

# Country Policy Communique

## News from Central Asia and the Eastern Neighbourhood

April 2021

**GCRF COMPASS:** Comprehensive Capacity-Building in the Eastern Neighbourhood and Central Asia: research integration, impact governance & sustainable communities (ES/P010849/1)



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# Azerbaijan

## Aliyev and Lukashenko meet in Baku to strengthen bilateral cooperation

14.04.2021

Source: [Azernews](#)

President Ilham Aliyev has said that there are close political ties and a high level of trust between Azerbaijan and Belarus. Aliyev made the remarks during the one-on-one meeting with the Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko in Baku on April 14.

The president said that there are reciprocal regular visits by the two countries' leaders, which has brought dynamism to the relations.

“That is why we are seeing good results in the framework of economic cooperation. Despite the pandemic last year, our turnover has increased, and so have exports from Azerbaijan to Belarus. Therefore, today we will discuss in more detail the issues related to industrial cooperation.”

The meeting continued in an expanded format with the participation of delegations and was followed by press statements by the two presidents. Azerbaijan and Belarus signed three memorandums of understanding on agriculture, tourism and energy with the participation of Aliyev and Lukashenko.

The signed documents are “The Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Food Safety Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Belarus in the field of veterinary medicine”, “The Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the National Tourism Agency of the Republic of Belarus in the field of tourism” and “The Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Belarus in the field of energy”.

## Azerbaijan slams Biden's statement on 1915 events

26.04.2021

Source: [Azernews](#)

Aliyev said that Biden's statement seriously damages the emerging cooperation tendencies in the region, adding that Azerbaijan stands by Turkey.

Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry dubbed Biden's statement on Armenian Remembrance Day as a distortion of the historical facts about the events of 1915. In a statement published on April 24, the Ministry said “the falsification of history, attempts to “rewrite history” and its use for political pressure are unacceptable.”

# Belarus

## Aleksandr Lukashenko made new appointments

05.04.2021

Source: [President.gov.by](http://President.gov.by)

Belarus President Aleksandr Lukashenko has appointed Vladimir Pertsov Information Minister of Belarus. Former minister Igor Lutsky was appointed Deputy Head of the Belarus President Administration.

## Euronews stops broadcasting on TV in Belarus

12.04.2021

Source: [Belarusian Telegraph Agency](http://Belarusian Telegraph Agency)

On 12 April the Ministry of Information removed the foreign TV programme Euronews from the list of foreign mass media permitted to distribute in Belarus. The previously issued permission for distribution on the territory of the country has expired.

## Belarus and Azerbaijan sign documents on cooperation in tourism, energy and oil industries

14.04.2021

Source: [Belarusian Telegraph Agency](http://Belarusian Telegraph Agency)

As a result of the negotiations between President Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus and President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan, the sides signed several documents on the development of cooperation in various spheres. Thus, Memoranda of Understanding were concluded in the tourism, energy and oil industries.

## Visit of Alexander Lukashenko to the Russian Federation

22.04.2021

Source: [Belarusian Telegraph Agency](http://Belarusian Telegraph Agency)

During the negotiations, the signing of the final road maps was discussed.

Probably, 26 or 27 programs have already been reconciled at the government level. There is not much left - two or three key programs related to economy, including taxes; it is a well-known program, the decision on which was taken in Minsk," the President Alexander Lukashenko said.

## Russian Ambassador presents copy of credentials to Belarusian FM

30.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus](http://Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus)

On 30 April, Belarusian Minister of Foreign Affairs Vladimir Makei met with Russian Ambassador to Belarus Yevgeny Lukyanov to receive the copy of his credentials.

The parties discussed topical issues of Belarusian-Russian cooperation and the interaction within the framework of the integration associations.

# Tajikistan

## Meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan

01.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#)

On April 1, 2021, at the regular meeting of Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Moscow, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan Sirojiddin Mukhriddin held a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Ruslan Kazakbaev.

During the meeting, they discussed the prospects of Tajik-Kyrgyz cooperation in the political, trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres, exchanged views on cooperation between the parties in the field of transport and the use of resources of transboundary rivers. Special attention was paid to the issue of delimitation and demarcation of the state border line.

In this vein, the Tajik side stated the need to continue the negotiation process based on the documents that have passed constitutional procedures, as well as the parties' adherence to the agreed rules for covering the results of the meetings in accordance with the regulation on the organization of work and the order of vision of negotiations on the delimitation of the state border between the Republic of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic. It was also noted that, taking into account the normative legal acts between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, regulating issues of dual citizenship, the head of the Tajik Foreign Ministry raised the issue of the need to streamline the process of granting citizenship, primarily to residents of border areas.

## A regular meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the CIS member states Moscow

02.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#)

During the meeting, the heads of the foreign affairs agencies discussed issues of political, trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian interaction within the framework of the commonwealth. The head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan drew the attention of the meeting participants to the challenges faced by the member states of the commonwealth due to the coronavirus pandemic. In this context, the need for close interaction to level the factors of economic, social and other instability, joint development of new and non-standard approaches was noted.

