



*"LEADING KNOWLEDGE CENTER PROMOTING ECONOMIC COOPERATION
IN THE CAREC REGION FOR SHARED AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"*

Weekly Newsletter

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ABOUT CAREC INSTITUTE

CAREC Institute is an intergovernmental organization contributing to the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program through knowledge generation and capacity building.

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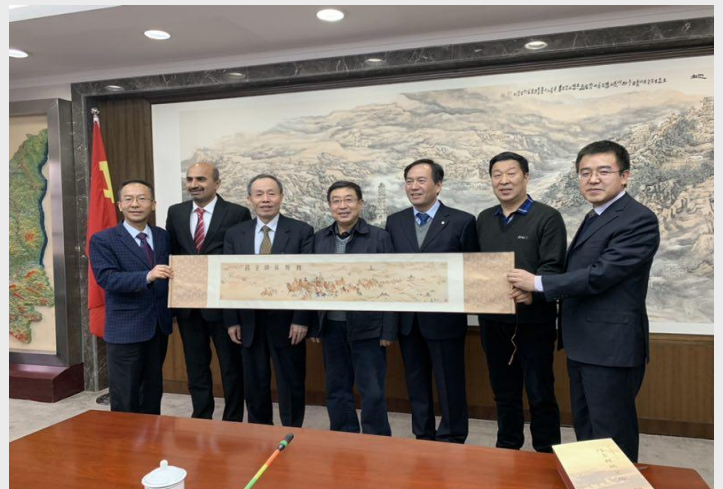
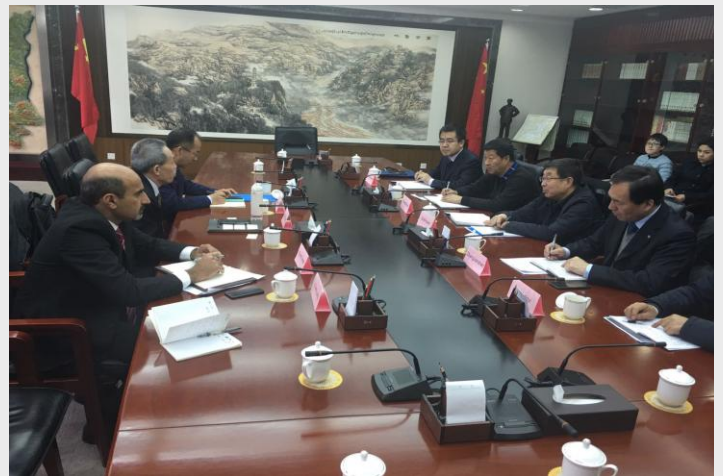
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Visit to Shaanxi province for 4th think-tank forum

CI team visited Shaanxi province on February 25th to 27th, 2019. They had a meeting with government of Shaanxi province and Financial department of Xi'an to seek collaboration for organizing 4th think tank forum. DDI introduced the background and purpose of think tank forum, and expressed the wish to hold CI think tank forum in Xi'an in tandem with Euro-Asia Forum. Government of Shaanxi province and Financial department of Xi'an expressed their willingness to cooperate with CI and agreed to provide full support during the forum. Mr. Khaild, Head of strategic planning and Mr. Dang Haieping, Head of administration also attended the meeting along with the scribe.

Quarterly meeting video conference in PRCM(Beijing) on March 14,2019

Director and DDI together with other CI staff attended video conference meet with ADB headquarter at PRCM in Beijing on march 14th, 2019. The meeting discussed 6 agenda items of regarding follow up on GC meeting decisions, staffing and recruitment, status of TA utilization for 2019, Institutional capacity, policy research fellowship and exchange visit.





