

Kuwait a reliable friend, trusted partner of Uzbekistan

Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in July 1994. In 2001, the Embassy of the State of Kuwait was opened in Tashkent, and in November 2004, the Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan was opened in Kuwait. To date, there have been two high-level visits – in 2004 to Kuwait and in 2008 to Uzbekistan.

By H.E. Ayub Khan Yunusov
 Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Kuwait

Kuwait is a reliable friend and partner of Uzbekistan in the Middle East, and was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 30 December 1991, said Ambassador of Uzbekistan H.E. Ayubkhan Yunusov.

He added, "Since then friendly relations between the two countries have been based on a shared desire for peace, economic development, and the prosperity of both peoples. The shared cultural, historical, and religious values, customs, and traditions are also of considerable importance, acting as a natural catalyst that accelerates cooperation between the two states,"

He pointed out that the legal framework for cooperation between the two countries includes Intergovernmental Agreements on the Promotion and Mutual Protection of Investments, on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture and Art, on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, on the Avoidance of Double Taxation, and on Cooperation between the State Customs Committees of Uzbekistan and Kuwait. The Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the two states work together on the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding, and the Diplomatic Academy of Kuwait and the University of World Economy and Diplomacy of Uzbekistan work together on the basis of a Partnership Memorandum.

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of Uzbekistan was opened in Kuwait. To date, there have been two high-level visits – in 2004 to Kuwait and in 2008 to Uzbekistan.

In addition, a delegation headed by Sheikh Ahmed Nasser al-Muhammad al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, participated in the international conference 'Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities', which took place in Tashkent in July 2023. During the delegation's visit, Sheikh Ahmad Nasser al-Muhammad al-Sabah, was received by the President of Uzbekistan, Sh.M. Mirziyoyev.

A joint intergovernmental commission (IGC) on trade, economic, scientific, and technical cooperation is in operation. At the IGC meeting last November in Tashkent, measures were agreed to expand the range of goods traded, sign a Preferential Trade

Agreement, expand cooperation in e-commerce, remove barriers, and hold "Made in Uzbekistan" and "Made in Kuwait" exhibitions on a mutual basis. A Program of Industrial Cooperation and an Agreement on Bilateral Investment Treaties are being developed.

Both countries understand the importance of strengthening trade and are consistently moving in this direction. The main items of trade turnover, which has grown almost seven times since 2020, are services, mineral fuels, food products, and chemical products. Nevertheless, and this is recognized at the highest level, there is still enormous untapped potential for increasing interaction in this area.

A similar situation is observed in the field of investment cooperation. There are seven enterprises operating in Uzbekistan with the participation of Kuwaiti capital.

Kuwait fully supports Uzbekistan's reforms, and with the financial and advisory support of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), major social projects in healthcare, education, and various infrastructure sectors are being implemented in Uzbekistan. In total, 10 credit agreements have been signed with KFAED for a total of \$213.2 million and four technical assistance agreements for \$2.5 million.

Expert opinion is unanimous—despite the distance, the two countries have significant potential for increasing trade and investment partnership, and industrial cooperation. Analysis shows the effectiveness of using mutual trade opportunities to organize trade supplies, joint ventures, and access to large regional markets.

A meeting of leading entrepreneurs from Uzbekistan and Kuwait is expected in the very near future, which means that new trade contracts and investment projects will not be long in coming, said the ambassador in conclusion.



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Uzbekistan and Kuwait: Towards Mutually Beneficial Cooperation

Foreign policy concepts of the two countries are very similar. Both Uzbekistan and Kuwait see their development prospects as being closely connected with the countries of their respective regions.

By Aziz Karimov,
Leading researcher at the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

In recent years, within the framework of its renewed foreign policy concept, Uzbekistan has been strengthening its external relations with traditional partners, enhancing its activities in international organizations, and expanding its partnerships' geography. This trend is particularly evident in Uzbekistan's efforts to elevate its relations with the Gulf Arab states to a new level. An important aspect is that relations with these countries are developing both multilaterally and bilaterally. This is reflected in establishing the 'Central Asia – Gulf Arab States Council Strategic Dialogue' and successfully hosting the first high-level summit in this format in 2023. Tashkent places special emphasis on developing bilateral relations with the region's countries, with Kuwait being a priority.

Recently, Uzbekistan has intensified political dialogue with Kuwait. In April 2024, Kuwait's Foreign Minister, Abdullah al-Yahya, was received by the President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev. In 2024 alone, five rounds of negotiations were held between the two countries' foreign ministers. The dialogue between economic agencies and business circles has also been strengthened. Last year, over 100 Uzbek entrepreneurs visited Kuwait City. In May and August 2024, two business forums and 'Made in Uzbekistan' exhibitions were organized in Kuwait. In turn, business forums were held in Uzbekistan with the participation of a 31-member Kuwaiti business delegation. Prominent Kuwaiti companies also visited Uzbekistan.

