
CENTRAL ASIA AND AZERBAIJAN: WHAT THE REGION'S LEADERS AGREED AT ISSYK-KUL

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The Kyrgyz resort town of Cholpon-Ata, on the shores of Lake Issyk-Kul, briefly became Central Asia's political capital as it hosted a series of high-level meetings, including bilateral talks between the presidents of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, the state visit of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, and the informal Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia and Azerbaijan.

Only a few years ago, such a format would have seemed unlikely. Today, however, regional leaders are discussing joint railway projects, energy security, transport corridors, investment, and foreign-policy coordination rather than managing old disputes. The agreements reached in Cholpon-Ata suggest that the consultative format is gradually evolving from a platform for political dialogue into a mechanism for practical regional cooperation.

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