AFGHANISTAN (2017)

Area: 652,9 thousand km²

Population: 35.53 million

GDP: US\$20.82 billion

GDP per capita: US\$586

National currency: Afghani (AFN)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 75.4 AFN



US\$0.8 billion; India, Pakistan



fruits and nuts, carpets, wool, cotton, hides and pelts, precious and semi-precious gems, and medical herbs



US\$7.1 billion; China, Iran, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan



machinery and other capital goods, food, textiles, petroleum products

Afghan's nine transit goods vessels dock in Chabahar port

Iran's Director General of Sistan and Baluchistan province Ports and Maritime Organization Behrouz Aqaei said that nine transit goods vessels of Afghanistan took a berth in Chabahar port in the past year (ended March 20, 2018). [Read more](#)

Cost of transporting Afghan goods to India increases as Pakistan closes airspace

Afghan traders are paying higher prices for transporting their goods to India, after Pakistan closed its airspace to commercial flights due to tensions with India, officials said Saturday. [Read more](#)

Asian Development Bank hands over completed geo-portal to Afghan government

According to a statement by ADB, the portal, launched in March 2018, provides accurate and comprehensive geospatial data from a central information system hosted in the country.

The statement further added that the handover ceremony was attended by ADB Principal Country Specialist Mr. Renadi Budiman, Deputy Director General of the National Statistics Information Authority Mr. Noorullah Stanikzai, and around 35 participants from various line ministries. [Read more](#)

Tajikistan eyes to increase electricity export to Afghanistan

At the peak of electricity production (spring-summer season), Tajikistan may offer Afghanistan and Uzbekistan more electricity than was supplied last year. Preliminary negotiations on this issue with the energy industry officials of neighboring countries will be held in the first quarter this year. [Read more](#)



AZERBAIJAN (2017)

Area: 86,6 thousand km²

Population: 9.8 million

GDP: US\$40.8 billion

GDP per capita: US\$4132

National currency: Azerbaijan manat (AZN)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 1.7 AZN



US\$15.2 billion; Italy, Turkey, Israel, Russia, Germany, Georgia



oil and gas roughly 90%, machinery, foodstuffs, cotton



US\$9.0 billion; Russia, Turkey, China, US, Ukraine, Germany



machinery and equipment, foodstuffs, metals, chemicals

Central Bank of Azerbaijan to put notes up for sale

An auction will be held at the Baku Stock Exchange (BSE) for placing short-term notes of the Central Bank of Azerbaijan for 300 million manats on March 19, 2019, Trend reports referring to the BSE.

Some 3 million securities with par value of 100 manats each, and a circulation period of 29 days, will be put up for auction. The maturity date of the notes is April 17, 2019. [Read more](#)

Minister: Venezuela looking for new oil markets

Venezuela is looking for new markets for oil, Minister of Oil and President of the State Oil Company of Venezuela Manuel Quevedo Fernandez told reporters on the sidelines of the 13th meeting of the OPEC/non-OPEC Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) in Baku, Trend reports March 18. [Read more](#)

Kazakhstan may start supplying additional volumes of oil, LNG through Azerbaijan

- Kazakhstan can start supplying additional volumes of oil and liquefied natural gas through the territory of Azerbaijan to world markets, Trend reports citing the Ministry of Energy of Azerbaijan.
- This issue was discussed by the Minister of Energy of Azerbaijan Parviz Shahbazov and the Minister of Energy of Kazakhstan Kanat Bozumbayev. The meeting was held on the eve of the meeting of the Monitoring Committee of OPEC Ministers and non-cartel countries to be held in Baku on March 18.
- Minister Bozumbayev shared his thoughts on the development of the Kashagan, Tengiz and other fields, as well as routes that are being considered to supply additional volumes of Kazakh oil to world markets. [Read more](#)



CHINA (2017)

Area: 9,6 million km²

Population: 1.41 billion

GDP: US\$12237.7 billion

GDP per capita: US\$8823

National currency: Yuan Renminbi (CNY)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 6.72 CNY



US\$2216.5 billion; US, Japan, S.Korea



electrical and other machinery, including computers and telecommunications equipment, apparel, furniture, textiles



US\$1.7 billion; S.Korea, Japan, US, Germany, Australia



electrical and machinery, including computer components, oil and mineral fuels; optical and medical equipment, metal ores, motor vehicles; soybeans

China eyes multiple measures to improve foreign trade in 2019

China will take an array of measures to support foreign trade this year amid increased uncertainty, a senior official said Monday.

The country's foreign trade development is facing a more complicated and severe environment with greater uncertainty and more risks and challenges, Assistant Commerce Minister Ren Hongbin told a national conference on imports and exports. [Read more](#)

China Securities Co reports profits

down over 20%

China Securities Co said on Tuesday that its net profits fell 23.11 percent year-on-year to 3.09 billion yuan (\$461 million) in 2018, largely due to its sluggish wealth-management sector.

