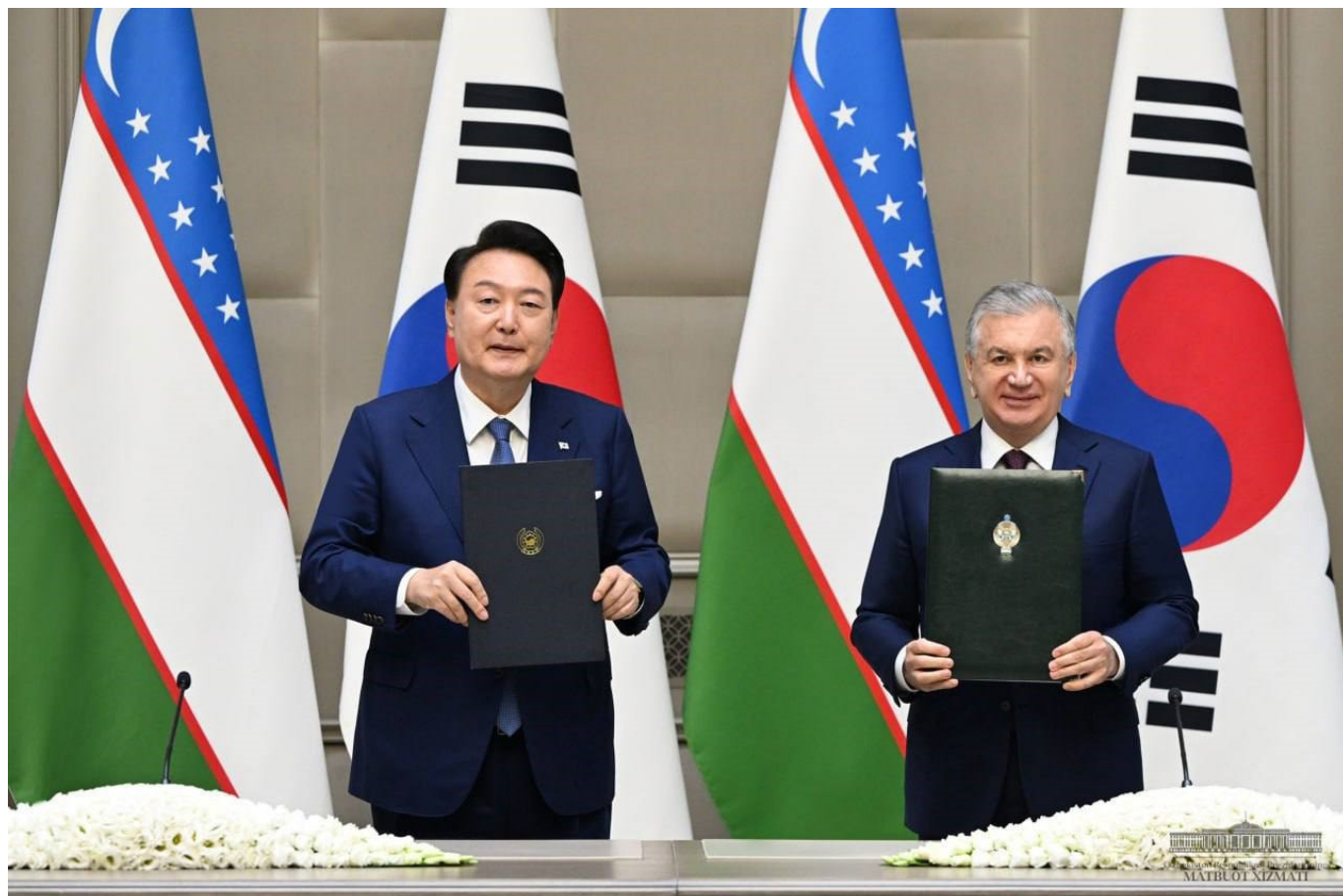


## A high-tech vector of cooperation as a new stage in the development of a special strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and South Korea



On 13-15 June, the first visit of the President of the Republic of Korea Yoon Suk Yeol to Uzbekistan took place. The program of the South Korean leader's stay was very informative and included high-level negotiations, a visit to the Tashkent Technopark and participation in a joint business forum.

Particular attention in the extensive agenda of the meetings was paid to the issue of developing cooperation between Uzbekistan and Korea in the field of high technologies.

It is important to note that by now the countries have already managed to establish successful cooperation in this direction.

As Yoon Suk Yeol emphasized, "cooperation between the two states, which began with the automotive industry, today extends to all sectors, including IT, industry and infrastructure."

To date, in partnership with South Korea, a joint educational and practical textile technology park, a Scientific and Technological Center for Rare Metals and Alloys, a Design and Technology Center for Agricultural Machinery, and an Uzbek-Korean Center for Cooperation in the Field of Electronic Government have been created in Uzbekistan.

In addition, the South Korean side also assisted in the launch of the National e-commerce platform in our republic.

In this regard, in order to fully realize the existing potential, during the high-level negotiations, the head of Uzbekistan noted the importance of forming a new high-tech agenda for the Uzbek-Korean special strategic partnership for the next 3 years.

This will significantly strengthen and increase the level of cooperation with South Korea, which is one of the world leaders in the field of high technologies, such as electronics, IT, robotics and biotechnology.

The Republic of Korea is in the top 10 of the Global Innovation Index, and over the last decade alone (2013–2022) it has risen from 18th to 6th position.

In addition, the number of patent applications over the past 10 years has increased by 42.5%, which allowed Korea to take 4th place in the world in terms of their total number (267.5 thousand), behind China, the USA and Japan.

At the same time, Seoul is actively developing the biotechnology sector. Thus, the annual volume of Korean production in this industry exceeded 42 trillion won (30 billion dollars) back in 2020, and there are goals to increase it 5 times (up to 149 billion dollars) by 2035.

In this context, the governments of the two countries were instructed to prepare a Strategic Program for the creation of a regional high-tech hub in Uzbekistan, identifying partnership in the areas of critical mineral resources, semiconductors, chemical industry, mechanical engineering, technology transfer of smart agriculture, urban planning and energy as the most important.

Such a step is a logical continuation of the strategy focused on the innovative and high-tech development of Uzbekistan, designated by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev as a main priority. Its implementation will help accelerate the technological modernization of the economy of our republic and increase its competitiveness in the global market.

In addition, Yoon Suk Yeol, during the negotiations, as well as during his speech at the business forum, repeatedly emphasized the existence of huge untapped potential for interaction between countries in the areas of rare earth resources, semiconductors, development of the technology sector and human capital. This emphasis demonstrates the interest of the Republic of Korea in strengthening partnership with Uzbekistan in high-tech industries.

Thus, the results of the Korean leader's visit to Uzbekistan indicate the commitment of the leadership of the two countries to further deepen relations, especially in the field of advanced technologies. In turn, the agreements concluded during the visit create the foundation for making a new breakthrough in the technological partnership of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Korea.

Timur Kurbanklichev,  
Leading Researcher at ISRS  
under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan