



Burgeoning of Iran-Africa Relations in Isfahan

The third Iran-Africa Cooperation Summit, held in Isfahan with the participation of senior domestic and international officials, had specialized meeting, field visits and concluded the signing of cooperation agreements. The summit, emphasizing the development of economic and cultural relations between the two sides, charted a new path for sustainable and .commercial cooperation

85% of foreign tourists described Iran as an attractive place

According to the Isfahan Chamber of Commerce's public relations report, the Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts stated at the summit: "Based on a survey conducted, more than 85 percent of foreign tourists described the country's attractions excellent when leaving the country."

Seyyed Reza Salehi Amiri added: In 2024, more than 7.3 million people from all over the world visited Iran, indicating the country's growing position in the tourism industry.

Referring to the unique capacities of Iran's cultural heritage, he said: "Iran has a great number of registered historical monuments, the diversity in history and culture which has no parallel in the world."

Counteracting the negative portrayal of Iran in the world

Referring to the efforts of some media to portray a unrealistic image of Iran, Salehi Amiri, the Minister of Cultural Heritage stated: "The arrogant world is trying to tarnish Iran's image on the global level. The phenomenon of Iranophobia discourages tourists from traveling to this country."

He noted: "Iran has a unique cultural heritage, handicrafts, and natural beauties that should be represented on a global level.

The potential of handicrafts and the role of Isfahan in the cultural economy is undeniable."

He continued: "So far, 400 types of handicrafts have been identified in the world by the World Handicrafts Council, of which over 300 types are produced in Iran. Isfahan is also known as the hub of Iranian handicrafts and plays an important role in introducing the country's traditional arts."

He further added: "Last year, handicrafts generated more than \$2 billion in revenue and created 1.2 million job opportunities for the Iranian economy. Isfahan province, as one of the premieres in this respect, has also played a key role in exporting these products."

Message of friendship between Iran and Africa

The Minister further emphasized: Iranians are a hospitable and grateful people and have always had a deep belief in friendly relations with African.

He added: "Based on Iran point of view of, Africa, which has gone through a long history of colonialism and exploitation, needs fair development based on human values and justice."

Africa's economic potential and opportunities for cooperation

Referring to the diverse capacities of the African continent in the fields of mining, tourism and handicrafts, he stated: "Africa is one of the regions with vast economic opportunities, many of whose capabilities have remained unknown and underestimated. "This continent, with its dense forests and valuable mineral reserves, can be one of Iran's most important economic partners.

Isfahan; a city with global potential

Respecting the vital position of Isfahan in Iran's economy, The Minister said: "Isfahan has all the necessary capacities for economic and cultural development and is considered one of the pillars of Iranian civilization. This city is not only important in the field of industry and trade, but is also a place for art, music, prominent universities, medical sciences, technology, and innovation."

Formation of Africa Headquarters in Iran with the aim of expanding cooperation

The Head of the Trade Services Department of the Trade Development Organization stated: The third Iran-Africa Cooperation Summit was held on May 27th with the presence of the President of I.R. of Iran, some government officials, and senior African officials, and hosted more than 400 representatives from African states. He added: In order to develop economic relations, the African Headquarter has been formed under the chairmanship of the First Vice President to strengthen the framework of cooperation.

Isfahan Governor's Suggestions for Developing Relations with Africa

At the conclusion of the summit, Isfahan governor emphasized: "This province is well prepared to implement joint projects in the fields of science, industry, tourism, agriculture and technology. He put forward proposals including establishing a Center for Scientific Cooperation

and Innovation between Iran and Africa, creating a permanent secretariat for academic diplomacy, forming a special zone for bartering goods and services, and strengthening cooperation in tourism and handicrafts.

Final message of the summit: Iran's voice was heard in Africa

The president of the Isfahan Chamber of Commerce stated: "We hope that this summit can develop economic relations between Iran and Africa and create a new path for long-term cooperation." He added: "Isfahan, a city that has been a symbol of peace and tranquility for many years, hosted African officials and economic activists at this summit, and this opportunity was used to strengthen bilateral relations."

The third Iran-Africa Cooperation Summit was an important step in the development of international cooperation, and it is hoped that these interactions can pave the way for creating new economic and cultural opportunities between the two sides.