

The Issue of Political Investment in Interstate Relations: On the Example of Uzbek-French Cooperation

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the analysis of the role and significance of political investment in interstate relations on the example of cooperation between Uzbekistan and France. The analysis in the article is carried out in two directions. Firstly, the essence and features of the concept of “political investment” are studied. Despite its presence in interstate and international relations, this term is poorly understood in scientific and academic communities. Secondly, the main areas of Uzbek-French cooperation within the framework of this concept are considered.

KEYWORDS: *Interstate relations, political investment, modernization, Uzbekistan, France, socio-political development, political system, foreign policy*

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INTRODUCTION

The term “investment” is not only “long-term financing in various sectors, socio-economic programs, innovations, business projects in the country or abroad in order to develop the economy” [1], but also means officially presenting/ giving something (law, authority, information, experience, etc.) to someone [2], directing all one’s energy to a certain action or measure [3]. So, political investment is a completely different term from investment policy. It is closer to the concepts of normative force, modernization, administrative-institutional development. In a broad sense, it also envisages the development and implementation of a legal framework for business investment in partner countries by providing legal security.

Political investment can take place in interstate relations in two ways:

➤ One-sided. The process of developing a specific strategy, concept, or program of action to systematize a country’s long-term relationship with another state or group of states based on

available opportunities, resources, and international political realities.

➤ Bilateral or multilateral. It means investing in the complex (political, economic, social, cultural, etc.) development of a particular state or group of states [4]. It is carried out not only in the form of financial resources, but also in the form of exchange of experience, consultations, expertise, provision of information or innovative technologies, legal advice.

As with any investment process, political investment requires an investor and the partners being invested in. In relations between developed and developing countries, the political investor is usually the developed country. Through its position in the international community, its level of trust and sphere of influence - it can offer a developed country its own socio-political, legal, economic experience, i.e. its “political capital”, that has stood the test of time [5]. Just as economic investment involves maintaining or increasing the value of capital in the future, political

investment involves expanding the parties' ability to benefit in the future through mutual cooperation.

The issue of political investment is one of the most important aspects of the further development of Uzbek-French cooperation. On the one hand, while this issue has caused misunderstandings between the two countries in setting priorities for cooperation, it has served to establish a deeper dialogue than standard ties in the early stages of the relationship. In this article, we try to find and clarify the role and forms of political investment in establishment and further development of the bilateral cooperation between Uzbekistan and France.

METHODS OF THE ANALYSIS

General scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, in particular, systematic and historical approaches, as well as methods of comparative analysis, quantitative analysis, scientific evaluation have been used in the research.

System analysis is an approach that studies a particular topic (process, event, etc.) as a set of interrelated elements / components that examine the relationship between the internal processes of the system and the external environment.

Historical-chronological analysis is a method of studying the subject in different historical periods, which allows to determine the possible causal relationship between processes and events.

Method of comparative analysis helps to establish the relationship between two or more events by studying the current and previous state of the research object, or by comparing its differences and similarities with other objects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The issue of political investment in Uzbek-French relations has a strong historical basis. The similarity of the approach to the concepts of public administration, executive reforms, justice in political, legal and encyclopedic sources, such as the "*Tuzūk-i Tīmūrī*" (Codes of Timur) of Amir Temur (Tamerlane) and the "Codes" of the famous French general, Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte indicates that the views the historical roots of relations between peoples are based on close ideas. After the independence of Uzbekistan, this historical basis laid the foundation for closer cooperation between the two countries in legal, political and social modernization. Nowadays in the formation and development of the political system and state institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the achievements of the development of the system and institutions of the V Republic of France (from 1958 to the present) are effectively used [6]. In particular, this can be clearly seen in such

fundamental areas as the development of the Constitution and the legal system of the Republic of Uzbekistan, parliamentary reforms and a multiparty system in the country.

It is known that the draft Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan was formed on June 21, 1990 by a 64-member Constitutional Commission for more than two years. The draft took into account the best constitutional experience of 97 countries of the East and the West, the South and the North, based on the interests and aspirations of Uzbekistan [7]. Prior to the adoption of the draft constitution, it was examined by experts from the United Nations, the OSCE (now the OSCE), the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and France [8]. In particular, Michel Lesage, Professor of the University of Public Law Paris-1, Director of the Institute for Comparative Legal Studies from France, took part in the examination [9]. The expert noted that the draft Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan is short and concise, which allows citizens to learn and understand the basic constitutional principles of civil society, as well as the influence of French constitutional law in the draft encyclopedic source. In particular, he noted that he observed similarities in the organization of the executive branch and the system of its relations with the legislature [10]. These similarities were reflected in the power of the President to chair the Cabinet of Ministers, to dissolve parliament, and to determine the direction of the country's complex development in accordance with the constitutions of the two countries at the time.

It should be noted that the Constitutions of both countries are based on the traditions of continental Romano-Germanic law and the legal systems of the two countries are codified. The main source of law is the legislation, i.e. normative acts adopted by higher state bodies. In both countries, the supremacy of the Constitution and the law is recognized, and there is a hierarchy of sources of law [11]. Both countries have a single, centralized judicial system.