Also, in the context of considering security issues, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan spoke in favor of taking the necessary measures to practically implement the initiative of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan on the formation of a single list of terrorist and extremist organizations prohibited on the territory of the CIS member states.

## Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Central Asian countries and the United States in the C5 + 1 format

21.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#)

On April 23, 2021, an online meeting of the Central Asian Foreign Ministers and the US Secretary of State took place in the C5 + 1 format. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan Sirojiddin Muhridin participated in the meeting and made a speech.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the issues related to the current state and prospects of cooperation in the region, countering international terrorism and extremism, combating COVID-19 and the consequences of climate change.

### **Inauguration of the Honorary Consulate Office of Hungary in Dushanbe**

08.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#)

On 7 April 2021, the Honorary Consulate Office of Hungary was opened in Dushanbe.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary Mr. Peter Szijjarto and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan Mr. Muzaffar Huseinzoda took part in the official opening ceremony of the Office and delivered congratulatory speeches.

Both sides highlighted that the opening of the Honorary Consulate Office of Hungary is a significant step in development of relations between the two countries. Peter Szijjarto and Muzaffar Huseinzoda stated that this Office would make contribution for the expansion of economic cooperation, attraction of investment, development of tourism and cultural exchange.

### **Online meeting of Deputy Foreign Ministers of Central Asian countries and China**

13.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#)

On April 13, 2021, for the purpose of preparation to the 2nd meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs «Central Asia - China», an online meeting of Deputy Foreign Ministers of Central Asian countries and China took place. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan Muzaffar Huseinzoda represented Tajik side at this meeting. The parties exchanged views on the preparations for the next meeting and discussed the draft documents proposed for consideration.

### **Telephone conversation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs with the EU Special Representative for Central Asia**

29.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#)

Text On 29 April 2021, with the initiative of the European Union's Special Representative for Central Asia Peter Burian, a telephone conversation was held between him and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, Sirojiddin Muhridin.

During the conversation, the situation on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border was discussed. The Minister of Foreign Affairs reported on the current situation in the border regions of Tajikistan with Kyrgyzstan and the measures taken to cease fire, as well as the agreement reached to further normalize the situation via political and diplomatic means.

The EU Special Representative for Central Asia welcomed the wise decision of the Tajik leadership to reach an agreement with a neighbouring state on a ceasefire and expressed the EU's readiness to provide technical support in the framework of joint projects and programs on the border.

### **Foreign Ministers of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan discussed the situation in the border areas**

30.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#)

On 29 April 2021, with initiative of the Kyrgyz side the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan Sirojiddin Muhridin had a telephone conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Ruslan Kazakbaev. The foreign ministers thoroughly discussed the aggravated situation that arose in the border regions of the two countries on 28-29 April 2021.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan noted that the development of relations with neighbours in the region, with which Tajikistan is bound by centuries-old ties friendship and good-neighbourliness, is a priority of the country's foreign policy.

S. Muhridin stressed that Tajikistan is resolutely determined to seek for mutually acceptable solutions through negotiations taking into account its national interests, and to progressively resolve issues related to the delimitation and demarcation of the state border line with Kyrgyzstan. At the same time, he emphasized that Tajikistan will never cede the lands that originally and legally belong to it.

During the conversation, the ministers stressed the importance of resolving all issues of the state border exclusively through negotiations and noted the inadmissibility of attempts at provocations by certain interested parties, which lead to a further escalation of the situation.

The ministers noted that the lack of confidence in the border areas could incite new incidents and entail serious consequences, in particular, civilian casualties in the two neighbouring states.

The foreign ministers agreed that it is necessary to show strong political will in dealing with complex issues of the state border.

## **Joint Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan**

30.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#)

In the evening of 29 April 2021, a working meeting was held between representatives of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic on the settlement of the armed conflict in the border areas of the Sughd region of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Batken region of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The parties agreed to end hostilities in the border areas of the Sughd and Batken regions, withdraw troops and military equipment from the border areas to their permanent deployment sites, and continue the negotiation process to stabilize the situation in the border areas.

In this regard, it was decided to create a working group from among the representatives of the relevant authorities of the parties to monitor the implementation of the agreements reached and take urgent measures to de-escalate the situation on the state border.

## **Telephone conversation of the President of Tajikistan with the President of Kyrgyzstan**

30.04.2021

Source: [Official Site of the President of Tajikistan](#)

Text On 30 April 2021, the Founder of Peace and National Unity - the Leader of the Nation, President of the Republic of Tajikistan His Excellency Emomali Rahmon held a telephone conversation with the President of the Kyrgyz Republic His Excellency Sadyr Japarov.

During the conversation, the Heads of State spoke about the latest conflict incidents in the border areas and discussed the current situation on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border.

They stressed the particular importance of coherent implementation of the agreements aimed at normalizing the situation and preventing its escalation, in particular, on a complete ceasefire and the withdrawal of troops from the border line at a specified time.

