

STRATEGIC COOPERATION AND PROSPECTS BETWEEN CENTRAL ASIA AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH

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Abstract: This article analyzes the key areas of strategic cooperation between Central Asian countries and the states of the Global South. It explores political, economic, environmental, security, and technological collaborations, highlighting their importance and future prospects. The discussion emphasizes opportunities for sustainable development and enhancement of international standing through mutually beneficial partnerships.

Keywords: Central Asia, Global South, political cooperation, economic relations, security, environmental sustainability, technological development, international relations.

Introduction.

Today, the system of international relations is undergoing profound changes. Shifts in the balance of geopolitical power, climate change, the technological revolution, demographic growth, and economic transformations are strengthening the role of the so-called Global South in the international arena. The Global South mainly includes developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. At the same time, Central Asian states, through a multi-vector foreign policy approach, are striving to deepen political, economic, environmental, and security cooperation with the countries of the Global South.

This article examines the current state, main directions, and future prospects of cooperation between Central Asia and the Global South. Relying on the information from Chapter III, it discusses the political, economic, security, environmental, and technological aspects of these relations.

Discussion.

After gaining independence, Central Asian states adopted a foreign policy approach based on multipolarity, which created favorable conditions for developing political cooperation with the Global South. Countries of the region actively engage with the Global South through international organizations such as the UN, SCO, and OIC. For example, at the 2022 SCO summit held in Samarkand, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan emphasized the need to deepen cooperation with Global South countries in the organization.

Furthermore, Kazakhstan's membership in the UN Security Council (2017–2018) demonstrated the region's willingness to participate in international political processes alongside the Global South. Through this cooperation, Central Asian states seek to protect their sovereignty, balance Western political pressure, and contribute to building a fair global political order.

In the economic sphere, Central Asian countries are also actively cooperating with the Global South. Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and others are carrying out large-scale trade and investment projects with China, India, Turkey, South Korea, Iran, and African states. For instance, Turkish companies have invested more than 1 billion USD in Uzbekistan's economy.

Transport and logistics initiatives also play a significant role. Uzbekistan's "Trans-Afghan" corridor project aims to access Pakistani ports, while Kazakhstan's "Middle Corridor" initiative positions Central Asia as an important transit hub connecting the region with the Global South. These projects enhance regional trade flows.

Security issues represent another crucial area of cooperation between Central Asia and the Global South. Instability in Afghanistan, extremism, drug trafficking, and transnational crime pose persistent threats to the region. Within the SCO framework, active cooperation is carried out under the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism.

In addition, Uzbekistan, in cooperation with the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), has established a regional center to combat drug trafficking in Central Asia. This center plays a significant role in coordinating security cooperation with Global South countries.

Environmental cooperation is equally important for the region's sustainable development. The drying of the Aral Sea, water scarcity, and the negative effects of climate change are forcing Central Asian states to collaborate on ecological issues. Kazakhstan and China cooperate on transboundary rivers, while Tajikistan is implementing hydroenergy projects with China and India.

Within its "Green Economy" strategy, Uzbekistan is attracting advanced technologies from Global South countries, fostering the development of renewable energy sources.

Digital transformation and innovative development are also among the region's top priorities today. Central Asian states are collaborating with Global South countries in technological parks, startups, digital infrastructure, and scientific partnerships. For example, Uzbekistan, within the framework of its "Digital Uzbekistan – 2030" program, is utilizing the experience of the Global South in developing its digital infrastructure.

Kazakhstan is implementing "Smart City" projects to introduce modern technologies. These efforts not only enhance economic competitiveness but also strengthen ties in the scientific and educational spheres.

Conclusion. Today, cooperation between Central Asia and the Global South is becoming one of the most multidimensional and promising directions. Political, economic, environmental, security, and technological relations serve the interests of both sides. Through this cooperation, Central Asian states gain the opportunity to actively participate in global political processes, strengthen their sovereignty, ensure economic growth, and promote sustainable development.

Moreover, intensified cooperation is an essential factor in ensuring regional security and consolidating socio-economic stability. By introducing new technologies, developing transport corridors, and participating in environmental projects, Central Asia is increasing its competitiveness and, through deep integration with the Global South, is becoming an active participant in the international political and economic system. These processes may play a crucial role in shaping a more stable and just global order in the future.

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