It is important to note that the activation of relations in this manner is not without reason. Kuwait is a comprehensively beneficial partner for Uzbekistan. This is due to several factors.

First, the foreign policy concepts of the two countries are very similar. Both Uzbekistan and Kuwait see their development prospects as being closely connected with the countries of their respective regions. Just as Uzbekistan plays a crucial role in the integrity and stability of Central Asia, Kuwait holds a significant position in the development of regional cooperation among Gulf states. In this context, it is worth recalling that the late former Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah, was one of the founders of the Gulf Cooperation Council. Similarly, at the modern stage, the President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, has fulfilled a historical mission. His election as President of Uzbekistan positively influenced the political situation in Central Asia. Uzbekistan chose the path of rapprochement with its neighbors and jointly building the region's future. The Consultative Meetings of regional leaders, initiated by the President of Uzbekistan, now serve as a key mechanism for ensuring intensive cooperation.

Second, the countries share common approaches within their participation in international organizations. For instance, Kuwait and Uzbekistan present similar views and proposals on platforms such as the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Both countries advocate for joint efforts to address international security issues



and promote stable, inclusive development. Tashkent and Kuwait City have supported each other's initiatives, providing political backing to these organizations.

Third, the two countries have aligned economic development strategies. Uzbekistan and Kuwait have placed economic modernization and diversification at the center of their domestic agendas. These goals are reflected in the New Uzbekistan 2030 and New Kuwait 2035 strategies. Both countries are undergoing a similar historical stage of development, namely a period of profound transformation. The success of this process depends not only on internal factors but also on creating a favorable external environment. Therefore, both countries are interested in



expanding their circle of external partners, attracting investments, and accessing new markets. Establishing constant coordination in these areas would be mutually beneficial.

Fourth, developing bilateral economic relations is equally advantageous for Uzbekistan and Kuwait. This is closely linked to the two countries' international and regional financial and geographical significance and strategic goals. Uzbekistan holds a strategically important geographical position in Central Asia, as it is the only country in the region that shares borders with all other Central Asian states. Uzbekistan also provides access to Eurasian markets. Moreover, the country is at the crossroads of major international land routes. This means that Uzbekistan, and Central Asia as a whole, is strengthening its

position in the new global economy model, restoring its role as a traditional transport corridor connecting East and West. Kuwait's location is also of strategic importance, both regionally and globally. While Uzbekistan is at the crossroads of land routes, Kuwait is at the intersection of maritime trade routes. Additionally, the country is located in the heart of the Middle East region.

The above factors indicate that industrial cooperation between Uzbekistan and Kuwait would create favorable opportunities for both countries to access third-country markets. Central Asian markets could serve as a platform for diversifying Kuwait's economy and reducing the dominance of fuel products in its trade. In turn, Uzbekistan could solve the



problem of accessing maritime trade routes by strengthening economic cooperation with Kuwait. The two countries could serve as logistical hubs for each other.

Another factor worth noting is the economic significance of the two countries. Uzbekistan has the second-largest economy in Central Asia. In recent years, the country's economy has shown high growth dynamics. Over the past seven years, Tashkent has doubled the country's GDP. By the end of 2024, Uzbekistan's GDP grew by 6.5 percent compared to the previous year, reaching \$115 billion. On the other hand, Kuwait is a country of significant importance for the global and Middle Eastern economies. The country holds a unique position in the current global energy security architecture. Kuwait is one of the world's top

ten oil-exporting countries, ranking second in the Gulf and sixth globally in oil reserves. Due to its rich resources, the country has one of the largest economies per capita in the world.

Considering the above factors, several areas of cooperation can be highlighted as particularly beneficial for Uzbekistan and Kuwait.

Trade: Over the past five years, trade turnover between Uzbekistan and Kuwait has increased fivefold. Currently, seven enterprises with Kuwaiti capital operate in Uzbekistan. However, this does not fully reflect the economic potential of both sides. In 2023, Kuwait's trade in goods and services with other countries amounted to \$164 billion, while Uzbekistan's figure reached \$63 billion. The agreement signed in 2024 to simplify trade processes could be a significant step in increasing trade dynamics.

