

# Promoting transport and logistics connectivity should be a priority for Uzbek-Turkmen cooperation



Akramjon Nematov, First Deputy Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of Uzbekistan (ISRS), said at the international conference “Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Prospects for development at a new historical stage of interaction” that promoting transport and logistics connectivity should be a priority for Uzbek-Turkmen cooperation.

The event was timed to coincide with the upcoming meeting of the Presidents of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedov in Uzbekistan. Heads of scientific and research institutes, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, leading political and economic centers, academies of sciences of the two countries took part in its work.

The experts discussed in detail the issues of the current state of Uzbek-Turkmen cooperation, the prospects for further strengthening the strategic partnership between our countries, as well as interaction within the framework of the Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia.

According to the ISRS expert, one of the key factors that should give a powerful impetus to bilateral and regional cooperation is the development of transport and logistics interconnectedness and the solution of emerging problems in this area.

Firstly, Akramjon Nematov noted, today our countries and states of the region, due to their geographical location, have limitations in entering large global markets. The transcontinental interconnectedness is not sufficiently developed, which causes significant transit and transport costs, which reach 70-80% of the cost of exporting products. In general, the lack of an integrated approach to improve regional transport connectivity limits the growth of the region's GDP by 15%.

Secondly, the First Deputy Director of the ISRS pointed out that the pandemic and its consequences, the disruption of supply chains, congestion in international seaports, the depletion / narrowing of the capacity of the Suez Canal led to the dysfunction of traditional transport, transit and logistics networks.

Thirdly, the representative of the ISRS believes, the sanctions policy against Russia and Belarus aggravates the problem, which limits the possibilities of the northern transport corridors, through which a significant part of the transportation of our goods was carried out.

“In the emerging new transport and logistics environment, there is a fundamental transformation of international transport and the search for new alternative routes for the delivery of goods. On the one hand, this carries risks for us, on the other hand, new opportunities for interaction are opening up,” Akramjon Nematov emphasized.

Under these conditions, he believes, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan need to coordinate their efforts in developing their transport and transit capabilities and use the opportunity that has appeared. “We need to jointly take practical measures to turn Central Asia into a hub for the intersection of main routes between Asia and Europe, increase the capacity and increase the volume of traffic through transcontinental land routes crossing Central Asia,” the ISRS representative stated.

According to Akramjon Nematov, in the context of the high interest of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in the development of transport potential, the joint development of the Trans-Caspian and Transoman corridors, the port of Turkmenbashi, coordination of efforts in promoting the multimodal transport corridor “APR - China - Kyrgyzstan - Uzbekistan - Turkmenistan - Azerbaijan - Georgia - Turkey - Europe is important.

Of course, Akramjon Nematov added that a lot has already been done in this direction. The Turkmenabat-Farab railway and road bridges across the Amudarya near the border with Uzbekistan are already

successfully operating, which increase traffic volumes.

“At the same time, today it is important to increase the capacity and simplify the administrative procedures of the southern route of the Trans-Caspian corridor passing through the port of Turkmenbashi,” the ISRS representative concluded.

The event was organized by the International Institute of Central Asia and the Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan.

#### **Source**