In its first annual report filed to the Shanghai Stock Exchange, the brokerage said its revenues decreased 3.5 percent from a year earlier to 10.9 billion yuan.

Total assets amounted to about 195 billion yuan at the end last year, down 5.25 percent from the end of 2017.

The brokerage's wealth-management operation saw drastic year-on-year declines, with revenues falling to 3.62 billion yuan. [Read more](#)



Georgia to increase import of Azerbaijani gas

The two most important strategic segments of the gas market of Georgia - the population and the production of electricity, are fully provided and will be provided by Azerbaijani gas, Georgian Deputy Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, Natia Turnava said at a briefing on March 12 Trend reports with reference to Sputnik Georgia. [Read more](#)

Turkmenistan, Georgia ready to expand exports, imports

Turkmen deputy prime minister and foreign minister Rashid Meredov met with Georgian Foreign Minister David Zalkaliani in Bucharest, Romania, Trend reports with reference to the Turkmen Foreign Ministry.

The parties discussed the prospects for partnership in the trade and economic sphere and drew attention to the potential for expanding export-import operations, the report said.

In this regard, an agreement was reached on holding regular meetings of the intergovernmental Turkmen-Georgian commission for economic cooperation in the near future. [Read more](#)

Georgia's economy grows 5.6% in December 2018

Georgia's economy is growing steadily, show the latest data from the National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat), Trend reports referring to Agenda.ge.

The estimated real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate in December 2018 equaled 5.6% year-on-year (y/y), while the real GDP average growth amounted 4.8% for 2018 y/y.

Last month the estimated real growth, compared to the same period of the previous year, was posted in the following activities: manufacturing, construction, hotels and restaurants, real estate, renting and business activities. [Read more](#)

GEORGIA (2017)

Area: 69,7thousand km²

Population: 3.9million

GDP: US\$15.2 billion

GDP per capita: US\$4078

National currency: Lari (GEL)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 2.7GEL



US\$3.6 billion; Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Armenia, China, Bulgaria, Ukraine, US



vehicles, ferro-alloys, fertilizers, nuts, scrap metal, gold, copper ores



US\$7.4 billion; Turkey, Russia, China, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Germany



fuels, vehicles, machinery and parts, grain and other foods, pharmaceuticals



KAZAKHSTAN (2017)

Area: 2,72million km²

Population: 18.2 million

GDP: US\$159.4 billion

GDP per capita: US\$8837.5

National currency: Tenge (KZT)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 380.0KZT



US\$49.3 billion; Italy, China, Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, France



oil and oil products, natural gas, ferrous metals, chemicals, machinery, grain, wool, meat, coal



US\$31.9 billion; Russia, China, Germany, US



machinery and equipment, metal products, foodstuffs

Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan ratify agreement in energy field

Senators of Kazakhstan reviewed and approved the ratification of an intergovernmental agreement with Uzbekistan on some issues of cooperation in the energy sector, Trend reports via Russian media.

The agreement is aimed at stimulating cooperation in the oil and gas sector, petrochemical and electric power industry, uninterrupted supply of natural gas to the southern regions of Kazakhstan, as well as mutual interest of the parties in developing the transit potential of gas transportation system.

Uzbek side is interested in supplying Kazakh oil in the amount of up to 2 million tons per year. The Uzbek side guarantees the timely completion of the construction of the oil transportation and oil refining infrastructure in Uzbekistan to ensure receipt of the planned volumes of oil. [Read more](#)

Kazakhstan investment development fund established

- Kazakhstan has established Kazakhstan Investment Development Fund, Trend reports via Kazakh media.

At the presentation of amendments to the republican budget in the Parliament, Vice-Minister of Finance Tatyana Savelyeva said that 370 billion tenge was provided for the creation of the Fund through the allocation of a targeted transfer from Kazakhstan National Fund.

