

RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAN AND ALBANIA (1992–2022)

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Abstract: The article examines the complex relationship between Iran and Albania between 1992–2022, following the collapse of communism in Albania. Initially, both countries sought to establish diplomatic and economic ties, but Albania's increasing alignment with Western powers, particularly its aspirations to join NATO and the EU, created friction. The relationship deteriorated sharply after Albania hosted the Iranian dissident group MEK, leading to diplomatic expulsions and cyberattacks attributed to Iran. Economically, bilateral trade remains minimal due to sanctions against Iran and Albania's focus on European integration. Culturally, Iran's influence in Albania is limited, hindered by religious and ideological differences, and a strong pro-Western sentiment in Albania. The current geopolitical climate suggests that substantial improvements in Iran-Albania relations are unlikely in the near future.

Keywords: Iran, Albania, Shiism, Balkans, International Relations

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