
ESTONIAN FM: AZERBAIJAN IS ONE OF REGIONAL HUBS OF SOUTH-NORTH TRANSIT CORRIDOR

-

22.02.2019

Trend News Agency (22 February 2019)

Exclusive interview of Azernews and Trend with Sven Mikser, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Estonia

Question: How do you assess the current state of political dialogue between Azerbaijan and Estonia?

Answer: Bilateral relations between Estonia and Azerbaijan are stable and friendly. We have made progress in enhancing political cooperation through high-level meetings during recent years. We are pleased to note very good contacts between our Parliaments. Our Vice Speaker visited Baku in October. Estonian government values cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries and actively promotes this initiative in the European Union. The EU is an important partner for Azerbaijan and we welcome positive dynamics in EU-Azerbaijan relations. The EU and Azerbaijan are currently negotiating a new framework agreement to further deepening cooperation. Naturally, there is interest to intensify the political dialogue and diversify spheres of cooperation. We already have excellent cooperation in ICT and education sector and there is a lot of potential to develop economic relations and increase trade flows.

Q.: What is your vision of the future cooperation in the economic field between the two countries? Which spheres are considered most promising? What measures should be taken to increase the trade turnover between the two countries?

A.: The potential for bilateral co-operation in economic field is promising. However, we are still in the discovery phase. The governments periodically convene the Intergovernmental Commission to discuss bilateral cooperation to promote trade and investment. Estonia has expressed interest in cooperation with Azerbaijan in transport and logistics as the geographical location of the country makes it one of the regional hubs of the south-north transit corridor developing rapidly. Agriculture and health sectors share mutual interest as well. There have been queries about energy, recycling and food products sectors and we hope that those contacts will be pursued into partnerships.

Q.: What is done to further develop humanitarian aspect of bilateral relations? What can be done to expand cooperation in tourism sector between the two states?

A.: There is a good cooperation between universities and many students have had the opportunity to study in both of our countries. Student exchange is a solid base where friendship between our countries can grow further and create lifelong networks. I am delighted that Estonian artists have

had the opportunity to introduce Estonian culture in Azerbaijan, be it in the form of films, theatre, music or arts. More than 20 years Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival, which is one of the biggest film festivals in Northern Europe, has been in the calendar of many Estonians. Most years Azerbaijani films have been screened giving us the glimpse of your culture and introducing your way of living.

Estonian travel agency Germalo is already organizing regular tours to Azerbaijan. Overall tourism numbers have still potential to grow. The number of visas to visit Estonia have remained the same within the last couple of years. I am confident that more people-to-people contacts as well as culture and business ties can all help to attract tourists.

<https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/3022485.html>

Kaynak/Source: