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# DIPLOMATIC FOCUS



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**Shavkat Mirziyoyev:**

***The New Uzbekistan is primarily the new economic relations, the new economic vision***







Mian Fazal Elahi



Pakistan was among the first countries to recognise the independence of Republic of Uzbekistan in 1991, On the 30th independence Day of the Republic of Uzbekistan and also the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two brotherly countries both the leaders congratulated each other and agreed to celebrate it in a befitting manner

Dreams of connecting landlocked Central Asia more closely to South Asia and the international trading system are coming into focus after a Central & South Asia was on July 15-16, 2021 conference taken place in Tashkent, initiative by President of Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Nearly 50 countries and more than 30 international organizations attended, including China, Russia, the United States, and the European Union.

The gathering was perhaps the largest yet to promote economic integration. Still, experts caution that high-level engagements must translate into tangible investments in order to deliver economic benefits. Pakistan and Uzbekistan agreed to strengthen their multifaceted ties in political, trade and economic, energy, communication, science and technology, education and cultural spheres, and fighting against Covid-19.

Prime Minister Iof Pakistan H.E. Imran Khan and President of Uzbekistan H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev expressed satisfaction at the continued progress in bilateral relations and announced the establishment of a strategic partnership for mutual benefit of the two countries.Both leaders agreed on the regular exchange of parliamentary delegations to deepen bilateral ties.

The leaders expressed satisfaction at the level of bilateral cooperation within the framework of international organisations and reaffirmed their commitment to continue supporting each other in the UN, SCO, OIC, ECO and other international and regional forums on issues of mutual interest.The Uzbek president highly appreciated the role of Pakistan in promoting the peace process in Afghanistan and its contribution to socioeconomic development of Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Imran Khan hailed Uzbekistan's efforts for socioeconomic reconstruction of Afghanistan through the implementation of a number of significant projects. The two leaders welcomed the signing of the agreement on transit trade as an important tool for expanding bilateral trade. They reiterated their support for the Termez-Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway project as an important initiative to create a rail link from Central Asia to the Arabian Sea through Afghanistan and Pakistani seaports of Karachi, Gwadar and Bin Qasim.

The two leaders also recognised immense potential of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor for the benefit of the entire Central Asian region and beyond entailing greater connectivity and trade linkages through a network of transport, fibre optic cable, energy pipelines, and investment opportunities in its SEZs. Following the talks, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Prime Minister Imran Khan signed a Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

The 30th Independence Day of the Republic of Uzbekistan is a very special occasion. This is the time to celebrate and renew our resolve to build upon the achievements of our two brotherly countries in the past decades. In order to celebrate this landmark year,

Diplomatic Focus desides to issue this special supplement.

The articles, columns, Opinions are published in Magazine in good faith. However, the contents of these writings may not necessarily match the views of the Editor/Publisher/Organization.





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# Territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan

The Republic of Uzbekistan is situated between the rivers Amu Darya and Syr Darya, and covers an area of 448.9 thousand sq. km.

The length of the territory of the Republic from west to east is 1 425 km from north to south - 930 km. The territory in the north and north-east of the Republic of Uzbekistan borders with Kazakhstan, in the east and south-east with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in the west with Turkmenistan, in the south with Afghanistan. The total length of the country border is 6 221 km. The long border with Afghanistan is 137 km, with Kazakhstan - 2 203 km, with Kyrgyzstan - 1 099 km, with Tajikistan - 1 161 km and Turkmenistan - 1 621 km.

Uzbekistan is divided into twelve provinces (viloyatlar, singular viloyat, compound noun viloyati e.g., Toshkent viloyati, Samarqand viloyati, etc.), one autonomous republic Karakalpakstan (Autonomous Republic, etc.).



## Administrative-territorial structure of the Republic of Uzbekistan







# Geographical location



The Republic of Uzbekistan is located in Central Asia. According to natural and geographical conditions Uzbekistan is one of the most favorable regions in Central Asia. The territory of Uzbekistan is a peculiar combination of plains and mountain terrain.

Most of the territory of Uzbekistan is occupied by plains (about four-fifths of the territory). One of the main is Turanian plain. The east and northeast of the country are situated spurs of the Tien Shan and the Pamir mountains, here is

the highest point in the country (4643 m). In the north central part of the territory of Uzbekistan is one of the largest deserts in the world - the Kyzyl Kum, west - the Karakum.

The mountains and foothills are about 1/5 part of the country. The east of the country is dominated by middle and high landforms. Within the territory of the country there are the slopes or the closure of the West Tien Shan (Ugam, Pskem, Chatkalskiy, Kurama) and the Pamir-Alai (Zeravshan,

Turkestan, Hissar, Kugitangtau Baysantau). To the south and west, they gradually fall and into the plains. Stretch between mountains large cavities: Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya, Zarafshan, Samarkand are located. The largest intermountain trough - Ferghana hollow (valley) - length 370 kilometers and width up to 190 kilometers. On three sides of it are surrounded by the mountain ranges and is opened only from the west. On the border with Afghanistan is a vast Amu-Darya basin.

## THE STATE FLAG OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN



The law about "The State Flag of the Republic of Uzbekistan" was adopted on November 18 in 1991 in the 8th session of the Supreme Council of Uzbekistan.

## THE STATE EMBLEM

The law about "The State Emblem" was approved by the 10-th session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Uzbekistan on July 2, 1992.

The new state emblem of the Republic of Uzbekistan was created to reflect the many centuries of experience of the Uzbek people. The state emblem of the Republic presents the image of the rising sun over a flourishing valley. Two rivers run through the valley, representing the Syrdarya and Amudarya.

The emblem is bordered by wheat on the right side and branches of cotton with opened cotton bolls on the left side.



According to The State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on statistics, as January 1, 2021 the population of the republic is 34 558 900 people. Sum (UZS) is the currency of Uzbekistan.



# ***Uzbekistan's Development Strategy for 2017-2021***

**W**ith the decree of the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan "on the strategy of action for the further development of the Republic of Uzbekistan" dated February 7, 2017, the Strategy of Action on Five Priority Directions of Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan was adopted in 2017-2021.

This strategy, which was introduced with the idea and initiative of the head of state, is the main goal of the comprehensive development of Uzbekistan, to occupy a place among the advanced democratic countries of the world and to occupy a worthy place in the world arena, has been highly appreciated by the international community, influential experts, state and public figures, political scientists as the Five priority areas of development of Uzbekistan have been identified in the strategy of action, each of which is reflected in specific measures aimed at further deepening and ensuring the effectiveness of democratic reforms at a new level in the country.

1. In the first direction, which is called "improving the construction of the state and society", it is envisaged to deepen democratic reforms and further strengthen the role of parliaments and political parties in modernization of the country, reform the system of Public Administration, development of the organizational and legal foundations of the public service, improvement of the system of "electronic government", increasing the quality.

2. In the second direction called "Ensuring the rule of law and further reform of the judicial

and legal system", measures have been taken to strengthen the guarantees of genuine independence of judicial power and reliable protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens, increase efficiency in the Prevention of violations, transform courts into a truly "fortress of Justice", radically improve the quality of legal.

3. In the third direction, which is called "further development and liberalization of the economy", important measures are taken to ensure the stability of the national currency and prices, regulate the currency, attract foreign investments to Uzbekistan, expand relations with leading international and foreign financial institutions, introduce modern technologies for the production of export-oriented goods, raise the country's position in the international.

4. The fourth direction, called "development of the social sphere", is aimed at ensuring employment of the population, especially young people, social protection and health of citizens, improvement of Science, Education, Culture and sports, implementation of measures for the development of road transport, engineering and communication

and social infrastructure.

5. Within the framework of the fifth line, which is called "Ensuring security, national harmony and religious tolerance, maintaining foreign policy in a deeply thought-out, mutually beneficial and practical spirit", it is envisaged to implement measures based on a peaceful policy, such as the realization of measures to protect the independence and territorial integrity of the state, mitigate the consequences of the island.

The "strategy of action" is envisaged to be implemented in five stages, on the basis of state programs, which are adopted in Uzbekistan based on the names given to each year.

Under the leadership of the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the National Commission for the implementation of the strategy of action has also been established and is operating consistently.

Also, the full, timely and qualitative implementation of the activities included in the annual state programs is controlled by commissions drawn up on each of the five directions in the strategy of action.

## **HARAKATLAR STRATEGIYASI 2017-2021**





# The New Uzbekistan is Becoming a Country of Democratic Transformations, Big Opportunities and Practical Deeds

## Answers of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev to the Questions of the Editor-in-Chief of the «Yangi O'zbekiston» Newspaper Salim Doniyorov

**Question:** Mr. President, first of all, we express our gratitude to You for agreeing to give an interview to our newspaper.

*As it is well-known, in the past five years, the large-scale democratic transformations have been taking place in our country. The «New Uzbekistan» concept is becoming a reality. In what exactly do You, as the Head of the State, the initiator of these socio-political processes and the leader-reformer at their center, first of all see the essence of these reforms?*

**Answer:** It should be noted first and foremost that any nation, any people with the great goal of building a free and just life of a just society in its country, is going through a difficult, thorny and complex path of development.

The Uzbek people, always looking at the future with great hope and confidence, living and patiently overcoming all challenges, on August 31, 1991, realized their sacred dream our dear Motherland gained independence.

In a few days, we will celebrate the 30th anniversary of this significant date. On the eve of this glorious holiday, the big preparations are underway in our country. The large-scale creative and improvement work is being carried out on the ground. In particular, the «New Uzbekistan» park and a unique Complex of Independence are being built on a vast territory of more than 100 hectares of land adjacent to the capital. If all goes well, this year we will celebrate our greatest, the most valuable holiday in this new square.

Undoubtedly, during the years of independence, our country has made historical efforts to build a new state and society, as well as high milestones have been reached thanks to a resolute will and enormous potential of our courageous and noble people. In a historically short period of time, our Main Law, the Constitution, was drafted and adopted. Our country as a sovereign state has taken a worthy place in the world community.

The foundations of modern statehood have been laid and the constitutional system of Uzbekistan has been established. Three independent branches of government – legislative, executive and judicial – were created. A truly constitutional state has been built.

The Armed Forces that are able to reliably protect the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the inviolability of



our borders, the peaceful life of our people and our national interests have been organized. The national currency – the Uzbek Soum has been introduced. The Gold and Foreign Exchange Reserves were formed.

Our ancient history, rich cultural heritage, national and religious values and our identity have been restored. I am delighted that I had the opportunity to take an active part in such unforgettable historical processes.

It should be noted that along with profound achievements in independent development, our path has not been without some mistakes and shortcomings. The processes themselves, aimed at abandoning the totalitarian regime and building a democratic society, at that difficult and alarming time sharply posed various problems and tasks for us. There were cases when our knowledge and experience, will and firmness have been sufficient and sometimes not sufficient to meet these challenges successfully.

Therefore, revival of our country's development to a new, higher level, the implementation of the new reforms for this purpose have become an objective necessity, a major strategic task. By the way, the word «new» has a special meaning for us. Let us remember, for instance, that one of our the most ancient holidays is called Navruz – the New Day. The values and traditions associated with this ancient holiday are so

rooted in our lives that for centuries our people have lived with a fervent hope and dream that, as the great poet and thinker Alisher Navoi said, «Our every day was like Navruz».

Yet, we are well-aware that at the beginning of the last century, our ancestors with the ideas of patriotism and national progress, boldly entered the arena of struggle under the flag of Jadidism - the movement for renewal and freedom, justice and equality, science and enlightenment, as well as national identity. The goal of these great people was to lead the people of Turkestan, who were trapped in a pool of ignorance and backwardness, on the path of universal development, equipping them with secular science and advanced professions.

The new type of schools, theaters, libraries and museums, newspapers and magazines founded by the Jadids, as well as the charitable societies for sending Turkestan children to study abroad, awakened our people from age-old ignorance and gave them unprecedented strength for the national liberation movement. Unfortunately, the establishment of the Bolshevik dictatorship in our country, the continuation of the tsarist colonial policy in the new formation did not allow our enlightened ancestors to fully realize their goals. However, their noble aspirations have been preserved in the blood and historical memory of our people and they are still alive.

Therefore, it would not be a mistake to say that



the idea of «New Uzbekistan», which has taken a deep place in the hearts of our people and today becomes a national movement, is based on the dreams and aspirations of our great ancestors, through whose efforts the first and then, the second era of Renaissance began in our national history. The history of mankind shows that the processes of spiritual awakening in the life of any people lead to an awareness of national identity and raise the economic and the cultural development of the country to a new level. We all know that such a unique social phenomenon is called «Renaissance», which means awakening, rebirth and elevation.

As it is well-known that the territory of modern Uzbekistan in the ancient times was the cradle of two great renaissance epochs - the First (enlightenment - IX-XII centuries) and the Second (Temurid - XIV-XV centuries) Renaissance. This is a historical fact, which was proven and recognized by the world science.

Currently, another important process of revival is taking place in our country. Therefore, the words «New Uzbekistan» and «Third Renaissance» harmoniously resonate with our life and inspire our people to great goals. Today, Uzbekistan is becoming a country of democratic transformations, big opportunities and practical deeds. For me, this process is the greatest result of our reforms. After all, the clarity of the goal is the most important criterion that ensures the effectiveness of actions.

If we briefly describe the true essence and idea of the Action Strategy adopted by us five years ago, then in this unique document we have set ourselves the strategic goal of building a New Uzbekistan and laying the foundations for the Third Renaissance.

It should be noted that the building a New Uzbekistan is not a whim, not a subjective

phenomenon, but an objective necessity, which has its own fundamental historical foundations, due to the current political, legal, socio-economic, spiritual and educational situation, based on the centuries-long aspirations of our people and fully conforming to their national interests.

The New Uzbekistan is a state, developing in strict compliance with the universally recognized norms in the field of democracy, human rights and freedoms, on the basis of the principles of friendship and cooperation with the international community, the ultimate aim of which is to create a free, comfortable and prosperous life for our people.

I do not want to make a long speech about the results, that we have achieved in a historically short period of time as a consequence of reforms. The opinions of the distinguished statesmen and politicians, experts and analysts on this topic are regularly being published in the national and foreign mass media.

Such impartial assessments make all of us delighted. At the same time, I want to emphasize that we are carrying out these democratic transformations not in order to please someone, not for someone's praise, not to get into various ratings, but because the democratic processes are vital to us, we implement them for the benefit of our people, primarily, thinking about the present and the future of our young generation, for the sake of national interests.

We, the citizens of Uzbekistan, more than anyone else, feel the rapid changes in the political, legal, socio-economic image of our country, the fact that the new relations, the new opportunities and values are being formed in our life. It is noteworthy that today such fundamental democratic concepts and

phenomena as «human rights and freedoms», «rule of law», «openness and transparency», «freedom of speech», «freedom of religion and belief», «public control», «gender equality», «inviolability of private property», «freedom of economic activity» are becoming an integral part of our life.

We must explicitly recognize the fact that over time, the reform process is only expanding and the fleeting time sets even more ambitious tasks for us. The life teaches us a lot. Therefore, we are in constant search, and where is a search, there, along with success, deficiencies and shortcomings happen, as well.

The most important thing is as said: «Fortune favors the brave», we have overcome the most difficult stage, that is, we have clearly charted our path and embarked upon a considerable work. Now the task is to resolutely pursue the path of reforms and bring it to its logical conclusion. Certainly, it is not an easy task, but we are capable of it. It is important that in recent years a sufficient political, legal, socio-economic, organizational and institutional framework have been created to fulfill such a huge and challenging task.

**Question: In the process of political, legal, socio-economic, spiritual and educational reforms being carried out in our country, the priority is given to the implementation of an important constitutional principle, according to which «It is not the people who serve the state bodies, but the state bodies must serve the people». Why?**

**Answer:** For many years, I have served in the positions of responsibility at all levels of government, from the lowest to the highest levels. I was also a Deputy of the Oliy Majlis (the national parliament). Therefore, I can say with complete confidence that I, more than anyone







of state power have opened up to the people, to every citizen and are actively engaged in a dialogue with them.

We have freely admitted the existence of problems in our lives with forced labor, especially among children, unemployment, poverty, corruption, housing, education and health, and we are addressing them along with our general public.

Today, the people have a growing belief in justice and truth. They impartially assess the work of the leaders and officials at various levels, openly criticize their shortcomings. This is very important for our development. Since, as our famous poet Erkin Vakhidov said: «A bitter truth is better than a sweet lie».

Today, the people are awakening. The society is awakening. Without a doubt, a society, in which the sense of civil liability is ever awake, is a powerful force. Tell me, was it possible to imagine such results a few years ago? Certainly, not. Therefore, there is every reason to say that today's Uzbekistan is not Uzbekistan from the past and our people are no longer the same as they were in the past. Along with this, we must not forget another truth: today's Uzbekistan is not Uzbekistan that we dream about. We still have a long and thorny way to go. Before, our path was not easy, and after it will not be easy, as well.

However, we should not be afraid to move forward boldly, to make the unconventional unexpected decisions if it is necessary, the end result of which is effective and goes in the interests of our people.

Recently we have made very important decisions on many issues, including such obsolete procedures as «registration», «sticker» for travelling abroad, forced labor, public orders for cotton and grain. Simply said, this did not make the sky to fall to the ground. On the contrary, the bureaucracy, abuse of official position, extortion, the life of our society has become more free, people are «breathing easier». Both our people and the international community have appreciated our steps.

The New Uzbekistan is, primarily, is the new economic relations, the new economic vision. The economic system of our country is being completely restructured and if it is even

else, know from the inside all the shortcomings and flaws of the old government system and problems that concern the population, even, how things are at the grassroots level. The wise words «Justice is the basis of the state and the motto of the rulers», inscribed on the portal of the residence of our great ancestor Amir Temur the Oqsaroy Palace in Shakhrisabz, carry a very deep meaning.

As you know, our ancestors from time immemorial instructed the younger generation: «Do not do evil. Build a temple of justice and fairness in your heart and soul of the people». We have followed these simple and vital requirements in reforming the judicial and legal system. In particular, we put forward and began to implement the idea that there should be only one goal in the mind of a judge - justice, in the mouth - truth, in the soul - purity. It should be noted that for a long time the state and the authorities were cut off from the life of the people.

From a political and legal point of view, the state is defined as «the body that expresses the will of the people». Who does form the state? The people and their plenipotentiaries. So to who, then, should serve the state and its bodies in the first place? Certainly, to the people, citizens who voted for the officials and expressed confidence in them.

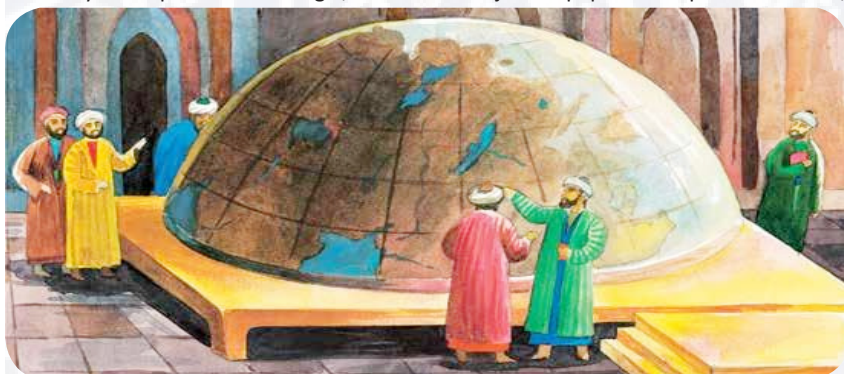
In this sense, our people have every right and deserve to be satisfied with the service of the state. Only state power based on such principles is truly a people's democratic authority. The political and legal, social and

economic, spiritual and educational roots of such a state and society will be strong and powerful. Therefore, we have set the main goal of all our reforms as to alleviate the concerns of our people, timely and effective tackle their problems, as well as improve their living and quality standards.

I believe it is not difficult to understand that this was the aspiration that served as the basis for declaring the 2017 in our country as the Year of Dialogue with the People and Human Interests, which was the year when I began my activity as the Head of the State.

