

## THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### VOLUME-5, ISSUE-9

#### FROM THE HISTORY OF DIPLOMATIC COOPERATION BETWEEN UZBEKISTAN AND THE PHILIPPINES (1992–2008)

**Shakirov Ilyas Rakhimzyanovich**

National university of Uzbekistan, named after Mirzo Ulugbek. PhD in history

[Ilyashakir@gmail.com](mailto:Ilyashakir@gmail.com)

#### ABSTRACT

The article examines the evolution of bilateral relations between Uzbekistan and the Philippines. Relying on a large number of previously unpublished archival materials, the author of this article attempted to analyze the main stages in the development of diplomatic cooperation between the two states. At the same time, the article provides information on the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1992, as well as the factors that contributed both to the progress and to the regression of interstate cooperation.

**Key words:** Uzbekistan, Philippines, cooperation, diplomacy, dynamics.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to examine the evolution and development of bilateral relations between Uzbekistan and the Philippines, to analyze the main stages of diplomatic cooperation, and to identify the factors that have influenced both the progress and challenges in the relationship between the two countries.

**Material and methods:** The article employs the methods of historicism, content analysis, and objectivity, as well as a dialectical approach. Within the framework of this study, the author utilized a wide range of archival materials, as well as the works of researchers.

**Introduction:** The foreign policy of the Philippines is shaped under the influence of numerous diverse factors. Its formation is a complex, multi-stage political process in which, in addition to the President and Congress, various state institutions, the public, mass media, and many other participants in the country's political life are involved[1, p. 405]. This process is ambiguous and occurs amid disagreements between different political groups, ministries and agencies, the President and Parliament, and finally, the government and the public, regarding issues of foreign policy strategy, the possibilities of alternative policies, the justification of expenditures and material costs for conducting specific actions, concessions, and sacrifices required from certain groups of society in connection with the implementation of particular foreign policy measures. An integral part of the foreign policy formation process, and its most important component, is also the development of its ideological and theoretical foundations: concepts and foreign policy doctrines[2, p.10.].

Ruling and political circles, as well as public opinion in general, consider foreign policy as an inseparable part of the national policy of the Philippine state, an extension of it into the external arena. Several Philippine historians and political scientists argue that Manila's practical activities on the international stage have varied depending on the ideas and concepts prevailing at a given stage in Philippine society. At the same time, it should be noted that, except for perhaps the era of F. Marcos' rule, the Philippines lacked deeply developed foreign policy doctrines. Their emergence and development were generally associated with the distribution of social forces and the political orientation of the government. Depending on such shifts, the substantive content of state ideology sometimes changed radically (page 41 of the dissertation).

## THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### VOLUME-5, ISSUE-9

In the last third of the 20th century, the theoretical basis of Philippine foreign policy became the concept of “national interests.” In foreign policy, national interests took precedence as “the most important principles and values of the nation, for which Filipinos would, without hesitation, risk life, property, honor, and dignity in order to protect and preserve them”.

The concept of “national interests” was concentratedly reflected in the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines. In Article II, Paragraph 7, it states that “the State in its relations with other countries shall be guided by national interests.” In the same article, Paragraph 8 states that “the Philippines, in accordance with national interests, pursues a policy of freedom from nuclear weapons on its territory”[3, p.168].

In the 1990s, the country’s foreign policy was significantly influenced by the doctrine of “three modernizations” (improvements in the economic, social, and political spheres) introduced by President F. Ramos, which envisaged socio-economic reforms based on liberal ideas, the restructuring of the political sphere, and the integration of the country into international and regional economic structures.

In contemporary foreign policy, the Philippines demonstrates an intention to become a more independent actor in the international system. Successful implementation of this strategy not only gains support from regional neighbors but also creates favorable conditions for strengthening international ties, effectively positioning the country as a middle power.

For Uzbekistan, the Philippines represents a promising partner in the Southeast Asian region, with which our Republic was interested in developing long-term and multifaceted relations from the first years of its state independence. The Philippines was among the first countries to recognize (January 22, 1992) and establish (April 13, 1992) diplomatic relations with the Republic of Uzbekistan. However, archival materials show that, despite a significant potential for expanding diplomatic ties, these relations for a certain period remained largely limited to protocol-level events, with key areas of cooperation being the economy, science and technology, and tourism.

In studying the bilateral relations between Uzbekistan and the Philippines, it should be noted that the leadership of the Philippines aims to strengthen an independent course in international affairs, with further expansion of bilateral ties and increased regional engagement. The Philippines is a member of major international organizations such as the UN, ASEAN, APEC, IMF, FAO, WTO, and in 1992 joined the Non-Aligned Movement.

The establishment of diplomatic relations in the 1990s did not lay a legal foundation for the development of bilateral ties, as during that period Uzbekistan was only beginning to form the basics of its foreign policy, focusing primarily on developing diplomatic relations with other ASEAN countries, particularly Malaysia, Vietnam, and Thailand.

A foundation for developing relations between the two countries was laid with the presentation of credentials by the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Philippines, resident in Moscow, Samuel Ramel, to the leadership of Uzbekistan in May 1996. During this meeting, the Philippine side highlighted important directions of bilateral political cooperation, notably interaction within international organizations such as the UN, UNESCO, IMF, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). At that time, the Philippines sought to strengthen its position in Southeast Asia and enhance its role in ASEAN, whose authority had significantly increased by that period. Based on the above, it can be argued that forming and developing ties with the Philippines could have allowed Uzbekistan to integrate into the Asia-Pacific region, thereby expanding the market for its export products. However, in the 1990s, Uzbekistan and the Philippines took

## THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### VOLUME-5, ISSUE-9

practically no measures to strengthen bilateral ties, unlike with other Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam and Thailand.

