

## New milestone in centuries-old friendship and strengthening fraternal ties

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**On October 15, Azerbaijan hosted the Seventh Summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, in Baku.**

The meeting was attended by the heads of state members of the organization – the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sooronbay Jeenbekov, the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – Elbasy Nursultan Nazarbayev. The event was also attended by the Prime Minister of Hungary (observer country) Viktor Orban, as well as the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan Purli Agamuradov.

For Uzbekistan, this was the first participation in the summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (Turkic Council) as a full member. Uzbekistan has joined this authoritative international structure this year.

Shavkat Mirziyoyev has repeatedly noted that the main goal and key principle of Uzbekistan's foreign policy is invariably the interests of the country. Following this principle, Uzbekistan pursues an open, friendly and pragmatic policy. As a result, in recent years, the number of friends and partners of the country has been growing in the international arena. A completely new atmosphere of political and economic partnership has been formed in relations with neighboring countries, states of near and far abroad. New directions, forms and mechanisms of international cooperation are being introduced.

One of such new platforms is the Turkic Council. This organization was created on October 3, 2009 in Azerbaijan's Nakhichevan city, its first members were Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

In recent years, cooperation between Uzbekistan and these countries has significantly strengthened. High-level visits were carried out. The President of Uzbekistan as an honored guest attended the summit of the Turkic Council on September 3, 2018 in the Kyrgyz city of Cholpon-ata. On October 5 this year, a meeting of the Business Council and the Investment Forum of Turkic Speaking States were held in Tashkent.

Finally, on September 14 this year, the Republic of Uzbekistan ratified the Nakhichevan

agreement on establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States.

The main goal of the organization is to build confidence and relations between the fraternal countries, develop cooperation in trade, economy, transport, energy, tourism and cultural-humanitarian sphere, coordinate efforts to ensure peace and security in the region.

All participating countries welcomed the entry of Uzbekistan into the Turkic Council. Officials and experts unanimously noted the historical role of Uzbekistan people in the fate of the Turkic people, the huge potential and importance of Uzbekistan for the organization.

In his speech at the summit, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted that the entry of Uzbekistan into the organization is a reflection of the natural historical process. Glorious pages of our common history were created on the ancient land of Uzbekistan, this land has raised scientists and thinkers who have made an invaluable contribution to development of world science and culture, such as Muhammad Khwarizmi, Ahmad Fergani, Abu Reikhan Beruni, Ibn Sina, Mirzo Ulugbek, the great theologians who left a bright trace in the history of our sacred religion, including Imam Bukhari, Imam Termizi, Imam Maturidi, Bahauddin Naqshband, as well as such a great poet as Alisher Navoi, who united the Turkic world with his beautiful works. Not only Uzbek people, but also all of us are proud with their names.

"Participation in the Turkic Council fully meets the fundamental interests of our people. Today, not only our cultural and spiritual ties, but also trade and economic relations have reached a new level. Over the past three years, the trade turnover between our countries has almost doubled, more than a thousand joint ventures have been created. The transport connection is expanding, the number of visa-free tourist trips is growing, the bonds of brotherhood of our people are strengthening", the President of Uzbekistan said.

Shavkat Mirziyoyev forwarded proposals on the issues included in the agenda of the summit.

The President of Uzbekistan noted that the priority is to create the most favorable conditions for establishing direct relations between entrepreneurs, based on mutual understanding and trust. In this regard, he proposed to organize joint technology parks, innovative start-up companies and venture funds, as well as a joint investment fund and open trading houses in Turkic Speaking States.

Taking into account that at present more than 40 percent of the population of the Council's member states is young people, the President of Uzbekistan proposed to

establish a Forum of Young Entrepreneurs within the framework of the Turkic Council and hold its first meeting next year in Uzbekistan for the wide involvement of talented and educated youth in entrepreneurship.

Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized the importance of implementing large transport and communication projects, which will create wide opportunities for accessing the markets of Europe, China and South Asia, as well as the effective use of the potential of the new Baku – Tbilisi – Kars railway. Practical proposals were forwarded to expand cooperation in tourism.

The President of Uzbekistan noted the importance of cultural and humanitarian interaction and suggested publishing in the native language of each of the Council countries a series of books "Treasury of Turkic literature", which will include the best examples of literature of our people.

Shavkat Mirziyoyev congratulated Ilham Aliyev on Azerbaijan's chairmanship in the Turkic Council and wished him great success.

Following the negotiations, the Declaration of the Seventh Summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and other documents were adopted.

An important event of the summit became the adoption of the Joint Statement of the Heads of States of the Turkic Council on the accession of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the organization as a full member.

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