

Iran-Africa meeting focuses on joint investment, agricultural production

Economy Desk

Iran is seeking to move agricultural ties with African countries beyond trade in goods towards joint production, investment and technology transfer, Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljah said on Saturday at a meeting on expanding cooperation between the two sides.

Speaking at the first national meeting on Iran-Africa agricultural cooperation in Tehran, Nouri-Qezeljah said Iran's priorities included expanding balanced, market-oriented agricultural trade, technology transfer and workforce training, joint investment in agricultural value chains, and removing operational barriers while strengthening institutional cooperation. The meeting was attended by ambassadors, economic advisers, honorary consuls and more than 200 businesspeople, ISNA reported.

He said Africa should be viewed not simply as a market for Iranian products but as a partner in joint investment, production and technology development. Cooperation should move beyond occasional exchanges and identifying business opportunities towards practical projects and lasting partnerships, he added.

Nouri-Qezeljah said Iran had expertise in water and soil management, modern irrigation, greenhouse production,

agricultural machinery, seeds, livestock and poultry, vaccines, veterinary products, fisheries and food processing. African countries, meanwhile, had significant potential in crop production, tropical products, livestock farming and fisheries. Linking these capabilities could boost productivity, employment and added value, he said.

Trade between Iran and African countries reached about \$940 million in the first nine months of the Iranian year beginning on March 21, 2025, up 66% from the same period a year earlier, according to figures cited by the minister. About two-thirds of Iran's imports from Africa consisted of food and agricultural products.

Despite the growth, Nouri-Qezeljah said trade remained below the potential of Africa's market of more than one billion people. He called for more balanced trade, reciprocal investment and the development of joint value chains.

Turning to ongoing cooperation, he said Iran had taken steps to expand agricultural ties with Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania and Kenya, including meetings of joint economic commissions and efforts to advance technical and trade agreements.

Iran had also held one- to two-month training courses for delegations from Mauritania, Mali and Senegal in veterinary medicine, vaccine production, fisheries,

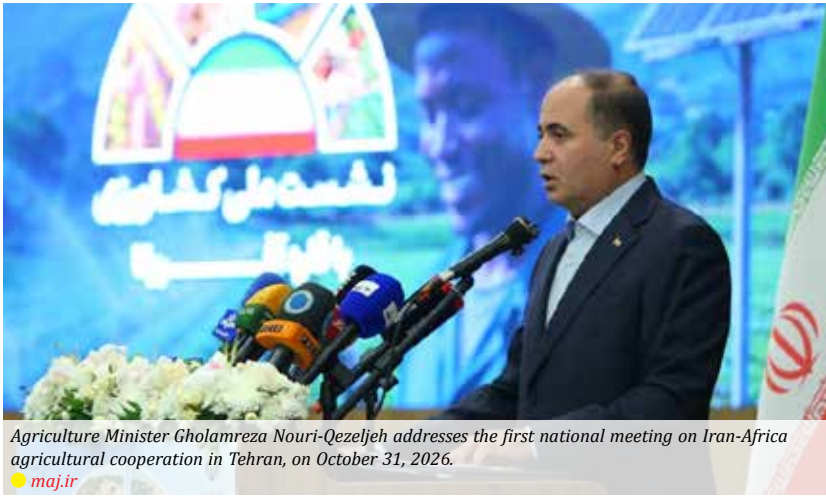
livestock farming and agricultural mechanization, he said. The courses could be extended to other African countries.

The Agriculture Ministry's international affairs office serves as the secretariat for six joint cooperation commissions with African countries and more than 10 joint agricultural committees, Nouri-Qezeljah said. The aim was to make better use of existing mechanisms and prevent negotiations from stalling at the stage of administrative correspondence, he added.

He urged businesspeople to submit specific project proposals identifying partners, target markets, required investment, legal requirements, timelines and performance indicators. Selecting a limited number of feasible projects and appointing designated contacts in both countries would be essential to moving cooperation forward, he said.

Nouri-Qezeljah also announced that the fourth Iran-Africa cooperation summit would be held next month, alongside the FIDAK (Foire Internationale de Dakar) event in Senegal, and called on private-sector companies and agricultural businesses to participate actively.

At the same meeting, Akbar Khosravi-Nejad, the Foreign Ministry's director general for African affairs, said Iran and African countries needed to shift their economic ties away from exports alone



towards joint production, technology transfer and sustainable value creation. Agriculture was chosen as the focus of the first specialized Iran-Africa meeting because of its importance to African countries, he said. Despite having extensive arable land and a young, growing population, Africa continues to import tens of billions of dollars worth of food annually.

African countries import an estimated \$65 billion to \$70 billion in food each year, Khosravi-Nejad said, pointing to significant opportunities for cooperation in agriculture and related industries.

He also said the African Union's strategic agenda for 2026-2035 placed emphasis on transforming agricultural and food systems and strengthening value chains across the continent. The African Continental Free Trade Area could also help create a larger market for technology and production, he added.

These developments point to a shift in African development policies towards generating more added value within the continent, Khosravi-Nejad said, adding that Iran's economic cooperation with African countries should align with that approach.

