
IRAN'S ROHANI DISCUSSES BILATERAL TIES, REGIONAL COOPERATION IN KAZAKHSTAN

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Iranian President Hassan Rohani held talks with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev in Kazakhstan's capital, Astana, on December 22.

Rohani, who arrived in the Central Asian country from Armenia, said that he and Nazarbaev discussed cooperation in trade, business, transport, and agriculture.

Nazarbaev said that cooperation between Iran and two regional groupings, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Eurasian Economic Union, were also in focus.

The Eurasian Economic Union consists of Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Belarus, and Kyrgyzstan.

From Kazakhstan, Rohani traveled to Kyrgyzstan -- the last leg on his trip -- where he was to meet with President Almazbek Atambaev and others on December 23.

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are SCO members along with China, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, while Iran has observer status.

Tehran applied for full SCO membership in March 2008, but membership was denied due to UN sanctions against Iran over its nuclear program.

After the UN sanctions were lifted in January under an international agreement addressing concerns that Tehran could develop nuclear weapons, Chinese president Xi Jinping announced support for full membership for Iran in the SCO.

Kaynak/Source: