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Cultural Diplomacy and Regional Integration: Central Building International Solidarity in Asia Uzbekistan- Kazakhstan Cooperation

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Abstract: The article is devoted to the study of the role of cultural diplomacy in regional integration processes using the example of Uzbek-Kazakh cooperation. The mechanisms for building interethnic solidarity in Central Asia through cultural exchange, joint projects, humanitarian initiatives, and the development of dialogue between the peoples of the two countries are analyzed. Modern methods and prospects for deepening cultural ties are considered as a means of strengthening good neighborly relations and maintaining regional unity.

Keywords: Cultural diplomacy, integration, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, cultural exchange.

Introduction: In the current era of globalization, in the context of geopolitical changes, a tendency towards increasing socio-political crises in the system of world politics and international relations is observed, and the need for mutual trust, solidarity and diplomacy in the processes of interstate cooperation is once again felt. In this regard, cultural diplomacy, which is considered an important direction of diplomacy, is emerging as a means of strengthening mutual understanding, trust

and solidarity between peoples.

In fact, cultural diplomacy is an integral part of state diplomacy and is a set of practical actions with strategic and tactical goals in the field of cultural cooperation between different peoples.

In this regard, Central Asia, a multinational and multi-confessional space, is in dire need of effective interstate cultural diplomatic cooperation mechanisms aimed at maintaining stability and harmony in interethnic relations. Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan relations occupy a central place in the regional architecture of Central Asia. Both countries have historical and cultural roots, linguistic and intellectual proximity, which creates unique conditions for the implementation of joint humanitarian and cultural initiatives. In recent years, bilateral cooperation in the field of culture, education and inter-community relations has intensified, which reflects the strategic interest of both sides in strengthening regional integration. The relevance of this study is associated with the need to comprehensively understand the potential of cultural diplomacy in building interethnic solidarity and facilitating integration processes in Central Asia.

METHODS

Among diplomatic studies of theoretical methodological importance is G. Khidoyatov's "Obstody" diplomatii " and " History дипломатии " [2] are of particular importance. A. Kasimov's work "Fundamentals of Diplomacy" consists of chapters on state sovereignty and modern diplomacy, international law, foreign policy, diplomatic protocols and events, and consular services.[3] This book examines the basic principles of the diplomatic profession. Also, D. Sayfullayev's scientific monograph "The Formation and Development History of Cultural Diplomacy of the Republic of Uzbekistan (1991-2019)" [4] is considered one of the main literature, which describes in detail the concept of cultural diplomacy and the achievements of independent Uzbekistan in the field of cultural diplomacy.

This research work uses the methods of historicism, systematic analysis, and political-comparative analysis, thereby attempting to reveal the most important points of the topic.

MAIN PART

Cultural diplomacy has long been considered an important force that unites people, minds and hearts. We can see that during the transition period that took place in the Central Asian region in the 1990s, this tool served as an important factor in positively influencing this process. Today, this area, which is described as a

tool of "soft power", continues to serve as an important bridge between countries and cultures. This factor is especially important in the current era of wars.

It is known that the Uzbek and Kazakh peoples have been closely connected for thousands of years by many factors, such as a single geographical space, a single religion, a similar language, a common culture and traditions. In this sense, these two peoples have a close past and an inseparable destiny, like members of a united family or like twin children of the same mother. The acquisition of independence by the two states as a result of the political transformation processes that occurred in the region at the end of the Cold War was the starting point for their future prospects. From the first years of independence to the present, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have been developing their relations steadily, without crises or conflicts.

It should be noted that no other country in the region has signed the Treaty of Eternal Friendship like the two countries, which is evidence of the high level of trust and respect between the two countries, as well as the warm brotherly relations. The first article of this treaty states that "The High Contracting Parties, being brotherly and friendly states, shall build their relations on the basis of equality, solidarity, comprehensive cooperation and mutual trust," and the eighth article is directly related to cultural relations, which states that "The High Contracting Parties shall ensure the right of Uzbeks living in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Kazakhs living in the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan to preserve their national culture and language, and shall also develop cooperation in this area."

Features and specific aspects of cooperation were highlighted during the state visits of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Kazakhstan on March 22-23, 2017 and December 5-6, 2021, as well as the visit of the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's state visits to Uzbekistan from April 14-15, 2019 and December 21-22, 2022 were marked. As a result of these visits, a number of important intergovernmental and interdepartmental documents were signed, as well as agreements in the field of trade and economic cooperation, as well as a number of documents on cultural exchange.

As is known, one of the integral parts of cultural diplomacy is the field of education and science. It is worth noting that today there are more than 280 cooperation agreements and memorandums between universities of the two countries in the field of higher education. On December 22, 2022, an intergovernmental agreement was signed on cooperation in the field of higher and postgraduate

education. Every year, exhibitions and fairs of Kazakh higher education institutions, Kazakhstan Education Days, are held in the cities of Uzbekistan. With the support of local consulting companies, representatives of about 40 Kazakh universities participate in them. 4 joint educational programs are being implemented between higher education institutions of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, in which 188 students study.

Our peoples closer together and creates a solid foundation for further development of cooperation. In particular, on December 19, 2022, the exhibition "Abay. Heritage of Fraternal Peoples" dedicated to the Kazakh writer and thinker Abay will be held at the Uzbekistan Fine Arts Gallery. An exhibition dedicated to the life and work of Kunanbayev was organized. In Kazakhstan, an exhibition by Dilorom Mamedova entitled "Almaty – through the eyes of an Uzbek artist" was opened. In addition, the short film "Tea" was presented to the Kazakh audience, Kalibek A gala concert with the participation of Uzbek creative teams was held at the Kuanishbayev Kazakh Music and Drama Theater.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that cultural diplomacy is the most important factor in strengthening regional integration and building interethnic solidarity in Central Asia. Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are Turkic civilization, the ancient Silk Road, the cultural space of Islam. In this regard, the Uzbek-Kazakhstani cooperation demonstrates a positive example of implementing a cultural policy aimed at bringing peoples closer together, supporting historical and cultural dialogue and developing humanitarian cooperation. Successful initiatives in the field of education, culture, inter-university exchange, as well as holding joint cultural events help to strengthen trust and understanding between the countries and peoples of the region. At the same time, the study revealed a number of problems that hinder the further development of cultural diplomacy. Thus, the fragmentation of coordination between specialized institutions, limited funding, weak institutionalization of cultural programs and insufficient involvement of young people in intercultural exchange processes can undermine the current strong development of cultural ties between them. In addition, taking into account the specific characteristics of each of the Central Asian countries, a single regional framework for cultural cooperation. The need to develop a concept remains.

For development, it is advisable to activate joint research projects in the humanitarian sphere, expand the network of cultural centers and academic mobility programs, as well as use digital platforms to popularize

common cultural heritage. It is also important to strengthen interstate coordination and create sustainable mechanisms to support civil society initiatives that promote interethnic dialogue. Thus, the deepening of cultural diplomacy between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan can not only be the basis for sustainable bilateral cooperation, but also serve as an example for the entire Central Asian region in strengthening regional identity, stability and solidarity.

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