

## Shavkat Mirziyoyev's proposals to contribute to the overall improvement of the sanitary and epidemiological situation in the ECO countries



One of the key topics raised by President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev during his speech at the next summit of the heads of state of the Organization for Economic Cooperation was the issues of increasing the collective potential to ensure sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population and health protection.

To this end, the Head of our country came up with a number of important initiatives. Among them - the creation within the ECO of a system for monitoring the epidemiological situation and the development of preventive anti-epidemiological measures in the member countries of the Organization, as well as the establishment of cooperation on the joint production of vaccines and the exchange of experience on their use.

The urgency of developing cooperation in this direction is directly related to the unfavorable epidemiological situation in the world and the impossibility of completely overcoming the epidemiological threat without consolidating efforts with close external partners.

First, the globalization of the new coronavirus infection and the protracted fight against it in the world, clearly demonstrate that any outbreak of an infectious disease can quickly develop into a global problem.

In these conditions, not a single country, even the most high-tech and economically developed, is able to cope alone with such a challenge of a trans-regional nature. For this reason, it is becoming increasingly obvious that the issues of containing a pandemic and building an effective fight against its consequences are an integral part of international cooperation.

Secondly, despite the emergence and approval of numerous encouraging vaccines against coronavirus in the world, the process of universal vaccination of the population has been launched mainly in high-income countries. According to UNESCO, residents of more than 130 developing countries have not yet received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and, in the current state of affairs, will not have access to drugs

until 2022. This situation makes the goals of co-production of vaccine products with external partners and the creation of a trans-regional platform within ECO for the exchange of the latest vaccine data urgently needed.

Thirdly, the rapid variability of the nature of coronavirus infection, provoking periodic cases of the emergence in the world of numerous new strains of COVID-19, more infectious and less susceptible to neutralizing antibodies, dictates the need for the ECO member states to take coordinated measures to regularly monitor these changes at the earliest stages. and the timely exchange of information in order to prevent the uncontrolled circulation of mutated viruses and a sharp jump in the incidence in the organization's space.

Taking into account these factors, it can be noted that the implementation of the initiatives of the leader of Uzbekistan in this direction will contribute to the achievement of a number of important goals that will increase the effectiveness of the fight against epidemiological threats:

first, the establishment of cooperation between health authorities, sanitary and epidemiological surveillance services and scientific expert communities of the organization's member states in the study, early detection, localization and prevention of the spread of epidemics;

second, to promptly obtain a complete picture of the sanitary and epidemiological situation through joint monitoring of the situation in the ECO space and the development of coordinated actions in the fight against various outbreaks of diseases;

third, establishing the practice of passing mutual internships, organizing the activities of joint teams of doctors, launching scientific and educational programs;

fourth, increasing the efficiency of exchange of information on the safety of various vaccines, obtained as a result of new research, as well as exchange of experience on mass vaccination of the population. These measures will identify gaps in knowledge about SARS-CoV-2 vaccines and identify research priorities.

The end results of these joint actions will be the provision of early access for the Organization's member states to effective vaccine preparations and the overall improvement of the sanitary and epidemiological situation in the ECO countries.

In this regard, we can say with confidence that the practical implementation of the initiatives in the field of combating the pandemic put forward by the leader of Uzbekistan will give impetus to building a solid mechanism for collective response to challenges in the health sector and accelerate the process of bringing the ECO member countries out of the epidemiological crisis.

In general, all the announced plans are evidence of the firm intention of our country to consolidate the efforts and capabilities of the ECO member states in solving the most pressing problems at the center of the regional agenda. Among them, one of the main, undoubtedly, remains a pandemic, since the epidemiological well-being of those living in the OE countries depends on the success of the fight against it.

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