She noted that the new Fund is created for the implementation of major breakthrough projects in the non-primary sector on the principle of co-investment with foreign investors. Kazakhstan plans attraction of foreign direct investment in the manufacturing industry, agro-industrial complex, innovation sector and infrastructure development (energy, transport, logistics and tourism) [Read more](#)



KYRGYZ REPUBLIC (2017)

Area: 199,9thousand km²

Population: 6.1 million

GDP: US\$7.6 billion

GDP per capita: US\$1219.8

National currency: Som (KGS)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 69.5KGS



US\$1.8 billion; Switzerland, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Russia, UK



gold, cotton, wool, garments, meat; mercury, uranium, electricity; machinery, shoes



US\$4.2 billion; China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, US



oil and gas, machinery and equipment, chemicals, foodstuffs

Kyrgyzstan intends to accelerate project of Turkmen gas transit to China

Kyrgyzstan will have to step up work on the construction of the Turkmenistan-Kyrgyzstan-China gas pipeline, Trend reports referring to the statement by Kyrgyz President Sooronbai Jeenbekov, published by the Kyrgyz presidential administration's press service.

"It is of great importance to use all the capabilities of Turkmenistan in the fields of fuel and energy, as well as the field of investment," as stated by the president.

It was reported earlier that the construction of the 4th branch "D" of the Turkmenistan-China gas pipeline via Kyrgyzstan is scheduled to commence by late 2019. The State Committee for Industry, Energy and Subsoil Use of Kyrgyzstan reported that, with an estimated cost of \$1.2 billion over this segment of the pipeline, the project will have a 3-year implementation period. [Read more](#)

President of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan discuss border situation

Presidents of Kyrgyzstan Sooronbai Jeenbekov and Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon discussed the situation on Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border by telephone, Trend reports referring to the Information Policy Department of the Presidential Administration of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The heads of the two states noted the need to create a joint commission to objectively investigate and prevent similar situations in the future, as well as to intensify negotiations on completion of the process of delimitation of the state border. [Read more](#)

Kyrgyzstan's GDP exceeds 63 bln soms over 2 months

The gross domestic product of Kyrgyzstan for the first two months of this year exceed 63 billion soms, the National Statistics committee reported on the preliminary calculations of the macroeconomic indicator, trend report referring to [kabar.kg](#). [Read more](#)



MONGOLIA (2017)

Area: 1,56 million km²

Population: 3.1 million

GDP: US\$11.5 billion

GDP per capita: US\$3735.2

National currency: Tugrik (MNT)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 2660.0MNT



US\$5.8 billion; China, UK



copper, apparel, livestock, animal products, cashmere, wool, hides, fluorspar, other nonferrous metals, coal, crude oil



US\$4.3 billion; China, Russia, Japan, US, S.Korea



machinery and equipment, fuel, cars, food products, industrial consumer goods, chemicals, building materials, cigarettes and tobacco, appliances, soap and detergent

Mongolia's economic watch

- Mongolian engineers earned MNT 11 billion from aircraft maintenance: The department repaired 12 foreign airplanes last year. Heavy maintenance service per aircraft lasts 10-14 days, receiving revenue of about USD 250-500 thousand;
- Cooperation with international organizations in agriculture to be tightened: The projects focus on the increase of domestic production of wheat, vegetables and fruits, creation of jobs and capacity building in the sector;
- E-catalogue for promoting export released: The catalogue is designated for encouraging Mongolian exporters in entering new market, promoting their products and services and expanding the business, and linking them with foreign partners. The e-catalogue presents products and services of over 100 Mongolian entities in nine categories;
- Wooden materials to be exempt from import duties: The Law on Customs Duty Exemption approved on May 10, 2018 took effect from January 1, 2019. The law specifies that all types of imported fuel wood, oriented standard boards and wooden building materials except logs will be exempt from customs duties;
- Over 1 million passengers carried on international flights: The Civil Aviation Authority of Mongolia (MCAA) reports that record-breaking 1.2 million passengers were carried on international flights to and from Mongolia this past year and as 36 percent of the passengers for international flights are flying to and from South Korea;

Bank of Mongolia (BoM) purchased a total of 22 tons of gold. Compared with the same period of the previous year, the amount of purchased gold increased by 9.5 percent;

