**Cities twinned with Shusha**

 Twinning of cities is one of the most optimal versions for the harmony of different cultures. Now we are talking about cities that are twinned with the cities of our country. This time we will talk about the cities that are twinned with our glorious city of Shusha. One of the cities which is twinned with Shusha is the city of Dyöndyös, which is in Hungary. Another city is Kayseri, Turkey.

 On May 8, 2013, the city of Dyondyosh was declared a twinned with the city of Shusha, contributing to the relations between Azerbaijan and Hungary.

 On September 21, Shusha City State Reserve Department and Erzurum Metropolitan Municipality signed a protocol on becoming twinned cities, taking into account the existence of strategic partnership relations between two friendly and brotherly countries. According to the information provided by the Shusha City State Reserve Department, the protocol reflects on promoting cultural, social and economic relations between the twinned, as well as friendly and fraternal relations and expanding the areas of joint activities.

 Joint programs, projects, organization of mutual visits between the parties, as well as exchange of experience and information, cooperation in the fields of art, culture, tourism, science, trade and information technologies are planned in accordance with the principles of equality, friendship, brotherhood and common interest. The document was signed by Maftun Abbasov, Chairman of the Management Board of Shusha City State Reserve Department, who was on a visit to Erzurum and Mehmet Sekmen, Head of Erzurum Metropolitan Municipality,

 Just a piece of information, the city of Shusha, which has an important role in the history of our statehood and culture, was twinned with the city of Kayseri in Turkey in 2021, and with the city of Turkestan in Kazakhstan on August 24, 2022.

 "Declaring the city of Shusha as our cultural capital and this year being the "Year of Shusha" shows that our head of state also pays special attention to Shusha. It is known that the city of Shusha was founded in 1752 by Panahali Khan. This year marks the 270th anniversary of Shusha, and Mr. President even signed an order on this. The importance given to Shusha is highly valued both in Azerbaijan and throughout the Turkic world.

 Interview dated 25.02.2023, an agreement on "Twinned Cities" was signed between a number of cities of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, especially the cities of Khiva and Shusha. 11 documents were signed between the two countries within the framework of the 1st Uzbekistan-Azerbaijan Interregional Forum which was held in Tashkent on February 24. According to this document, there is an agreement on sister cities between Khiva of Uzbekistan and Shusha, Samarkand and Ganja, Bukhara and Lankaran, Kokand and Sheki of Azerbaijan. The above mentioned event took place as a result of the 11th meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Commission on cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Uzbekistan. At the meeting, Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan, co-chairman of the Azerbaijan-Uzbekistan Intergovernmental Commission Mikayil Jabbarov led the delegation of Azerbaijan.

 Karabakh, Shusha - the cradle of Azerbaijani culture and music, and on the other hand Khorezm province, Khiva city had a significant impact on the development of culture, art and musical art of Central Asia, Uzbekistan.

 It was reflected in the A plan of events for the Year of Shusha" approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.

 In the Plan of events, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is instructed to carry out relevant work related to the city of Shusha receiving the status of a twinned city with the cities of different countries in 2022.

 The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should ensure that during 2022, schools that are members of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet), local and foreign educational institutions that have joined the "Twinned Schools" initiative, hold joint events related to the "Year of Shusha".

 Khiva has been declared the "cultural capital of the Turkish world" by TURKSOY for 2020 and Shusha has the same status for 2023.

 During the Soviet period, representatives of Uzbek literature and culture held numerous meetings in the city of Lankaran within the framework of the "Days of Uzbek literature and art" which was held in Azerbaijan under the leadership of the great leader Heydar Aliyev in 1979. During the visit, the folk poet of Uzbekistan Zulfiya was named an honorary citizen of the city of Lankaran, Azerbaijan.

 Ganja and Samarkand have a great role in the economic and cultural life of their countries. In these cities, which have produced great personalities, there are unique historical monuments of world importance, as well as sacred religious places. The tourism opportunities of both cities and regions are quite large. With the project of the Azerbaijan Cultural Center named after Heydar Aliyev in Uzbekistan, since 2015, the days of Azerbaijani culture are held every year in the city of Samarkand, Uzbekistan. During the past period, a visit of the leaders of the Samarkand city government to Azerbaijan was organized.

 According to the approved work plan of Azerbaijan Culture Center for 2023, media tour to Shusha with the participation of Uzbekistan's leading media organizations and journalists, to dedicate one nomination to Shusha in the competition that we announce every year among the mass media of the brotherly country in various nominations will be organized. This competition is organized by Azerbaijan culture center together with the Union of Journalists of Uzbekistan. Furthermore implementation of the project "Khiva-Bursa-Shusha: cultural capitals of the Turkic world", holding a scientific conference “The place and role of the literary environment of Kokand and Shusha in Turkish literature: in the context of the works of Nadirabegim and Natavan", together with the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, preparation of the publication, establishment of relations between the universities located in the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Kokand of Uzbekistan and higher education institutions in the cities of Ganja, Lankaran and Sheki of Azerbaijan, expansion of mutual visits, relations between culture, tourism and youth organizations, support for the implementation of joint scientific research and projects are also planned.