In general, we can observe that there are similar factors in:

- presidential system. In both countries, the President is the head of state, the guarantor of the sovereignty and unity of the country, a central figure in the system of governing bodies, the status of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He possesses the broad powers of legislative initiative, pardon/amnesty and declaration of emergency;
- the electoral system, the mechanism of relations between the government and the President, the tradition of continuing the activities of the

President in the system of state power after the end of the mandate;

- the order of formation, structure and division of functions of the parliament and its chambers, the government and the prime minister's role in it, and a number of other political parties- multiparty system [12].

The similarities in the constitutions are the system of government and the administrative form, the separation of religion and state affairs - the choice of the path of secular development, the issues of human and civil rights in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, self-determination of citizens. There are also close points in the territorial and administrative system. Both countries are unitary republics: France has its overseas territories, and Uzbekistan is a unitary republic with a federal character. Also, the system of citizen self-government defined in the first edition of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan was enriched with the practice of modern local associations in France [13].

Today, the current constitutions of the two countries "act as a kind of social contract between the citizen, society and state power" [14]. They have similarities in the articles on state sovereignty, administrative-territorial division, form of government, the principle of separation of powers, parliament, the presidency, the government and the executive power, and the organization of the judiciary system. In addition to the similarities in the Constitution and its articles, there are similarities in the constitutional development trends of the two countries. According to Academician A. Saidov, these similarities are due to:

- The Constitutions of Uzbekistan and France have started a new stage in the legal development of the countries;
- Dynamic constitutional creativity observed in the two countries in the first decade of the XXI century;
- and the relevance of these constitutional changes to human rights, the role of political parties, and the modernization of state institutions [15].

Political scientist and parliamentarian Q. Juraev explains the harmony in the constitutional and political trends by the similarities between the French and Uzbek societies of the 1950s and 1990s. These similarities are related to the elimination of the harmful effects of the previous period, the democratization of society, the need for a strong executive branch to ensure the sustainability of socio-political and economic reforms, attracting foreign

capital for development and finding effective solutions to ensuring constitutionality [16]. In our opinion, the development of the Constitution and the legal system of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the resemblances in the issues of constitutional trends are due not only to the challenges facing the societies of the two countries or to the impact of socio-political realities, but also to close practical and academic contacts between Uzbek and French officials and scholars, as well as the well-established process of exchange of experience.

Along with the formation of the Constitution and the constitutional system, the activities of the parliaments of Uzbekistan and France also reflect the process of mutual political investment. **At first**, we can see this in the referendum on the transition from a unicameral parliament to a bicameral parliament held in Uzbekistan on January 27, 2002, and the resulting parliamentary reforms. These reforms were aimed at improving the quality of the legislative process and transforming the lower house of parliament into a professional, permanent Legislative Chamber. As in France, as a result of this reform, bills will be considered not only in the sessions of the two chambers, but also in the meetings of party factions.

Secondly, the electoral system of the Uzbek and French parliaments is similar. In both countries, members of the lower house of parliament are directly elected for a five-year term by a two-round majority system. The Senate is formed by two-stage indirect elections in Uzbekistan and two- or three-stage indirect elections in France. The only difference is in terms: the term of office of the Senate in France is six years, while in Uzbekistan - five years. In France, lower house and presidential elections are also held annually under the 2000 reforms. This is due to the fact that France is a semi-presidential, semi-parliamentary republic.

Thirdly, there are analogies in the division of powers between parliaments and chambers. Some parliaments do not have a formal or informal division of powers. In Italy, for example, both chambers are required to implement the law equally, while in Romania, laws are passed by a majority of members of both houses, and laws are not designed and considered in a multi-tiered manner. In Uzbekistan, the two chambers have absolute (Articles 79, 80) and joint powers (Articles 78). In other words, the Uzbek parliament has a formal division of powers. In France, according to Article 45 of the country's Constitution, proposals in any area of legislation are considered alternately in both houses for adoption in the same text [18]. Although there is no formal division of constitutional powers between the chambers, it is informally

divided. The Senate has priority powers in foreign affairs, defense, the armed forces, finance, budget control, economic accounting, and constitutional and electoral law. The lower house, the National Assembly, deals with social, family, cultural affairs, the general economy (state budget review), production and trade legislation [19].

The issue of political investment in Uzbek-French relations is also reflected in the formation of a multiparty system in Uzbekistan. The political system of the countries is not based on two major parties, as in the Anglo-Saxon states, but on the political views of the parties, the division into right, left and central parties, and the predominance of pluralism in party relations. The presence of green parties, the participation of political parties in the presidential, parliamentary and local elections, as well as the fact that the elections are held by majority system, ie direct national elections- all testify to the resemblance of the multiparty systems of Uzbekistan and France. According to the French National Commission of Political Financing and Electoral Campaigns (CNCCFP), in 2021, there were 579 registered political parties in the country [20]. However, 30 of them are active, and 11 of them have seats in the European Parliament or the French Parliament [21]. There are five parties in Uzbekistan, all of which have seats in the lower house of parliament.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it should be noted that political investment does not mean forcibly shifting one's views to another party, interfering in the internal affairs of other countries, or blindly copying the experience of a particular state. It is the provision of specific experience, innovation, information for the development of partner countries, as well as the ability to implement this information, experience or innovation, taking into account national specifics, local conditions and opportunities.

Although the misinterpretation of the issue of political investment over time has prevented the achievement of joint coordination in defining the prospects for cooperation in Uzbek-French relations, it was able to lay a solid foundation for the relationship. Today's strong parliamentary and interagency dialogue and political consultations show that the two countries are constantly making mutual political investments.

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