Investment: Kuwait has significant investment potential. The Kuwait Investment Authority ranks second in the Gulf and fifth globally regarding financial capabilities. Its current assets are estimated at nearly \$1 trillion. Another fund, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, is a prestigious organization that provides concessional grants and loans to developing countries. In turn, Uzbekistan is becoming a significant investment destination with vast opportunities. Since 2017, Tashkent has attracted nearly \$80 billion in foreign investments. From this perspective, Uzbekistan could be a promising direction for Kuwaiti investors.

Tourism: In 2022, nearly half (47%) of Kuwait's service imports were related to tourism. Kuwaiti tourists spent over \$10 billion abroad. With its rich cultural heritage, Eastern science, and historical centers of Islamic culture, Uzbekistan could become an important tourism destination for Kuwaiti travelers.

Digital Economy: Both Uzbekistan and Kuwait are rapidly introducing modern digital technologies into their economies. Kuwait's information and communication technology market currently exceeds \$22 billion, while Uzbekistan's digital economy is worth nearly \$4.5 billion. Therefore, Kuwait could share its extensive experience in successfully integrating digital infrastructure into the economy with Uzbekistan. This aligns with the priority goals of the Digital Uzbekistan 2030 Strategy.

Agriculture: Kuwait's agricultural capabilities are limited. The country imports nearly

94 percent of its food needs. With its high potential in food production, Uzbekistan could be a promising partner in ensuring Kuwait's food security. This cooperation could develop through the establishment of joint production enterprises. It is worth noting that Kuwait has significant experience in this area, having financed 45 agricultural projects in 21 African countries in recent years to ensure food security.

In conclusion, economic and political cooperation between Uzbekistan and Kuwait will be a significant step in ensuring the steady development of both countries. Strengthening bilateral relations between the two states will provide another strong impetus for enhancing interregional cooperation.

Diplomatic Relations Between Uzbekistan and the State of Kuwait Are Reaching a New Level

By **Ozodbek Nazarbekov**
 Minister of Culture of Uzbekistan

Friendly relations with foreign states play an invaluable role in the development of any country. Especially in today's era of globalization, when the system of international relations is becoming increasingly complex, protecting national interests and enhancing a country's reputation on the global stage have become extremely important issues.

The level of development of a particular country is closely linked not only to its industrial or export potential but also to its ability to showcase its rich culture to the world. From this perspective, effectively organizing cultural diplomacy as a key component of foreign policy is a significant matter.

Today, Uzbekistan is actively working to develop its cultural diplomacy through productive cooperation with foreign states. The State of Kuwait, located on the Arabian Peninsula along the northwestern coast of the Persian Gulf, has been strengthening its multifaceted ties with Uzbekistan in recent years.

Diplomatic relations between Uzbekistan and Kuwait were established on July 8, 1994. Since then, cultural events, exhibitions, festivals, and scientific conferences have been organized to further develop cultural ties between the two nations.

To further enhance cooperation in the field of culture, permanent dialogue and experience exchange have been established between the relevant cultural organizations of both countries. Organizing joint cultural events and facilitating visits by representatives of art and culture have become a growing tradition.



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When examining the current state and dynamics of cultural cooperation with Kuwait, numerous collaborative efforts can be observed, including:

From December 15 to 22, 2017, “Uzbekistan Culture Days” were held in Kuwait City, featuring an exhibition dedicated to Uzbekistan at the “Al-Adwaniya” gallery, along with concert programs.

Kuwaiti representatives participated in the international cultural forum “Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations” in Khiva (September 14-16, 2021), the “Lazgi” International Dance Festival in Khiva (April 25-30, 2022 and 2024), the III International Bakhshi Art Festival in Gulistan (May 5-8, 2023), and the II International Maqom Art Forum in Zomin (June 27-30, 2024).

From February 9 to 13, 2024, a creative group from

the Uzbekistan State Conservatory was sent on a tour to Kuwait. From August 26 to 30, 2024, famous Kuwaiti journalist and blogger Abdulkarim Al-Hindal Al-Hashimi, who has more than 20 million followers, participated in the “Sharq Taronalari” International Music Festival in Samarkand. During his visit, he shared video footage of Uzbekistan's sacred sites, historical monuments, local traditions, and cultural values on his social media pages, which deserves special recognition.

To further strengthen bilateral cooperation and showcase Uzbek culture and art to the people of Kuwait, plans are underway to organize “Uzbekistan Culture Days” in Kuwait in 2025. Additionally, practical steps will be taken to develop cultural tourism and implement joint educational programs between cultural and artistic institutions in both countries.

Furthermore, opportunities exist to expand cooperation in areas such

as preserving and promoting national culture, launching joint projects, fostering partnerships between cultural institutions, and developing cultural tourism. Important documents are expected to be signed to solidify cultural collaboration and deepen mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of the two nations.

