

# President of Uzbekistan addresses ECO Summit



On March 4, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev took part in the 14th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), via videoconference.

The event, chaired by the President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan, was also attended by the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, the President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani, the President of Iran Hassan Rouhani, the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, the President of Kyrgyzstan Sadyr Zhaparov, the President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, the President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan, as well as ECO Secretary General Hadi Soleimanpour, heads of regional structures.

The current issues of enhancing practical cooperation between the member states of the organization after the COVID-19 pandemic was considered at the meeting.

In his speech, the President of Uzbekistan emphasized that the space of the Economic Cooperation Organization is a region with great potential with a common history, religion, culture and values.

It was emphasized that in the pandemic, the strengths and weaknesses of the economies of the countries were clearly manifested. This challenge demonstrated the obvious connectivity and the need for further development of trade-economic ties in the region.

At the same time, the existing potential and wide opportunities of the ECO member states are not fully used, the President of Uzbekistan said.

The leader of Uzbekistan put forward important initiatives to develop multilateral partnerships within the framework of the adopted Action Program until 2025.

The expediency of removing trade and transport barriers and restrictions introduced as part of quarantine

measures was noted to increase mutual trade and investments. Broad implementation of solutions for the digitalization of trade and the development of e-commerce, as well as the early adoption of a regional trade agreement, was proposed.

Another important area is the deepening of industrial cooperation between the leading enterprises of the countries based on an agreed roadmap. It was proposed to expand the mechanisms of financial cooperation and hold a regional forum with the participation of the leading banking institutions of the countries to promote such projects.

Interaction in the transport and communication sphere was identified as a strategic priority. Uzbekistan is interested in the development of transport corridors Uzbekistan – Turkmenistan – Iran – Oman and Uzbekistan – Kyrgyzstan – China, routes in the direction of Turkey and European countries.

The importance of the construction of the new Mazar-i-Sharif – Kabul – Peshawar railway was emphasized to ensure sustainable development, as well as the integration of Afghanistan into regional economic processes.

Another important area, in which the President of Uzbekistan dwelled, is ensuring food security.

In this regard, it was proposed, together with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, to prepare an appropriate program and present it at the next meeting of the ministers of agriculture of the ECO states, which is scheduled for this year in Uzbekistan.

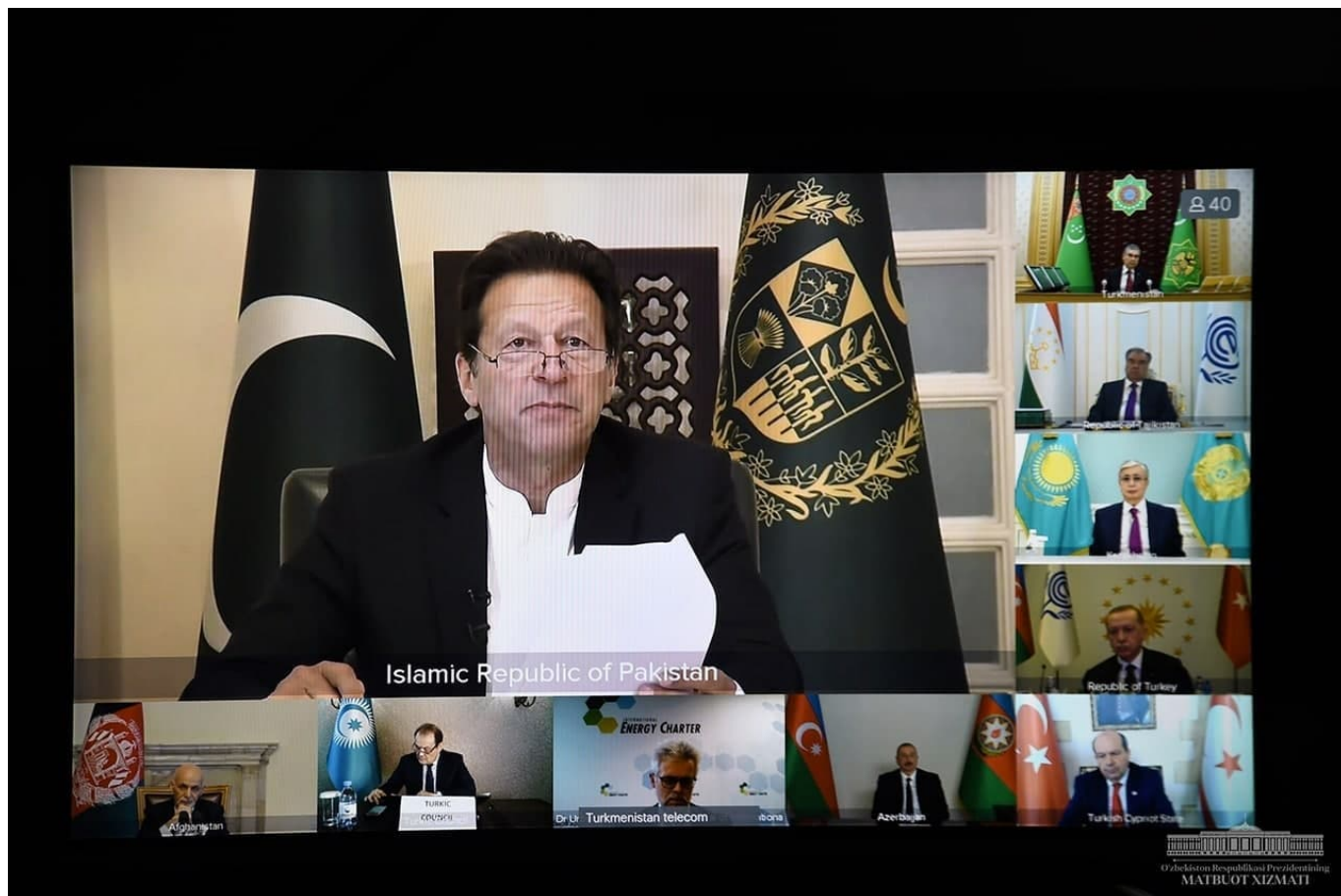
In the energy sector, the leader of Uzbekistan called for the development and adoption of a medium-term strategy to widely attract advanced technological solutions and investments, primarily in renewable energy.

Attention was also paid to the importance of uniting efforts in combating the global consequences of climate change, as well as the need for strengthening cooperation in the health sector, including for monitoring and promptly responding to modern challenges and threats.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev thanked President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for the effective chairmanship of Turkey in the organization, congratulated and wished President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov success in connection with the transfer of chairmanship to the Turkmen side.

It should be noted that important initiatives and specific proposals of the President of Uzbekistan have found the full support of the leaders of the countries of the association, primarily in matters of strengthening the economic connectivity of regions in the Eurasian space.

In their speeches, the leaders of the ECO countries paid special attention to the further development of mutually beneficial cooperation in the region, touched upon the prospects for promoting joint projects in trade, investment, innovation, transport and communications, energy, agriculture, industry, healthcare, tourism and other priority areas. An agreement was reached to hold the next 15th summit of the organization in Turkmenistan.







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