

# President of Uzbekistan addresses the Consultative Meeting of Central Asian Leaders



On August 6, the Third Consultative Meeting of Central Asian Leaders took place.

The event was held in Turkmenistan's Avaza National Tourist Zone.

The summit chaired by the President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov was attended by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Zhaparov and the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, as well as the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Central Asia, Head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia Natalia Gherman.

Central Asia is a region of great geostrategic and geo-economic importance. More than 74 million people live here. The history and culture of the peoples, the economy and infrastructure of the region's countries are closely interconnected.

As the Leader of Uzbekistan has repeatedly noted, the region's countries face the main goal – to turn Central Asia into a stable, economically developed and prosperous region by joint efforts. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev in 2017 came up with an initiative to organize a Consultative Meeting of Central Asian Leaders to achieve this goal and to fully realize the potential of the region, strengthen relations of mutual trust, good-neighborliness and cooperation.

This initiative, which meets the fundamental interests of the fraternal peoples of the region's countries, received broad support and quickly became a reality. The First Summit of Leaders took place in March 2018 in the capital of Kazakhstan, Nur-Sultan, and the second in November 2019 in the city of Tashkent.

The summit in Avaza was also very rich and informative.

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted that thanks to common political will and joint efforts, today the region is becoming a space of good-neighborliness, mutually beneficial cooperation and sustainable development.

“It is difficult to overestimate the role of the Consultative Meetings of Central Asian Leaders in the formation of a new political atmosphere. Our regular meetings at the highest level allow us to fully realize the unique potential of the region”, Shavkat Mirziyoyev said.

The President of Uzbekistan expressed his vision on the current issues and put forward several proposals.

It was noted that today’s realities require decisive steps to form a new model of economic cooperation in Central Asia. It is important to identify new growth points, new development drivers for the long term.

The need was noted for building up intraregional trade, and it is important to remove existing barriers to move to a full-fledged free trade regime. Long value chains can be created through the development of industrial cooperation, innovation and digital technologies

It was noted that for this, direct business contacts between entrepreneurs and regions of our countries should be encouraged, investment and economic forums should be held regularly.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted that the time has come for the adoption of the Agreement on the General Directions of Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation.

It is in the common strategic interests of the Central Asian countries to effectively use the transport and transit potential of the region. An extensive and integrated transport system can become a key transit hub on the Eurasian continent.

In this regard, the President of Uzbekistan called for the fullest possible loading of the existing transport corridors and infrastructure, including the ports of the Caspian Sea, large cross-border logistics centers.

In addition, Uzbekistan expects to use the potential of the Trans-Afghan corridor “Termez – Mazar-i-Sharif – Kabul – Peshawar”, the road and railways “China – Kyrgyzstan – Uzbekistan”.

The importance of the resumption of full-fledged transport communication in compliance with sanitary requirements was also emphasized.

The issues of the region's energy security are becoming even more urgent taking into account the growth of national economies and population. In this regard, it is necessary to continue efforts to form a common energy space, paying special attention to the advanced implementation of green energy and energy-efficient technologies.

The President of Uzbekistan proposed to intensify the activities of the Electric Power Coordination Council of Central Asia, expanding its mandate and powers, as well as the level of representation of countries.

The attention of the meeting participants was drawn to the aggravation of the problems of providing the population with food products in the context of a pandemic. There is a rise in prices and a shortage of basic foodstuffs in some regions of the world.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, supporting the initiative to hold regular meetings of the ministers of agriculture of the region’s countries, proposed introducing a regional food security monitoring system in the agenda of their first meeting.

This will make it possible to determine specific directions and joint programs to increase food production and control their quality, including deliveries to the world market.

Issues of close coordination and mutual assistance in the fight against the pandemic were also considered.

Shavkat Mirziyoyev proposed to launch a unified information system for the recognition of test results and

vaccination certificates, expand the exchange of experience in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases, training medical workers, establish scientific cooperation in pharmacology and cooperation in the production of vital medicines.

The Leader of Uzbekistan emphasized that the focus should always be on the environmental problems of the region. It is necessary to enhance the scale of cooperation, to take all possible measures to mitigate the consequences of the Aral Sea disaster.

In this context, the President of Uzbekistan proposed to develop a regional program “Green Agenda” for Central Asia”, which would contribute to the adaptation of our countries to climate change, as well as the wider introduction of resource-saving technologies.

The Leader of Uzbekistan stressed the importance of strengthening relations of the region with other large regions of the world. He thanked the Heads of state for the support and active participation of the delegations of their countries in the work of the recently held Tashkent International Conference on Connectivity of Central and South Asia.

Confidence was expressed that a special resolution of the UN General Assembly on this issue will be adopted by joint efforts, as well as the active participation of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in this issue.

“We are all aware of the important role played by young people in the development of our countries, which constitute the majority of the population in the region. Today, when the struggle for the minds and hearts of the young generation continues all over the world, we need to educate our youth in the spirit of patriotism, respect for national and universal values, as the future of Central Asia depends on them”, Shavkat Mirziyoyev said.

The President of Uzbekistan proposed to hold a Central Asian Youth Forum in Uzbekistan next year, which will be an important step towards forming a platform for strengthening trust and friendship, an interactive dialogue between representatives of governments and youth of the region’s countries.

An important factor in strengthening the fraternal relations of our peoples is the further development of the common cultural and civilizational space.

The President of Uzbekistan noted the importance of regular organization of festivals, culture and cinema days, a joint publication of books on the cultural heritage of Central Asia.

Another effective factor contributing to the rapprochement of our peoples is the tourism sector. It is important to actively apply additional incentives to increase intra-regional tourist exchange.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev proposed to start the practical implementation of the joint program “One tour – the whole region” covering the entire range of tourism products.

“Today’s summit acquires special significance since it is taking place on the eve of a significant event – the 30th anniversary of the independence of our countries.

These were difficult years for all of us. The main conclusion is that only together, jointly, supporting each other, we can achieve a solution to the problems we face, ensure the sustainable development of the region and increase the wellbeing of the population. There is no other alternative!” President Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted.

The importance of imparting a stable and irreversible character to the process of regional cooperation, wider use of the potential of people’s diplomacy, parliaments, civil society institutions and the media for these purposes was emphasized.

“We welcome the further development of the Women’s Dialogue of Central Asia, the expansion of contacts to achieve global goals in gender equality”, Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized.

Taking into account the growing role of parliamentarism, the President of Uzbekistan proposed holding a Regional Parliamentary Forum in Tashkent.

Concluding his speech, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev expressed confidence that the results of the Consultative meeting will become a worthy contribution to further strengthening the multifaceted partnership of the fraternal peoples of Central Asia.





Source