



CENTRAL ASIAN REGIONAL COOPERATION GENEALOGY AND MAIN PROBLEMS: LESSONS FROM EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

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1. EU interests in Central Asia: goals and milestones

The Central Asian region has long been the focus of attention of Western and Eastern countries, because it has an important geopolitical and geo-economic position, and it has been a bridge connecting Asian and European countries. Centuries ago, the Great Silk Road provided the passage from China and India to Europe. Today, the countries of the region, like other countries in the world, are taking steps to restore their historical heritage. According to Khosiyat Kamilova, a leading expert at the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of Tajikistan, “The goal for the Central Asian countries is clear: the restoration of ties between Europe and Asia along the Great Silk Road will serve to restore their economic potential.” [1]

The interest of the world’s big powerful countries in the Central Asian region is growing at the same time since there is a large amount of oil and gas reserves here,

ABSTRACT

The article discusses the genesis and key issues of regional cooperation in Central Asia, and also takes into account the experience of the European Union. It is emphasized that Central Asia is a unique region that can benefit from the experience of European integration, since Central Asia is now in the pre-European integration process.

first of all. **Secondly**, the countries of the region have an important strategic position on the Eurasian continent. Until recently, the most influential players in Central Asia were Russia, the United States and China, but more recently, the European Union has also begun to take a special interest in the region. An analysis of the literature on the subject shows that since the 1990s, the European Union has been pursuing a policy of expanding its strategic influence to new Central Asian states.

The Deputy Director of the European Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor Mikhail Nosov particularly noted that “the European Union has extensive experience in cooperating with young countries that have gained independence. If before most of such states, whether they were African, Arab or Asian countries, were once a colony of the West and were under the multifaceted influence of the European Union. In contrast, the Central Asian states



were republics that were part of the Soviet Union until 1991. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the loss of Moscow's economic and political influence in the region created a certain political vacuum, which has not gone unnoticed by the West and, in particular, by the European Union's policy of strengthening its position here." [2] This is evidenced by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini in an interview with "Gazeta.uz" on November 20, 2017: "The EU's relationship with Central Asia is built to compete with other countries and forces, our efforts are only aimed at improving the living standards of the people living in the region." [3]

In addition to the aforementioned names M.G.Nosov and H.G.Kamilova, the information about this point written in the scientific works of Professor of St. Petersburg State University N.V. Eremina [4], Expert of the Institute of World Economy under the Foundation of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan G. Tulebergenova [5], G.I. Akkazieva, a postgraduate student at the Moscow State University of International Relations under the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [6], Zaynab Muhammad-Dost, a young researcher working in London [7] and others have allowed us to divide the EU's transition from a traditional "observer" role to an "active participant" role in Central Asia into the following 4 periods on a regional scale.

The first period covers the period 1991-1995. During this period, the European Union dealt with the stabilization of the domestic political situation in the Central Asian republics; creating and marketing a diverse framework for democratic innovation and European ethics and

economic assistance in the process of establishing foreign economic relations.

While speaking about this period, it should be noted that the above mentioned goals have been achieved through financing through intergovernmental agreements in the form of interest-free loans or credits in various fields.

In addition to financial assistance, domestic political situation has been observed by the EU and international European organizations (OSCE, European Parliament, European Commission, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Council of Europe, etc.).

The second period (1996-2000) can be called as a period of despair for the EU countries. The Central Asian republics could not come closer to the European standards of market economy and democracy of the European Union during this period.

Moreover, Western democratic standards have made it possible to begin the process of religious awakening in the CA countries, in many ways this has led to anti-government protests in the republics of the region. *(It is worth mentioning events organized by Islam militants on February 16, 1999 in Tashkent, November in Yangiabad district of Tashkent region, Terrorist attacks in Sariosiya in 2000, as well as, the events of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan in this period).*

It is no secret that Central Asian countries were a source of tension and instability during this period, the scale and unpredictable consequences of such instability have only halted EU programs, but also caused certain cold relationships.

The third period (2001-2004) can be called as an attempt to restart its programs aimed at achieving three main goals by the



European Union. They are measures to form and develop a democratic society in the Central Asian republics; implementation of a set of measures aimed at stabilizing the domestic political situation and financial support of the republics of the region.

However, to achieve the third goal, it should not be forgotten that it is aimed at solving economic problems. Because, Europe's economic interests are in the development of the region's energy and mineral resources. It should also be noted that, following the events of September 11, 2001 in the United States, the European Union radically reconsidered its policy towards the countries of the Central Asian region, which was an event aimed at strengthening regional cooperation.

The fourth period we are witnessing now aims to strengthen and expand the EU's position in Central Asia. Today, the EU's view for the future of Central Asia has already based on the region as an area able standing against drug trafficking, a region that can prevent illegal migration and religious extremism.

The formation of an independent security system of the European Union is also important for the Central Asian states, because the growing military role and responsibility of the European Union to some extent predetermines the prospects for cooperation between the West and the East.

2. History of integration within Central Asia

One of the effective examples of how integration contributes to development is cooperation within the European Union. "If Central Asia wants comprehensive economic and social development, it must study the lessons of European integration,

writes independent researcher Zaynab Muhammad-Dost. This will allow the two regions to develop a parallel regional cooperation strategy based on some similarities in the history of integration processes".[7] We think Europe also would have contributed to the development of regional mechanisms of CA as a result. Initiative and Exchange of Experience in the framework of the interregional cooperation "EU-Central Asia" contribute to the development of integration processes in Central Asia.

It is known that the Central Asian states are a region with ethnic, historical, religious and cultural roots, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. It is no coincidence that the Central Asian states have shown great interest in the idea of creating a regional community in the early 1990s, after the declaration of their independence.

As for integration within Central Asia, it is distinguished by its distinctive features. According to A. Yusupov, a senior researcher of Tashkent State University of Economics, the main basis for the integration of Central Asian countries was the meeting of the leaders of Kazakhstan and Central Asia in Almaty in 1990 due to the agreement named "On creating the necessary conditions for the introduction of a mechanism for the integration of national economies within the renewed Union". On August 14, 1991, an agreement was signed in Tashkent to establish an Inter-Republican Consultative Council to find common solutions to common problems of national economic importance. However, due to the disintegration of the USSR and the formation of new independent states, it was not practically possible to develop this organization [8].



An agreement between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan (later Kyrgyzstan) on the establishment of the Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC) was signed in Tashkent in January 1994. These countries began to implement projects aimed at deepening economic integration in Central Asia from that very time.[9]

It is necessary to mention that these initiatives, which took place in the recent history of Central Asia, are of great importance. The Intergovernmental Council, the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Council of Defense Ministers and the Peacekeeping Battalion – Centrazbat were established under the Central Asian Union. The Central Asian Bank for Cooperation and Development was established with an initial capital of 9\$ million. [7] The parties even planned to form a Central Asian parliament. Prime ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan signed a five-year plan for economic integration in April 1995 in Bishkek. In December 1997 the presidents of the countries signed a protocol on the establishment of an international consortium on energy, water resources, food, minerals and raw materials in Astana. The ministers of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan discussed key issues of water distribution, ecology, migration policy and economic development in 1998. Tajikistan joined the group in 1998, after which the countries signed an agreement to establish a hydropower consortium and agreed on common principles for creating a single market.[8] If we look through the dynamics of the meetings of the heads of the CA states, that the then we can see Central Asian Union was more effective than the CIS mechanisms, and that they developed inter-ethnic coordination structures very

well. It should be noted that Saparmurat Niyazov, the first president of the Republic of Turkmenistan, who did not join the initiative due to the declaration of the country neutrality, stated the necessity of creation of a confederation of five Central Asian republics.[7]

If we look at history, we can see that integration processes, which have a positive beginning, went much slower in later years. As a result of distrust between countries and their leaders, and undermining each other, the Central Asian Union transformed into the Central Asian Economic Community, later transformed into the Central Asian Cooperation Organization. At the initiative of Uzbekistan, Russia was invited to the organization in May 2004. Later, this organization became a full-fledged member of the Eurasian Economic Community, (EuroAzES) went into the composition. According to A.Yusupov, most of the agreements reached remained unfulfilled. The parties refused to implement the signed intergovernmental documents for various political and other reasons or allowed delays in the implementation of its mechanisms. Such cases are not only in the context of Central Asian integration, but also in the framework of the Eurasian Economic Community, established in October 2000 by five CIS countries - Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan was also observed several times. [8].

3. Integration process: Comparative analysis with the EU

Exact economic cooperation, then the unification of Europe allowed the countries devastated by World War II to re-build as powerful states of the world. The geostrategic position of Central Asia



deprives it of access to the sea, the availability of valuable natural resources is not eternal, and the fact that it is located in the heart of Eurasia requires the region to unite so that it does not remain on the sidelines of world politics. Ernst Haas, the founder of the theory of neo-functionalism and European integration, had pointed out that Central Asia was a unique region to benefit from the European integration experience. In his opinion, Central Asia now has the characteristics of pre-European integration [10].

First, attention must be paid to the historical, ethnic and cultural unity of the peoples of Central Asia. The population of Central Asia includes people of Turkic-Mongol and Iranian descent. The main ethnic groups are Uzbek, Kazakh, Karakalpak, Kyrgyz, Turkmen, Tajik and others. For centuries, Turks lived alongside Iranians, Persian and Turkic languages were used in the palaces of rulers, and the population was often mixed. Despite some differences in dress and appearance, all the peoples of the region have a common culture, the origins of which lie not only in Islamic traditions but also in pre-Islamic traditions. To prove it, it is no coincidence that the Jadids called themselves as supporters of the united Turkestan movement and distinguish the people of the region as a separate community. The idea of European unification had been suggested by Prince Richard Kalergi of Austria long before the emergence of the European Union, in the 18th century, which appeared in the 1920s in the pamphlet of the French politician Aristide Bryan. [7] Europe experienced two world wars to realize this idea. In the example of Central Asia, unification is natural because of the similarity and interdependence of the

cultures and customs of the peoples, which was manifested by the integration initiatives of the independent republics. The advantage of Central Asia is that mutual interest in resolving conflicts, as well as existing economic ties between the countries, that is, there are more favorable conditions for integration than in Europe, where interdependence is destroyed by wars.

Second, as in pre-integration Europe, Central Asian countries have important economic sectors and resources related to economic activity. European integration solves tensions over coal and steel, European transport sector, then trade, began to integrate agriculture and other sectors. The current problem in Central Asia is water use and energy supply, regional cooperation initiatives are aimed at this goal. Thus, if the countries of the region can mutually recognize that water is a common source and solve the problem of water use, we can automatically agree on the power supply. If the transport sector is merged, it will force us to cooperate in trade and customs policy.

Third, the presence of similar external and internal threats. This includes not only geopolitical competition between forces and the interests of dominating this energy-rich region, but also transnational threats. Just as Europe was once united against communism, threats such as drug trafficking, terrorism and extremism for Central Asia, as well as a consensus on the ideology that feeds them. This is a security area, the will of the countries was united. According to analysts, An important result of the CAEC era was terrorism, political and religious extremism, there was an agreement to work together to combat transnational organized crime [11]. The



issue of making Central Asia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone may also belong to this idea, which is one of the important achievements of regional cooperation to date.

Fourth, nationalism often contradicts countries' aspirations for integration. Some aspects of European integration have found their confirmation here as well. The initial positive aspirations of the countries were halted due to the slowdown between the countries that did not want to give up their ambitions for independence. According to Leon Lindberg, another representative of neo-functionalism, "stress" can, in the worst case, lead to the reverse process, i.e., a state of stagnation. So, since the beginning of the 1960s, despite the agreement to establish a European Coal and Steel Community, that is, despite the existence of an interethnic mechanism, when European countries preferred to solve the coal problem in the 1960s, they pointed out some mistakes in the European project. Moreover, despite talking about mergers, EU members have also introduced non-tariff barriers to protect their economies from competition. Suffice it to recall that in 2000, as a manifestation of this process in Central Asia, Kazakhstan unilaterally renounced tariff and non-tariff regulation of trade in Central Asia.[12]

Fifth, The formation of Europe was accompanied by debates between supporters of the united region and Eurosceptics. Many called the idea of a united Europe a utopia and an unattainable goal. Nevertheless, the European Union was built under the influence of Eurosceptics. Due to the strong position of Euro-pessimists in the UK, the country withdrew from the European Union in a 2016 referendum. However, the UK's exit

does not mean the end of the European project. A similar situation with the idea of integration is observed in Central Asian countries, here a pessimistic mood prevails over the formation of a single team.

4. Central Asia. Key factors contributing to regional cooperation.

Being located at the crossroads of world trade routes, Central Asia has long been an important region in the interaction of cultures and civilizations since ancient times. The Great Silk Road (II century BC - XV century AD) as an international transport link not only trade routes between Asia and Europe, but also provided information-civilization dialogue between continents and countries, acting as a crossroads in the spread of new technologies and innovations, created favorable conditions for agricultural crops, agro-technologies, inter-civilizational and technological exchange, as well as cultural values.

The Central Asian states are united by a common understanding of the need to counter modern threats and challenges, and that this can only be achieved with the active participation of all states in the region. All this lays a solid foundation for strengthening regional cooperation and transforming Central Asia into a "zone of cooperation and development". At the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in recent years, relations with these countries have reached a new level in the field of international relations. A special resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on regional and international cooperation in Central Asia was adopted on June 22, 2018. Practical efforts to create and strengthen an atmosphere of friendship, good neighborliness and trust in the region have



been recognized by the international community, indicates widespread support. At the initiative of the President, the principle of “Central Asia - the main priority” has been put into practice in the foreign policy of Uzbekistan. Further strengthening friendly and mutually trusting relations with all our neighboring countries has become one of the main tasks. The open and friendly neighborhood policy being implemented created a healthy and friendly situation and favorable conditions for the development of mutually beneficial cooperation between our country and the Central Asian states and will soon create a completely new environment in our region.

The peoples of Central Asia are united by centuries-old fraternal ties, common history, spiritual and cultural values, similar language and mentality. In other words, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have always leaned on each other like the five fingers of one hand. The sustainable development and prosperous future of our peoples with a common historical heritage cannot be imagined in isolation.

It should be noted that, political dialogue and mutual trust have been strengthened in Central Asia in recent years as a result of the support of the leaders of neighboring countries. A system of consultative meetings of heads of the Central Asian states has been established. Consequently, the level of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the region has reached a new level. During 2017-2019, trade turnover with Central Asian countries increased by an average of more than 50% annually, reaching \$ 5.2 billion, in particular. According to the results of 2020, the total trade turnover of Uzbekistan with

Central Asian countries amounted to \$ 5 billion, despite the global pandemic. The share of Central Asian countries in the total foreign trade turnover of Uzbekistan, in particular, increased from 12.4% in 2019 to 13.6% in 2020. In the total foreign trade turnover of Uzbekistan in the region, the share of Kazakhstan was 61%, Kyrgyzstan - 18.2%, Turkmenistan - 10.6% and Tajikistan - 10.2%. [14]

Reaching \$6.3 billion, the trade turnover with Central Asian countries had comprised 15.1% of the total foreign trade turnover by the end of 2021. Foreign trade turnover of Uzbekistan with Kazakhstan amounted to 3910.5 million US dollars (including exports of \$1,172.1 million and imports of \$2,738.4 million), 952.6 million US dollars with Kyrgyzstan (exports \$ 791.1 million, imports \$161.5 million), with Turkmenistan 881.9 million US dollars (exports \$191.3 mln, imports \$690.6 mln.) and with Tajikistan 604.5 million US dollars (exports \$500.9 million, imports \$3.6 million) [15]. Therefore, in the implementation of foreign policy, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev called on all countries, first and foremost, it attaches priority to further strengthening friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation with neighboring countries.

These goals are reflected in the Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021. At present time such a well-thought-out, mutually beneficial and practical foreign policy, strengthening security, stability and good neighborliness around Uzbekistan, completion of delimitation and demarcation of state borders are being carried out within the seventh priority of the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026.



Historic steps have been taken in this direction during past such a short period of time, says expert Yu. Kutbitdinov from Uzbekistan. Acute problems such as border crossings and water use have been and are being solved. Borders have been opened, mutual interaction has gradually increased. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan started his first state visits to neighboring countries. Strategic partnerships have been established with Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Important documents on further deepening the strategic partnership with Kazakhstan were signed. As the Republic of Uzbekistan shares a common border with all Central Asian states, these efforts of the head of our country have had a positive impact on the environment in the entire region [16].

Consultation meeting of the leaders of Central Asian states is such a good noble initiative aimed at further strengthening the friendship between nations and neighborhood environment among the Central Asian republics. If we look at the history of this conference, we can see the implementation of the speech of our president at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly in 2017, where Shavkat Mirziyoyev stated: "located in the heart of Central Asia, Uzbekistan has directly interested in transforming the region into a region of stability, sustainable development and a good neighborhood. A peaceful, economically developed Central Asia is the most important goal and the main task we are striving for. Uzbekistan is a strong supporter of dialogue, practical cooperation and strengthening good neighborliness". the President of Uzbekistan announced the initiative to hold an informal meeting of Central Asian presidents in his speech.[17]

Uzbekistan is also interested in gradually expanding comprehensive relations with another Central Asian state Afghanistan. Uzbekistan is ready to take an active part in international efforts to resolve the Afghan problem, to develop and support bilateral and multilateral formats aimed at establishing peace and stability in Afghanistan, and is ready to make a real contribution to the Afghan-led peacekeeping efforts in this country.

Holding the Tashkent Conference on Afghanistan in 2018 at the initiative of President Sh. Mirziyoyev, the proposals put forward by the head of our state to resolve the Afghan conflict and involve it in regional economic projects have gained wide international recognition.

Conflicts are escalating as a result of the fight against ignorance in some parts of the world at present time. We are witnessing tragic processes such as hundreds of people have been killed, and thousands of people losing their homes and forced to leave their homelands as a result armed conflicts, based on national, religious and other socio-political factors especially in the Middle East.

The role of the "Uzbek factor" in the elimination these negative consequences, including initiatives of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the international conferences, such as the 72nd and 75th sessions of the UN General Assembly, at the high-level meetings of the CIS, SCO, and the meetings of the Central Asian leaders are playing an important role.

5. New EU Strategy for Central Asia: Prospects for 2022

Following the official announcement of the new EU Strategy for Central Asia (May 2019), some of the ideas of this organization were elaborated in a



statement by EU Special Representative for Central Asia Federica Mogherini in Bishkek in June of that year. In October 2019, Peter Burian, the Union's next representative after Mogherini, supported Uzbekistan's accession to the EAEU, even if the EAEU is seen as a "Russian project" and the United States opposes it. This means that it is possible speak about the formation of a new strategy of the EU aimed at cooperation with Russia and other regional players without conflict in Central Asia.

Nikita Mendkovich, an expert of the Russian Council on Foreign Affairs, states the most important changes in EU policy as follows:

1. A peaceful approach to the reconstruction of the political system of the region. To rely on current regional governments in order to provide development and security.
2. To show the CSTO EAEU, SCO and China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative, which were almost ignored in previous EU strategic documents, as subjects of regional policy.
3. In establishing relations with the CA member states, the EU cites such aspects as the rejection of projects that harm the interests of other states [18].

Central Asia is mentioned as a key region connecting East and West in the new EU strategy, which is linked to the concept of sustainability, which is the overall goal of the Union. Moreover, EU is continuing to advertise its status in Central Asia by calling the region as a "key partner" of the countries in solving problems connected with border control, environment, legal priority, and issues related to domestic reforms. The European Union recognizes the need to support young people and develop regional cooperation.

If we focus on areas of cooperation, they are the same as in the areas identified in previous strategies: transport, energy, digital networks that strengthen relations between countries, as well as cooperation between civil societies in countries. Apparently, EU officials still see the development of Central Asian states as a positive process of transition to a democratic model. At the very least, officials are so optimistic about the evolution of the region's states. Data analysis shows that, the EU strategy does not take into account the historical aspects, traditions, values, etc. of the Central Asian countries, for them it is a key factor in the idea of the development of states towards democracy and an open society.

Based on aforesaid, it is possible to note that The EU's new strategy for Central Asia is not new ideas, rather, it is a more in-depth and detailed explanation of the EU's tasks and activities in the region.

In our view, the EU will not carry out large-scale reforms in the region where Russia and China are active. In addition, it is clear that the EU is undermining its goals in the region, because of the involvement of Central Asian states in the historical Russia and China. It is no secret that Russia and China have made significant achievement in Central Asia. (It should be noted that in the trade turnover of Uzbekistan in 2021 alone, the share of the Russian Federation amounted to 5.7 billion US dollars, China - 5.6 billion US dollars, and they are estimated as major trading partners of these countries). Besides that, it should be taken into consideration that the gross domestic product of the CA countries depends on money transference from migrant workers in Russia.



The results of Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, which is a major problem of our time, will also affect the future. They should also be taken into account.

These issues will be discussed very seriously in the next meetings of the European Union with the Central Asian states. Because the main problem facing the EU is the lack of solidarity in the Central Asian region, the existence of certain conflicts between states (border, water and energy issues), economic problems and even political instability in some countries in the region and differing views on future cooperation. Taking the above mentioned factors into consideration, the EU needs to lead a balanced policy to implement its major projects in the region.

6 In what areas can Europe promote integration mechanisms in Central Asia?

The documents of the Council of Europe pay special attention to the development of transport, which hinders the integration of Central Asian states. The integration of transport networks will increase trade in the region and increase the attractiveness of Central Asia as a Eurasian transport bridge. According to Russian scientist Natalya Eryomina, the change of regional strategy of EU is closely connected with Brussels' reassessing its opportunities in Central Asia, in particular in relation to the EU-Asia Relations Program adopted by the EU in September 2018. The goal is to create a permanent land transport corridor between the countries of East and Southeast Asia and the European Union [4]. Moreover, controversial regional issues, including the issue of encouraging cooperation between countries on water use take an important position on the

agenda of European diplomats. Furthermore, the EU sponsors educational initiatives in Central Asian countries, is also involved in improving educational standards in the region, encouraging research and academic communication [11].

Another noteworthy aspect of the EU's assistance to the CA countries is the implementation of inter-regional cooperation on security issues.

Conclusion

The overall trade of EU with Central Asian countries remains low. Uzbekistan's trade turnover with the EU alone was only 3.9 billion US dollars in 2021 (9% of the total trade turnover), the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan mentions on its website [19]. Exports from the region to the European Union are mainly focused on several commodities, particularly oil, gas, metals, and cotton fiber. EU exports are dominated by machinery and transport equipment, as well as other manufactured products. These products account for more than half of the EU's exports to Central Asia.

In terms of integration, the modern Central Asian region has clear advantages over Europe, which was devastated by two wars. Integration and deeper cooperation will guarantee future protection of Central Asian countries from regional conflicts and wars that may manifest themselves for various reasons. This is primarily a mutually beneficial use of water, energy supply, logistics, trade and border protection.

Integration is a process that has had the greatest success for nations, but it takes time and political will as can be seen in the nearly 60-year history of the European Union. Today we have the opportunity to



draw conclusions from the European experience in Central Asia, and we should rely on the experience of the European Union in the development of integration initiatives, involving regional and foreign experts. If our countries strive for transparency, the attractiveness of the region for investors will increase significantly. Europe itself is also promoting certain regional programs to achieve these goals.

We believe that the European Union will have to identify the problems, difficulties and obstacles that hinder full dialogue with Central Asian states in the future. EU also needs to understand that competing with Russia and China in the region will do more harm than good to its position. So far, the Brussels strategy does not take into account differences between countries, which hinders the development of bilateral cooperation. However, it is likely that the EU's overall strategy, will continue to rely on a common position and common responsibilities. Brussels also continues to

prioritize its views on cooperation. puts political considerations above economic ones.

Central Asian states are important for the EU not only in terms of logistics but also in terms of addressing security issues at present time. These countries have the potential to serve as a platform for communication between the European Union and the vast region of Asia, so interest in them will not diminish further. Moreover, the EU is committed to working with the United States to ensure security, but will inevitably compete with Russia and China. No matter how the situation develops, it would be advisable for the EU to move to a "non-confrontational, non-confrontational" strategy in its relations with regional players.

It should also be noted that the current situation in Russian-Ukrainian relations also affects the EU's policy towards the CA countries, as noted above. This requires special attention and study ...

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