

## President of the Republic of Uzbekistan receives the President of the European Council

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**On May 31, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev received the President of the European Council Donald Tusk, who arrived in Uzbekistan on a working visit.**

The Head of the state, warmly welcoming the distinguished guest, noted with deep satisfaction the development of constructive political dialogue and productive practical cooperation with the European Union in trade-economic, innovation, scientific-technical and cultural-humanitarian fields.

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It was emphasized that the first visit of the President of the European Council to Uzbekistan, taking place on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the European Union, indicates a growing mutual desire to expand and strengthen multifaceted partnership.

Regular meetings of the Council and Uzbekistan – EU Cooperation Committee, development of inter-parliamentary exchanges, visits of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini and other high representatives of the European Union to Uzbekistan show the intensification of contacts in recent years.

Negotiations have begun on the draft new Agreement on expanded partnership and cooperation between Uzbekistan and the EU.

The trade turnover and a portfolio of investment projects with the European Union countries grow. Consultations are held on creating favorable conditions for further increasing mutual trade operations and investments.

In addition, European partners assist in issues of Uzbekistan's accession to the World Trade Organization.

Partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has been resumed and expanded, implementation of the first joint projects with participation of the European Investment Bank in priority sectors of the country's economy has been launched.

Active scientific and educational exchanges are carried out within the framework of Horizon 2020 and Erasmus + programs.

At the meeting, main attention was paid to issues of further expanding practical cooperation in economy, trade, innovation and investment, transport, science, education and healthcare.

It was emphasized that the ongoing reforms in Uzbekistan to liberalize the economy open up opportunities for a broader presence of the leading European business, actively attracting the latest technologies, advanced experience and high standards to Uzbekistan.

The importance of strengthening cooperation in the region in accordance with the provisions of the new EU Strategy for Central Asia was noted.

The President of the European Council highly appreciated the practical efforts of Uzbekistan to overcome the negative consequences of the environmental disaster in the Aral Sea basin. He confirmed his readiness for active cooperation within the framework of the Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea region.

The sides also exchanged views on other current issues of international and regional agenda, including the peaceful settlement of the situation in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, the mutual commitment to further strengthening full-scale partnership and expanding multifaceted cooperation in the interests of ensuring the stability and sustainable development of the entire region was highlighted.

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