the implementation of surveillance systems and unmanned aerial vehicles. This cooperation is exclusively defensive in nature and is aimed at enhancing the professional level and technical capabilities of the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan, which is a rational contribution to strengthening national defense capability.

The humanitarian dimension of the Uzbek-Turkish partnership lends further depth and stability to the

relationship. The implementation of the Cultural Cooperation Plan for 2026-2027, the agreement to hold the fourth Rectors' Forum in Bukhara, and joint education projects form a long-term foundation for cooperation. Uzbekistan's participation in the reconstruction of the earthquake-damaged Hatay province, the construction of the "Uzbekistan" residential complex, and a comprehensive school have become clear examples of practical solidarity. The start of construction of an Uzbek school in the Bekirkoy district of Istanbul—Uzbekistan's first educational institution abroad—is also symbolic, reflecting the strategic focus on the humanitarian aspect of cooperation and outreach to the diaspora.

Overall, the visit to Turkiye confirmed that Uzbek-Turkish relations are developing as a pragmatic, dynamic, and responsible partnership. Compared to previous stages of bilateral cooperation, the current format is characterized by greater institutional stability, expanded economic and regional cooperation, and deepened humanitarian ties. The agreements reached create additional tools for overcoming transportation and technological constraints, modernizing the economy, strengthening defense capabilities, and ensuring shared security, forming a solid foundation for further expanding Uzbekistan's international cooperation in a changing global environment.