It should be noted that, unlike other ASEAN countries, the Philippines did not pay significant attention to cooperation with Uzbekistan. The main reason, in our view, was the lack of regional knowledge, not only about Uzbekistan but about the entire Central Asian region. Analysis of archival materials shows that in February 1992, a Filipino student, in a letter to the Government of independent Uzbekistan, noted the absence of knowledge about Uzbekistan and requested materials describing the nation, history, culture, and economy.

The first prerequisites for establishing the foundations of multilateral cooperation were laid in the early 21st century during an official meeting between the two sides. In particular, in 2004, as part of participation in the UN system, Uzbekistan supported the Philippines' candidacy for Non-Permanent Membership in the UN Security Council for the 2004–2005 term. This event became the first diplomatic action between the two countries within the international system [4, p.187].

On August 30, 2004, Ernesto Villarica Lamas presented credentials as the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Philippines to Uzbekistan, resident in Moscow. In July 2007, the Philippine Ambassador to Iran, A. Villacorte, received agreement from the Government of Uzbekistan as head of the diplomatic mission in Uzbekistan, resident in Tehran. Thus, practical steps to develop bilateral relations were only made at the beginning of the 21st century.

During the participation of the Uzbek delegation at the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly on September 29, 2007, a meeting was held with Philippine Foreign Minister Alberto Romulo (2004–2011). During the meeting, the parties discussed the prospects of Uzbek-Philippine relations, including high-level visits, activation of political dialogue, and cooperation in trade, economy, and cultural-humanitarian areas.

At this meeting, the Philippine Foreign Minister proposed to intensify relations both bilaterally and within regional organizations, primarily ASEAN. At that time, the Philippines advocated consultations with ASEAN partners regarding Uzbekistan's potential connection to the forum as a sectoral partner. In this context, the Philippine Foreign Minister proposed accrediting the head of one of Uzbekistan's embassies in Southeast Asia as the head of the diplomatic mission to the Philippines. Consequently, in 2007, the Uzbek Ambassador to Malaysia was concurrently accredited to the Philippines, and Honorary Consuls of both countries were appointed. Thus, in the early 21st century, within regional organizations, bilateral relations between Uzbekistan and the Philippines entered a qualitatively new stage. Cooperation in ASEAN, including sectoral partnership, began to take shape. Support from the Philippines in international organizations, including the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, played an important role in strengthening bilateral relations.

In the early 21st century, the Philippine side expressed interest in cooperating with Uzbekistan in combating international terrorism, religious extremism, and strengthening the international regime of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. During the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly, both sides discussed enhancing mutually beneficial cooperation, including high-level political consultations and creating an Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, and Investment Cooperation to determine specific areas of interaction. The Philippine delegation proposed expanding the legal framework of bilateral relations, leading to the signing of agreements "On Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments" and "On the Avoidance of Double Taxation".

## THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### VOLUME-5, ISSUE-9

Based on this, it can be noted that the legal foundation of bilateral relations between Uzbekistan and the Philippines was established in the first decade of the 21st century, which not only facilitated the development of diplomatic relations but also created a basis for cooperation in areas such as the economy, tourism, science, and culture.

During negotiations within the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly, the Philippine side positively assessed Uzbekistan's contribution to the development of Islamic civilization, particularly recognizing Uzbekistan's role in strengthening intercultural and interfaith dialogue through ISESCO, which designated Tashkent as the Capital of Islamic Culture in 2007.

Considering the Philippines' role in Asia and international organizations, primarily ASEAN, and Manila's active position in combating transnational crime, terrorism, and regional extremism, cooperation between Uzbekistan and the Philippines in the early 21st century advanced Uzbekistan's long-term political and economic interests bilaterally and multilaterally, fostering the development of Uzbekistan's integrative ties with Asian countries and regional structures.

During the Philippine delegation's visit to Uzbekistan in 2008, negotiations were held on intensifying political dialogue between the two countries, resulting in the signing of a Protocol on Political Consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs. The visit of the Philippine Foreign Minister to Uzbekistan in 2008 became an important event in establishing diplomatic contact between the two ministries. As a result, the first round of political consultations was planned for 2008. However, due to objective reasons, this event was not practically realized.

**Conclusion.** Thus, as the analysis of the formation and development of diplomatic cooperation between Uzbekistan and the Philippines shows, although bilateral relations were established in 1992, in practice, until the beginning of the 21st century, the interactions between the two states were limited to protocol-level events. At the same time, starting from the 21st century, a positive dynamic in the development of relations has been observed, including within the framework of international organizations.

### THE LIST OF USED LITERATURE

1. Райков Ю. А. Эволюция основных направлений внешней политики Филиппин: Анализ теории и практики, 1950-2000 гг. / дисс.док.ист.наук. – Москва, 2000. – 405 стр.
2. Текущий Архив МИДа РУз. / Папка. Филиппины. 2015+. Л. 10.
3. НА Уз. Ф. М-37. Оп. 4. Д. 2550. Л. 168.
4. ААП РУз. Ф. 975. Оп. 30. Д. 827. Л. 187.