# TRADE RELATIONS OF UZBEKISTAN WITH THE COUNTRIES OF THE NEAR EAST

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**Annotation:** At the beginning of this thesis, the names of the countries located in the Middle East region are listed one by one. Also, this article provides detailed information about the relations of the Republic of Uzbekistan with some countries located in this region.

**Key words:** The Middle East, The Republic of Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Al-Azhar University of Egypt, SCO, Saudi Arabia, ACWA Power.

The Middle East is the historical name of the region located mostly in Western (Anterior) Asia and partly in North Africa, on the border with Southern and Eastern Europe. The name for this closest eastern region was given by Europeans.

The Middle East is the name of the regions in the western and southwestern part of Asia and the northeastern part of Africa. The OHCHR Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa is located in Lebanon and covers the following countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. 14 states in the region differ in their political systems, of which 7 are republics; 7 monarchies, of which 3 are absolute monarchies.

The Middle East is rightfully considered the cradle of several ancient civilizations and three world religions. Throughout its long history, the region remains one of the most important political, economic, religious and cultural centers of our planet.

The main route from Europe and Africa to Asia runs through the Middle East. The climate is mostly arid and there are several large rivers that are used for irrigation. The Middle East is an important oil-producing region of the planet.

This region is the homeland of the oldest civilizations on Earth, known to us from history textbooks and three world religions - Judaism, Christianity and Islam. More than 5.5 million sq. km. are uninhabited, representing rocky, sandy deserts or mountains, unsuitable for agriculture, and sometimes even life.

The amazing development of most countries in this region is primarily due to the huge oil reserves discovered here in the 1920s. last century. Revenues from oil exports allowed these states to raise their international prestige and become one of the leaders in world politics.

After gaining independence, the Republic of Uzbekistan began practical efforts to develop foreign policy directions in various fields. Uzbekistan has set itself the main task of conducting not only a consistent domestic policy, but also an active foreign policy, and is systematically working towards this goal. The first steps of the diplomacy of sovereign Uzbekistan have been taken. In particular, in order to effectively establish the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, to create favorable external conditions for the political and socio-economic development of the Republic, to represent and protect the interests of citizens and the state of the Republic of Uzbekistan in international relations and in foreign countries. On May 25, 1992, the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers "On issues of organizing the activities of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan" was adopted. The foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On improving the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan" adopted in March 1994 and "On the main principles of the foreign policy activity of the Republic of Uzbekistan" in 1996 was formed based on decisions. Due to this, during the years of independence, our country established official relations with more than 133 countries, currently 45 embassies of foreign countries, 9 consulates, and 11 representative offices of international organizations are operating in Tashkent. The main principles, principles, strategic priorities, goals and objectives of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan are reflected in the "Concept of Foreign Political Activity" adopted in September 2012. This concept is a comprehensive system of views that defines the priorities that advance the national interests of Uzbekistan.

As the Republic of Uzbekistan conducts its foreign policy based on democratic principles, from December 1991 to July 1992, 111 countries recognized the republic, and up to now more than 180 countries recognized the independence of Uzbekistan.

There are also diplomatic relations with the countries of the Middle East.

The Republic of Turkey, located in the Middle East region, is the first country to recognize the independence of Uzbekistan. In December 1991, the President of Uzbekistan I. A. Karimov paid an official visit to Turkey. Having met with the President of the country Turgut Ozal, Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel and businessmen, an agreement was signed on the basis and goals of relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Turkey. In this agreement, the moral and spiritual closeness between our countries was emphasized. Cooperation, culture, science, education, healthcare, sports, tourism and other agreements were signed in the sphere of economic and trade. With the help of Turkey, in Karakalpakstan "Kateks", "Elteks", in Bukhara "Vardonze" (adapted to sewing men's shirts) and many other enterprises were built. Among them, "Otayol" bus manufacturing enterprise in Samarkand is of particular importance. Turks helped in the renovation of many hotels in Uzbekistan. Relations between the two countries are growing in the field of culture and science. An agreement on eternal friendship was signed between Turkey and Uzbekistan. A high-level Uzbek-Turkish strategic cooperation council was established as part of the state visit of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Uzbekistan (April 29 - May 1, 2018). The parties agreed on concrete measures to increase the volume of mutual trade to 5 billion dollars in the coming years.

During the past period after the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the leaders of the United Arab Emirates (October 2007) made high-level official and state visits to our country. The official visits made by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I.A. Karimov to the United Arab Emirates (March 17-18, 2008) became important in the development of bilateral relations and laid the foundation for the establishment of mutually beneficial cooperation. Official visits of the ministers of foreign affairs, finance, energy, foreign trade and economy of the United Arab Emirates (June 2009) were made to Uzbekistan. Diplomatic relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the UAE were established on October 25, 1992.

Another country located in the Middle East region, Egypt, is one of the first Arab countries to recognize the independence of Uzbekistan on December 26, 1991. Uzbekistan-Egypt relations - during the visit of the official Egyptian delegation to Uzbekistan in January 1992 and the visit of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov to Egypt in December 1992, the intentions of both countries to deepen and expand cooperation in various fields were confirmed and clarified. By 2000, 10 bilateral documents were signed between the countries. Foundations

of relations and cooperation between the Republic of Uzbekistan and Egypt, promotion and mutual protection of investments, economic, scientific and technical cooperation, cooperation in the field of aviation and air transport, cooperation in the field of science and culture between the Tashkent Institute of Oriental Studies and Al-Azhar University of Egypt, Uzbekistan and The agreements on cooperation and consultation between the Egyptian foreign ministries are the most important of these documents.

Currently, the development of multilateral and mutually beneficial relations with Egypt is becoming one of the priorities of Uzbekistan's foreign policy. On September 4-5, 2018, the President of Egypt, Abdul Fattah al-Sisi, visited Uzbekistan. At the end of the high-level negotiations, 4 intergovernmental and 7 interdepartmental documents were signed. Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Abdulfattah al-Sisi also met during the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics held in Beijing on February 4, 2022.

On May 25-26, 2022, the 10th round of political consultations between the ministries of foreign affairs of the two countries was held in Cairo.

During the SCO summit held in Samarkand on September 15-16, 2022, a document was signed on granting Egypt the status of "Dialogue Partner" of the SCO. At the same time, Uzbekistan and Egypt have been mutually supporting each other's initiatives within the framework of international organizations such as the UN, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the League of Arab States, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Currently, a total of 56 documents form the contractual and legal basis of bilateral cooperation, of which 14 are intergovernmental agreements and 42 are interdepartmental agreements and memoranda.

On September 6, 2018, the Government of Uzbekistan and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt signed an Agreement on cooperation in the field of tourism. Starting from the last quarter of 2020, direct flights are being operated once a week in the directions "Tashkent-Sharm al-Sheikh" and "Cairo-Tashkent". Egyptian cleric, Dr. Abdulhadi al-Qasabi, was appointed the "Pilgrimage Tourism Ambassador" of Uzbekistan in Egypt.

Uzbekistan also has active political and economic relations with Saudi Arabia. Relations between Uzbekistan and Saudi Arabia - after the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia Prince Saud al-Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to Uzbekistan in February 1992, and the visit of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov to Saudi Arabia in April of the same year, the Consulate of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Jeddah in November 1992, in May, the embassy was opened in Riyadh, and on March 27, 1997, the embassy of Saudi Arabia was opened in Tashkent. In November 1995, during the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Saudi Arabia, an agreement was signed between Uzbekistan and Saudi Arabia on cooperation in the fields of trade, economy, investments, technology, culture, sports and youth affairs.

The current warmth in Arab-Uzbek relations is not a new phenomenon. After all, relations between Saudi Arabia and Uzbekistan existed even in the 90s of the last century. The current situation is more about continuing to build mutually beneficial and pragmatic relations with the Arab world in new conditions and accelerating the process.

During his visit to Uzbekistan on January 25, 2021, the Minister of Investments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Khalid al-Falih, referring to contracts in the energy sector, stated that "these contracts will start a new stage of bilateral investment cooperation." Indeed, in recent years, the main investments of Saudi Arabia have been directed to the country's energy sector. We can see that the most investments are directed to the energy sector in the first place, followed by agriculture, healthcare, science and education.

Since 2020, ACWA Power, one of the leading companies in Saudi Arabia, has been one of the foreign investors investing the most in the energy market of Uzbekistan. ACWA Power, the largest company in the Middle East region, specializes in the construction, design, financing and operation of power plants, as well as industrial facilities for water desalination. The company operates internationally in 12 countries in the Middle East, Africa, Central and Southeast Asia. In recent years, he has begun to implement large projects in Central Asia, especially in Uzbekistan.

Our observations show that Saudi Arabia has really been trying to expand its presence in Uzbekistan's business environment in recent years. But in many cases, it covers only some areas. That is, as analyzed above, cooperation is limited to the energy sector. On the basis of the involvement of the rural population and the strata in need of social protection in the production process of Saudi Arabia and the organization of the subsequent delivery of agricultural products abroad, Uzbekistan-Saudi Arabia has been established in the field of agriculture, poultry and animal husbandry of Uzbekistan. has great interest in establishing joint ventures and expects specific programs to be developed in this regard.

In conclusion, we can say that today the Republic of Uzbekistan is paying great attention to establishing relations with all the countries located in the Middle East region.

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