I believe that cultural ties between Uzbekistan and this Arabian Peninsula country will continue to grow stronger.



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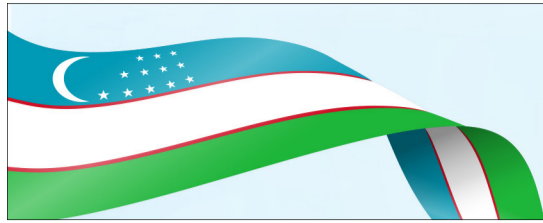


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Uzbekistan conquering new frontiers in the field of Smart City Planning And Territorial Development

By Tulaganov Baxrom Abdukabilovich
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The educational and scientific-technical cooperation between the Republic of Uzbekistan and Kuwait is strengthening year by year and expanding into new directions. Along with collaboration in traditional fields such as Arabic language and literature, Islamic studies, medicine, tourism, and economics, the two countries are now actively establishing cooperation in implementing "Smart City" projects. This is opening doors to new opportunities not only in the sphere of education and science but also in the realm of innovation and technology. The implementation of large-scale projects for the collaborative establishment of modern scientific and technological complexes, business incubators, and startup accelerators in Uzbekistan, involving leading Kuwaiti manufacturers, is of crucial importance for developing and commercializing innovative ideas, inventions, and technologies. These initiatives play a significant role in enhancing the effectiveness of scientific research, improving the personnel training system, and introducing advanced technologies into strategic sectors of the economy.

In Uzbekistan, the role of science in the socio-economic development

of regions is invaluable, and the implementation of the "Smart City" concept in this process is of strategic importance. Significant attention is being paid to enhancing the innovative potential of regions through scientific research and experimental design work, introducing digital technologies, and developing modern infrastructure. The collaboration between higher education institutions and regions involves developing scientifically-based proposals for socio-economic development and implementing them in practice. This, in turn, enables the advancement of "Smart City" projects and the organization of effective management based on modern technologies and data analysis.

As a result of research and analysis conducted this year, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation has developed hundreds of proposals aimed at increasing the socio-economic potential of the regions. Also, specific plans are being developed in such areas as the development of "Smart Mahalla" projects based on innovative technologies, the creation of a digital services platform, and the rational use of resources.

In the sphere of regional development, Uzbekistan is working on a number of projects based on the experience of cooperation with Kuwait. Kuwait has implemented several large-scale projects to create smart cities, which are mainly aimed at combining



digital technologies and green infrastructure. Smart cities often rely on energy-efficient systems, solar panels, and energy-saving devices. For this reason, significant work has been done in Kuwait to effectively utilize renewable energy sources, especially solar energy.

Currently, the safety, environmental sustainability, and efficiency of cities remain among the most important factors for the comfortable life of people. Therefore, the "Smart City" concept has been developed in Uzbekistan, and experiments are being conducted to implement the project. At this point, the question may arise: why are "smart cities" needed?

Today, the population of the world is growing sharply. In such conditions, smart technologies play an important role in solving problems related to urbanization, improving

the ecological environment, and ensuring safety. "Smart cities" not only solve a number of problems but also find solutions for them, for example: Traffic and transport problems in this case, controlling roads through artificial intelligence and reducing traffic jams, increasing the efficiency of public transport. In addition, smart surveillance cameras, analytical programs, and artificial intelligence play an important role in crime prevention. In addition, it can control the environment, that is, control air quality, develop directions in waste recycling and energy efficiency.

Through the digital management system, public services, urban infrastructure, and utility systems will be automated. As an example, we can take Kuwait city. The city of Kuwait is entirely controlled by smart security

systems. This city has managed to ensure the safety and convenience of the population using artificial intelligence and IT technologies. Traffic is regulated, public places are under video surveillance, and emergencies are detected and promptly responded to through artificial intelligence.

A number of proposals have been submitted by the Tashkent University of Architecture and Civil Engineering for the implementation of a similar system in Uzbekistan. The university has engaged a group of specialists for the "Smart City" project, and experiments are being conducted on the project.

As a result of the experiment, specialists, relying on technologies, implemented the first stage of the "Smart City" project in an artificial intelligence system, that is, a systematized approximate view of the territory was developed, in which a digital control system and the use of solar energy were established. In addition, the project pays special attention to the installation of surveillance cameras, security systems, transport and parking lots, business centers, waste processing, energy efficiency, as well as the sustainable development of the green economy in order to safely protect the territories. Uzbekistan's "Smart City" project is a big step towards sustainable urban management.

The New Tashkent project is expected to be one of the key stages in the development of smart cities in the country.



Heartily Welcomes

His Excellency

Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

To Kuwait



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