
SWEDISH MFA: NEW EU-AZERBAIJAN AGREEMENT TO DEEPEN BILATERAL RELATIONS

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Swedish Foreign Ministry believes that the new partnership agreement between Azerbaijan and the European Union (EU) will expand bilateral relations.

The ministry told Trend that presently, negotiations are underway on the new EU-Azerbaijan agreement which will deepen the relations between EU member states and Azerbaijan.

The Eastern Partnership is also an important instrument for the relations, the ministry noted.

Speaking on the relations between Azerbaijan and Sweden, the ministry noted increase in exports and imports between Sweden and Azerbaijan in 2018. Thus, last year, exports from Sweden to Azerbaijan increased by 25 percent and imports by 24 percent.

The foreign ministry also emphasized that the opening of the Swedish embassy in 2014 provides new opportunities for increasing the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Azerbaijan is also represented by an embassy in Sweden. Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallstrom visited Azerbaijan in February 2016 and the following year Azerbaijani Minister for Foreign Affairs Elmar Mammadyarov visited Sweden, the ministry said.

The MFA added that currently there are no plans for high level bilateral visits; however, Ministers Wallstrom and Mammadyarov both participated at the 10th anniversary of the Eastern Partnership High Level Conference on May 14, where future of the partnership was discussed.

Touching upon political relations with Sweden, it is important to note that Sweden was one of the founder countries of the OSCE Minsk Group created in the 1990s to encourage a peaceful, negotiated resolution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

There are fields, such as educational sector, where Azerbaijan and Sweden enjoy good partnership, which is evidenced by scholarships offered by Swedish universities for student from Azerbaijan.

The European Council adopted a mandate for the European Commission and the high representative for foreign affairs and security policy to negotiate, on behalf of the EU and its member states, a comprehensive agreement with Azerbaijan in November 2016.

The new agreement should replace the 1996 partnership and cooperation agreement and will

follow the principles endorsed in the 2015 review of the European Neighborhood Policy and offer a renewed basis for political dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation between the EU and Azerbaijan.

Creation of a common aviation area is an initiative of the European Commission and aims to open and integrate aviation markets. This will lead to new opportunities for consumers and operators, and, most importantly, to high standards in terms of flight safety as well as air traffic management.

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