

《中国与乌兹别克斯坦签订100多亿协议》

Deals signed with one of first neighbors to back Belt and Road

Chinese and Uzbekistani enterprises signed agreements and deals of more than \$10 billion, just days before the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.

The deals were signed during Uzbekistani President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's first state visit to China, which began on Thursday, Assistant Foreign Minister Li Huilai said on Friday. Mirziyoyev will also attend the forum in Beijing on Sunday and Monday.

In his meeting with Mirziyoyev on Friday, President Xi Jinping said Uzbekistan is a close and important neighbor of China.

Xi said Uzbekistan was among the first countries to support and participate in the building of the Belt and Road Initiative.

The two countries have harvested achievements in their cooperation to build the initiative, and this has created a mainstream that leads bilateral cooperation, he said.

Xi added that China is ready to work with Uzbekistan to fully tap into the potential and push for new progress on cooperation in building the initiative.

He said the two sides should strengthen the synergy between their development strategies and jointly plan the priorities for directions, areas and programs of bilateral cooperation.

Additionally, they should fully tap into the potential for economic and trade cooperation, expand the scale of bilateral trade, optimize the trade structure and achieve long term, steady and healthy development of bilateral trade, Xi said.

He said China is willing to expand cooperation with Uzbekistan in production capacity, investment, industrial parks and infrastructure construction on the basis of equal footing and mutual benefits.

Mirziyoyev said China is a great neighbor of Uzbekistan, and that under the current international situation, China is a crucial and positive factor in promoting world peace, stability and development.

He said Uzbekistan appreciates China's support for the country's taking its own development path, one that adapts to its own national condition, and that his country firmly supports the one-China policy.

He expressed Uzbekistan's support for China in safeguarding its rights and interests and major concerns, as well as its position in combating the "Three Evil Forces" — separatism, extremism and terrorism.

He said Uzbekistan will deepen cooperation with China in areas such as economy and trade, investment, production capacity, infrastructure and water conservation; strengthen exchanges regarding localities and culture; and reinforce coordination and collaboration within multilateral frameworks.

After the talks, the two leaders signed a joint statement and witnessed the signing of cooperative documents covering such areas as economy and technology, transportation and shipment, medical care, agriculture, hydropower, small and medium-scale enterprises, infrastructure, tourism and exchanges.

Assistant Foreign Minister Li told reporters that the two neighbors have seen achievements in the Belt and Road Initiative, such as the completion last year of the longest tunnel in Central Asia. Chinese builders finished the tunnel, which has a total length of 47.3 km, in Uzbekistan in 900 days.

"The project has elevated Uzbekistan's role as a regional transportation passage," Li said.

He added that companies from the two countries also are discussing hydropower projects in Uzbekistan.

