

Experts from leading analytical centers of Uzbekistan and South Korea to discuss issues of further strengthening bilateral cooperation



On August 23, Tashkent will host an expert forum "Uzbekistan - Korea: a look into the future", organized by the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan with the assistance of the University of World Economy and Diplomacy in partnership with Korea-Central Asia cooperation Forum Secretariat.

The event is held in accordance with the Program of joint events dedicated to the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Uzbekistan and the Republic of Korea.

The forum will be attended by high-ranking representatives of the two countries - First Deputy Chairman of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Head of the Inter-Parliamentary Group of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Cooperation with the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea Sadyk Safayev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan Furkat Sidikov, Executive Director of «Korea-Central Asia» Cooperation Forum Secretariat Rhee Jonh Kook, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of Uzbekistan Kim Hee Sang and others.

The forum will bring together leading experts and heads of analytical centers of the two countries. From the Uzbek side, experts such as the director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Eldor Aripov, the director of the International Institute for Central Asia Anvar Nasyrov, the director of the Information and Analytical Center for International Relations Doniyor Kurbanov, the director of the Institute for Forecasting and Macroeconomic Research Umid Abidkhojaev, the deputy director of the Center for Economic Research and Reforms Mukhsinjon Holmukhamedov and others.

The Korean side will be represented by Director of the Center for Asia-Pacific Studies at Hanyang University Eom Gu Ho, Head of the New Northern Policy Department of Korea Institute for International Economic Policy Park Jung Ho, Director of the Institute of Eurasian Turkic Studies Oh Eunkyung, Professor of International Relations Department of Seoul National University Shin Beom Shik and others.

The main goal of the upcoming forum is to develop proposals for further strengthening bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres.

Taking into account that the expert forum is timed to coincide with the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, in this context it is important to note that over three decades, Uzbek-Korean relations have reached the level of a special strategic partnership, consistently developing on the basis of the principles of mutual respect, trust and consideration of interests.

The intensive nature of official contacts at the highest and high levels contributes to the strengthening and expansion of interstate ties. Over the three decades of cooperation, 18 summits have taken place between the leaders of the two countries.

At the same time, over the past five years, meetings between the leaders of the two countries have become active and regular - 4 summits were held at the highest level, which gave great momentum to Uzbek-Korean relations.

The growth of indicators of bilateral trade and investment also testifies to the high dynamics of interaction. In the period from 2016 to 2019, the trade turnover between the countries increased by 2.5 times - from US\$1.1 billion to US\$2.8 billion.

Despite a significant decrease in the volume of mutual trade during the pandemic in 2020-2021 to US\$2 billion, it has been steadily growing since the beginning of this year. Thus, in the first half of 2022, trade between the countries has already exceeded US\$1.3 billion.

The total volume of accumulated direct Korean investments in the economy of Uzbekistan amounted to US\$7 billion. Today, about 100 investment projects amounted more than US\$14 billion are being implemented in Uzbekistan together with Korean companies. If at the end of 2017 the number of operating enterprises with the participation of capital from Korea was 510, then, as of the beginning of this year, 930 similar enterprises operate in our country, representative offices of about 80 South Korean companies are accredited.

In partnership with the Republic of Korea, Uzbekistan has established the Uzbekistan -Korean textile training and research technopark, Scientific and Technological Center for Rare Metals and Alloys, Design and Technology Center for Agricultural Machinery, Uzbek-Korean e-government cooperation center. The creation of Uzbek-Korean cooperation centers in the field of construction and chemical technologies is in progress.

From year to year, cooperation in the cultural and humanitarian sphere is expanding, including in the field of education, science, culture, healthcare, sports and tourism.

For example, in Uzbekistan, Korean language learning is carried out in 7 universities, 48 schools and lyceums.

Branches of 5 Korean universities are successfully functioning: Inha, Puchon, Yeosu, Aju in Tashkent, as well as the Korean International University in Fergana. Departments of the Uzbek language have been established at the South Korean universities of foreign languages in Busan and Daegu.

These and many other areas of interaction, which form the basis of Uzbek-Korean relations, are planned to be considered at the upcoming forum, which will consist of three thematic sessions:

- I. Uzbekistan - Korea: comprehensive political dialogue as the basis of a special strategic partnership;
- II. Uzbekistan - Korea: search for new growth points and development drivers (digital and green economy, industrial cooperation and innovation);
- III. The versatility of cultural and humanitarian cooperation is a guarantee of friendship, mutual

understanding and sustainable development.

In general, it is important to emphasize that holding the expert forum "Uzbekistan - Korea: a look into the future" will allow a comprehensive assessment of the results of bilateral cooperation over 30 years, discuss the current state and outline further prospects for Uzbek-Korean relations.