In this context, the presidents also emphasized the importance of continuing the Tajik-Kyrgyz interstate dialogue to further advance the negotiation process on border delimitation. Agreements were reached to hold a meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission of the Parties on Delimitation and Demarcation on May 1 in Batken city of the Kyrgyz Republic. It was also agreed to resolve the entire range of issues of Tajik-Kyrgyz relations on a bilateral basis in the spirit of good-neighbourliness and mutual understanding through negotiations and consultations. The head of our state invited the President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Japarov to pay an official visit to Tajikistan in the nearest convenient time. The invitation was accepted with satisfaction by the President of Kyrgyzstan. The exact dates of the visit will be agreed upon through diplomatic channels.

As a result of the conversation, the parties gave specific instructions to the relevant ministries and departments to take the necessary measures on all topical issues of Tajik-Kyrgyz good-neighbourliness and mutually beneficial cooperation.

## **Telephone conversation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Central Asia**

30.04.2021

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan](#)

On April 30, 2021 a telephone conversation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan Mr. Sirojiddin Muhridin with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Central Asia, Head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) Ms. Natalya Gherman on the situation in Tajik-Kyrgyz border was held.

During the conversation the Minister of Foreign Affairs informed the Special Representative about the situation on the line of the state border of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, including the ceasefire agreement and the intention of the parties to resolve the situation through negotiations by using political and diplomatic tools.

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary General welcomed the agreements between the parties on a ceasefire and the signing of the Protocol on the settlement of the armed conflict in the border areas of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

It was reported that the UN Secretary General is closely following the developments on the border between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and is pleased with the proclamation of the ceasefire. In this context N. Gherman reported on the readiness of the UN Secretary General to assist in a peaceful solution of the situation that had arisen. At the end of the conversation the parties discussed issues of cooperation between Tajikistan and the UN in areas of mutual interest.

# Uzbekistan

## Tashkent hosts The Second International Forum “Tashkent Law Spring”

23.04.2021

Source: [Dunyo Information Agency](#)

The organizer of the two-day event is the Ministry of Justice of Uzbekistan. The main partners – the UNDP, the OSCE and other international organizations.

Taking into account the current conditions, this year the forum is being held in a new, so-called hybrid format, with remote participation of foreign guests and direct participation of national experts.

The main theme of the forum is “Law 4.0” (the vision of law in the age of the fourth industrial revolution).

Speaking at the plenary session, the Minister of Justice Ruslanbek Davletov noted that the achievements of scientific and technological progress have affected almost all spheres of modern life, including lawmaking.

It was noted that in the context of the fourth industrial revolution, it is necessary to take a fresh look at legal institutions and consistently adapt traditional legal mechanisms to new realities.

## Senate approves the Law on the Ratification of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Uzbekistan and the UK

25.04.2021

Source: [Uzbekistan National News Agency](#)

The Law “On the Ratification of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement establishing a partnership between the Republic of Uzbekistan, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part (Tashkent, October 31, 2019)” was discussed at the 14th plenary session of the Senate.

Ravshanbek Alimov, Chairman of the Committee for International Relations, Foreign Economic Ties, Foreign Investment and Tourism, noted that the Agreement covers such important goals and directions for preserving the legal basis of Uzbekistan – British relations

## Uzbekistan and Tajikistan discuss construction of a new railway section

26.04.2021

Source: [Uzbekistan National News Agency](#)

The Law “On the Ratification of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement establishing a partnership between the Republic of Uzbekistan, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part (Tashkent, October 31, 2019)” was discussed at the 14th plenary session of the Senate.

Ravshanbek Alimov, Chairman of the Committee for International Relations, Foreign Economic Ties, Foreign Investment and Tourism, noted that the Agreement covers such important goals and directions for preserving the legal basis of Uzbekistan – British relations in the future, creating favorable conditions for further continuation of contacts between the businesspeople of the two countries, as well as the development of cooperation in political, trade, economic, investment, financial and other spheres.

The document has been brought into line with the format of cooperation between Uzbekistan and the UK, while maintaining all the provisions of the current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the European Union.

The Law passed by the Legislative Chamber and approved by the Senate will enter into force after it is signed by the President.

### **Uzbekistan to hold an Inter-Parliamentary Global Cooperation Forum in Achieving SDGs**

27.04.2021

Source: [Uzbekistan National News Agency](#)

A meeting of the Organizing Committee for holding the International Forum of Inter-Parliamentary Global Cooperation in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals has taken place.

The meeting was attended by members of the Organizing Committee, the Parliamentary Commission for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goals, the Coordination Council, heads of ministries and agencies, UN Resident Coordinator for the Republic of Uzbekistan Helena Fraser, members of youth parliaments, hokims of Bukhara region and the city of Tashkent.

On April 9, Councils of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis and the Senate adopted a Joint Resolution. This resolution approved the holding of an international forum for global inter-parliamentary cooperation in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals on June 23-24 in the city of Bukhara, its concept, regulations, the composition of the Organizing Committee.