Iran looks to ECO summit to boost regional economic ties



Economy Desk

Iran is seeking to expand economic cooperation with regional countries through the

Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref chairs a meeting to plan the ECO summit in Tehran on October 31, 2026.

● IRNA

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), with a forthcoming summit offering an opportunity to address what its first vice president described as four decades of shortcomings by the bloc.

Mohammad Reza Aref made the remarks on Saturday at a meeting to plan the ECO summit, saying Iran had expanded its engagement with members of the Shanghai Cooperation

Organization and the Eurasian Economic Union in recent years and established more substantive ties with them, IRNA reported.

Aref identified tourism, science and technology, cybersecurity and trade as major areas for cooperation among ECO members and called for them to be prioritized at the upcoming summit. He said the meeting would provide an opportunity to chart a new course for regional economic cooperation.

Aref said developing relations with regional countries was a government priority and that countries in the region were also more willing to expand cooperation with Iran.

ECO, initially established by Iran, Pakistan

and Turkey and now comprising 10 member states, had not performed adequately, Aref said. Leaders of member countries had stressed the need to expand the organization's activities.

He said stronger bilateral ties among ECO members, along with their cooperation through other regional organizations, had created favorable conditions for improving collaboration within the bloc.

Aref also pointed to the readiness of countries in Central Asia, the Caucasus and east of Iran to expand ties, stressing the need to make use of regional capacities and the member states' shared cultural ties.

At Saturday's meeting, the Foreign Ministry presented an update on preparations for the summit. The ministers of culture, science, cultural heritage and tourism, and roads and urban development also outlined the latest state of Iran's cooperation with ECO members in their respective fields.

Aref ordered the formation of five specialized working groups on cultural, tourism, diplomatic, economic and political affairs, to be headed by the relevant ministers.

ECO has 10 members: Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Protesters in Iraq demand reopening of border crossing with Iran

Economy Desk

Protesters gathered at a border crossing in south-eastern Iraq on Saturday, demanding its reopening after a 10-day closure that they say has disrupted the livelihoods of thousands of people dependent on cross-border trade.

The protesters included truck and taxi owners and employees of the al-Shaib crossing in Maysan Province. They said the closure had cut off their income and halted business activity linked to border trade, Fars news agency reported.

The demonstration followed several protests by truck drivers in recent days. On Friday, dozens of drivers gathered outside the crossing in their third protest in less than a week, Iraqi news outlet Al-Maalomah reported. The drivers said hundreds of trucks relied directly on the crossing for their operations.

Earlier, on October 25, protesters blocked a road from the Bazargan area toward oil companies and reported rising fruit and

vegetable prices in Maysan markets following the border closure.

On October 28, drivers also gathered outside the provincial governor's office, saying they had been protesting for about nine days. They said transferring their operations to the Shalamcheh crossing was not a viable option because it would increase transport costs for both businesses and consumers.

The Iraqi government decided on October 20 to close al-Shaib until further notice, with the measure taking effect on October 21. Baghdad said the crossing lacked the technical, technological and logistical readiness needed to continue operating and that it was working to complete infrastructure and control systems.

The closure followed an earlier suspension of activity at al-Shaib, Shalamcheh and Mandali crossings on September 12, after a drone attack on Saudi oil infrastructure was alleged to have originated from Iraqi territory. Trade resumed at

most crossings after security reviews, including at al-Shaib on September 17, but the crossing was shut again several weeks later.

Al-Shaib, known as Chazabeh on the Iranian side, is an important land trade route between Iran and Iraq. Local Maysan officials say about 4,000 people depend on it directly or indirectly for their livelihoods. Some cargo can be diverted to alternative crossings, including Shalamcheh, Zurbatiyah-Mehran, Mandali-Khosravi, Somar, Bashmaq and Parviz Khan. But rerouting shipments does not fully offset the disruption, as it increases travel distances and costs for businesses in Maysan.

The impact of the closure comes amid substantial trade between the two countries. Figures from the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce put bilateral trade at about \$12 billion last year, including more than \$10.2 billion in Iranian exports to Iraq. Another estimate puts the value of bilateral trade in 2024 at about \$12.5 billion.



ADDENDUM NOTICE

Date: 1405/08/10 - No.:1267122

INVITATION TO ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY



Further to Tender Notice no.1203315 published in Tehran Times and Ettelaat on 25/10/2026 and Moeen and Iran Daily on 26/10/2026, please be advised that the terms and conditions of tender for the purchase of 2×50000±5% MTS of Granular Triple Super Phosphate (GTSP) will be available until Monday dated 2/11/2026.

All qualified and interested companies that were unable to obtain the tender documents are invited to receive them from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of IRI. Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30-character identification code of 33903978226350065000000000000008.

The bidders are required to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Wednesday** dated **2/12/2026 at 9:00 a.m.** to our security office, located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be on **Wednesday** dated **2/12/2026 at 11:00 a.m.** with the presence of bidders' representatives in our purchasing committee (9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

Other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

For more information, you may refer to our website www.assc.ir, and <http://iets.mporg.ir> or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.

Public Relations and International Affairs of Agricultural Support Services Company