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PERSPECTIVES - UZBEKISTAN RISING AS CENTRAL ASIAN INTEGRATION CATALYST

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A new dynamic governing regional integration is shaping up in Central Asia. Uzbekistan is challenging Kazakhstans position as the regions power broker, and Chinas economic choices may well be a critical factor in determining the outcome of the leadership rivalry.

The shift seems counterintuitive on the surface, given that Kazakhstans economy currently generates three times the GDP of Uzbekistans. Kazakhstan also enjoys better connectivity with international markets. Nur-Sultans strong diplomatic relations with China and Russia should seemingly ensure that Kazakhstan remains the main driver of regional integration. Nevertheless, the reality is that the road to Central Asian stability and prosperity is increasingly running through Tashkent.

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