- On December 31, 2018, 117,499,858 shares of 23 firms listed as Tier I, II, and III were traded. 20 companies' shares increased in price while those of 3 companies decreased;
- TTPP Power Source Framework Agreement signed: On December 31, the Government of Mongolia and OyuTolgoi LLC signed the Power Source Framework Agreement (PSFA), which sets out the pathway for OyuTolgoi (OT) to construct the TavanTolgoi Power Project (TTPP) and secures a long-term domestic power solution for OT and the wider South Gobi region;
- Renewed MNT 5000 banknotes to be put into circulation next year: Bank of Mongolia (BoM) aims to upgrade level one security features of MNT 5,000, 10,000 and 20,000 banknotes as these are the most counterfeited currencies in Mongolia. The renewed MNT 5,000 banknotes will have 3D rainbow effect security feature on the Soyombo emblem on the front of the banknote. Thus, it will be easier to identify genuine and fake notes with unaided eyes;
- Mongolia counts 66.4 million head of livestock: the highest number of total livestock population has been counted in Khuvsgulaimag with 5709.9 thousand, while the runner-up was Arkhangaiimag with 5481.1 thousand. [Read more at Montsame News Agency...](#)



PAKISTAN (2017)

Area: 796,1 thousand km²

Population: 197.0 million

GDP: US\$305.0 billion

GDP per capita: US\$1547.9

National currency: Pakistan Rupee (PKR)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 139.0 PKR



US\$23.2 billion; US, UK, China, Germany, Afghanistan, UAE, Spain

textiles (garments, bed linen, cotton cloth, yarn), rice, leather goods, sporting goods, chemicals, manufactures, surgical instruments, carpets and rugs



US\$53.1 billion; China, UAE, US, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia

petroleum, petroleum products, machinery, plastics, transportation equipment, edible oils, paper and paperboard, iron and steel, tea



ADB supports Pakistan in accelerating urban project with new financing instrument

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved UD \$9 million in project readiness financing (PRF) to support the preparation and design of urban sector projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), which will support the Government of Pakistan in accelerating the delivery of critical infrastructure in the rapidly urbanizing province

This is the first project approved under the PRF in Central and West Asia, which is part of a set of new financing instruments approved by ADB's Board of Directors to help deliver projects in a faster and more responsive manner, says a statement issued by ADB on Tuesday. [Read more](#)

Tajikistan intends to enhance trade volume with Pakistan

Tajikistani investors and business community will take advantage of package of incentives offered to foreign investors by Prime Minister Imran Khan and this would help both the countries to take bilateral trade to \$500 million per annum.

A 18-member high-level Tajikistan delegation of investors and businessmen led by Chairman Union of Private Sector Development of Tajikistan Radzhabov Fayzali Kurbonalievich called on Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Chief Executive Mian Kashif Ashfaq on Monday at PFC headquarter," says a press release issued here on Monday. Speaking on the occasion leader of the delegation said Tajikistan was keen to promote bilateral trade with Pakistan as both countries have huge potential to enhance trade, joint ventures and investment in different fields. [Read more](#)



TAJIKISTAN (2017)

Area: 142,6 thousand km²

Population: 8.9 million

GDP: US\$7.2 billion

GDP per capita: US\$801.0

National currency: Somoni (TJS)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 9.42TJS



US\$0.9 billion; Turkey, China, Russia, Switzerland, Algeria, Iran



aluminum, electricity, cotton, fruits, vegetable oil, textiles



US\$2.4 billion; Russia, Kazakhstan, China, Iran



petroleum products, aluminum oxide, machinery and equipment, foodstuffs

Which sectors of Tajikistan's economy most promising for investments?

Tajikistan's government has singled out a number of prospect sectors of the country's economy for attracting investments, namely, hydropower industry; agriculture and processing of agricultural products; mining and chemical industry; light industry; transport; financial sector;

Tourism, Trend reports referring to Tajinvest state unitary enterprise.

More than 70 investment incentives are provided for the creation of a favorable investment environment, as well as attracting investments in the country by legislative and regulatory acts in the Republic of Tajikistan. Investment incentives are divided into fiscal (such as tax rebates) and non-fiscal incentives (such as grants, soft credits, measures to improve the business environment). [Read more](#)

ADB to finance development of Central Asian railways

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a grant of \$2 million for the development of railways in the countries of Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC).

ADB Senior Transport Specialist Jurgen Sluijter noted that rail transport should be the preferred mode of trade in the region, but it is still difficult for railways to compete with road transport. [Read more](#)

Sound and significant policies should ensure food safety in Tajikistan

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the European Union (EU) have joined efforts to help developing national food safety strategy in Tajikistan, Trend reports referring to [news.tj](#).

Developing an effective food safety strategy is a key element to ensure safe food supplies for local, regional and international trade. The establishment of relevant and enforceable food safety policies and regulations is a pivotal component of effective food safety systems. [Read more](#)



TURKMENISTAN (2017)

Area: 488,1 thousand km²

Population: 5.8 million

GDP: US\$42.4 billion

GDP per capita: US\$7355.8

National currency: Turkmenistan manat (TMT)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 3.5TMT

	US\$7.8 billion; China, Turkey
	gas, crude oil, petrochemicals, textiles, cotton fiber
	US\$10.2 billion; Turkey, Algeria, Germany, China, Russia, US
	machinery and equipment, chemicals, foodstuffs

Turkmenistan preparing for participation in world Expo 2020

Work is underway to organize the pavilion of Turkmenistan at World Expo 2020 in Dubai, UAE, Trend reports referring to the local Altyn Asyr TV channel.

An international tender was held by the Turkmen Ministry of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations, following which a project proposal made by Tekmil, a local private enterprise, was selected. [Read more](#)

Turkmenistan, Pakistan ink main agreement on TAPI

A Host Government Agreement (HGA) was signed in Islamabad, which encompasses the main terms of an agreement with Pakistan on the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline construction project, Trend reports March 13 with reference to the Turkmen Foreign Ministry March 13.

The HGA was signed by Pakistani Additional Secretary In-charge of the Petroleum Division Mian Asad Hayauddin and general director, chairman of the board of TAPI Pipeline Company Ltd. Muhammetmyrat Amanov, according to Pakistani media. [Read more](#)

Turkmenistan publishes data on state budget execution

As per the results for January-February 2019, the revenue part of the state budget was executed at the level of 2.65 billion manats, and the expenditure part at 2.55 billion manats, Trend reports referring to the Turkmen government. The Turkmen Parliament of the 6th convocation adopted the draft law "On the state budget of Turkmenistan for 2019". In general, the revenues and expenditures of the state budget in 2019 are both in the amount of 8.3868.3 million manats. The official exchange rate of the Turkmenistan manat to \$1 from January 2015 remains at the level of 3.50 Turkmen manats. [Read more](#)



UZBEKISTAN (2017)

Area: 448,9 thousand km²

Population: 31.9 million

GDP: US\$48.72 billion

GDP per capita: US\$1504.2

National currency: Uzbekistan Sum (UZS)

Exchange rate (per US\$): 8280.0Sum



US\$14.0 billion; China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Afghanistan



machinery, automobiles, energy products, cotton, gold, mineral fertilizers, ferrous and nonferrous metals, textiles, foodstuffs



US\$13.0 billion; China, Russia, S.Korea, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Germany



machinery and equipment, chemicals, foodstuffs, ferrous and nonferrous metals

Uzbek authorities prepare memorandum on foreign trade regime for WTO accession

Authorities of Uzbekistan have prepared a memorandum on the foreign trade regime for accession into the World Trade Organization (WTO), Trend reports with reference to the press service of Uzbek Ministry of Investment and Foreign Trade.

The document was reviewed and approved at the first meeting of the interdepartmental commission of Uzbekistan on cooperation with the WTO.

In late November 2017, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev said that the country resumed work on joining the organization. Earlier, Deputy Director General of the WTO, Alan Wolff, said that the process of country's accession would take about one or two years. [Read more](#)

Economic cooperation issues are discussed

Issues of cooperation between the two countries in the economy, health, agro-industry were discussed at the meeting. Implementation of agreements reached during the state visit to Uzbekistan of the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in October 2018 was also considered.

Economic cooperation of the two countries is developing at a new stage. Last year, the trade turnover between Uzbekistan and Russia grew by 20 percent and amounted to almost 6 billion USD. The trade turnover in January-February this year reached 877 million USD, and the exports volume increased by 70 percent. [Read more](#)

Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan will hold the first Business Council Meeting

On March 6, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan hosted a meeting of the Ambassador of Uzbekistan Akmaljon Kuchkarov with the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Orazmyrat Gurbannazarov, during which issues of further enhancing Uzbekistan – Turkmenistan cooperation in trade-economic sphere were discussed. [Read more](#)