Certainly, it is too early to say that we have completely changed the old system and achieved our goal. I repeat, we are in search every day. We are just taking the first steps on this path. However, those who say that these changes are just a temporary campaign that will pass and be forgotten are mistaken. This is one of the priorities of the long-term, pragmatic, people-focused policy pursued by the President and his team. And together with our people, we will definitely accomplish it and we will never draw back.

Actually, the fact that our democratic reforms have become irreversible is the most important result we have achieved today. The openness and transparency in the activities of the state bodies in our country are expanding. The senators and deputies, ministers and khokims (governors and mayors), officials of all levels are meeting face-to-face with citizens and seriously engaged in solving their problems not just on paper but in practice. That is, the bodies







# FIVE IMPORTANT INITIATIVES OF THE PRESIDENT

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev has put forward **5 principal initiatives** to streamline social and spiritual-enlightenment works in a new system



## 1

INCREASING THE INTEREST OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN **MUSIC, VISUAL ARTS, LITERATURE, THEATER AND OTHER TYPES OF ARTS**

## 2

**PHYSICAL CONDITIONING** OF YOUTH, DELIVERING ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS TO REVEAL THEIR ABILITIES IN SPORTS

## 3

CONDUCTING THE POPULATION, ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE, FOR EFFECTIVE USE OF **COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES AND THE INTERNET**

## 4

ENHANCING THE SPIRITUAL MATURITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE, MORE **EXTENSIVE PROPAGANDA OF THE CULTURE OF READING**

## 5

**ENSURING THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN**

difficult, we have begun to put into practice the market mechanisms. Today, such problems as cashing in of money from debit cards through the ATMs, various rates of the national currency on the «black market» and in banks, buying foreign currency, acquisition of citizenship, acquisition and registration of housing and property in any region of Uzbekistan are things of the past.

The reforms have a positive effect on the interests of all segments of the population: the entrepreneurs are gaining freedom and the new opportunities to develop their businesses, peasants and farming enterprises, the clusters are becoming the owners of the crops they have been growing.

Although under the previous Soviet regime, we had no right to take a step without an order from the «above». It got to the point that we planted cotton on the roofs of our houses, but our welfare did not improve at all. The schoolchildren were herded into cotton fields. As our beloved poet, Abdulla Aripov once wrote with a deep pain and regret: «The Uzbeks were scattered over millions of furrows», for a hundred years we bent over to pick cotton.

Until recently, about 6-7 million people were forced to participate in the cotton harvest every year. It has been three years since they have stopped doing it. No matter how difficult

it may be, we have introduced the proven and effective market economy methods in this area, including the cluster system. With the help of clusters, we strive to receive from each hectare 50 centners of cotton and 100 centners of grain, and we will definitely achieve these goals.

Unfortunately, the acute problems that needed an urgent solution have been accumulated in other areas, as well. We could imagine that this is the order of things, i.e. not to notice and ignore the problems. However, this would be a betrayal, both in relation to ourselves and in relation to our people, to the future.

I want to state explicitly: by nature, I am a person who absolutely does not tolerate falsehood. Our people have laid a trust in me

and to justify this high trust, to create the decent living conditions for the people are the meaning and purpose of my life. Since I have taken responsibility for the destiny of millions of people, I cannot go the other way and leave everything as it was before.

I repeat once again: we must complete the work before us by ourselves, with our strength, for no one will come from outside and solve any problem for us.

**Question: What are the highest priority tasks we face at the current stage of development of our country?**

**Answer:** I spoke about this in detail in my Address to the Oliy Majlis (the national







parliament) in December last year. Therefore, I will answer your question briefly.

The first priority task: social policy is one of the most important priorities of the state policy in our country and will remain so in the future.

Today, the most important areas of our economic strategy are a comprehensive increase in the well-being and living standards of people, which demands the creation of new jobs, sources of income, poverty reduction, and the development of our villages and cities.

A completely new and unique system for solving social problems has been created in our country. You, the journalists, are well aware of this. That is the reason why we have recently introduced such practices as «iron book», «women's book», «youth book», «makhallabay» (meaningfully, each community residential area – 'one by one') and «khonadonbay» (meaningfully, each house – 'one by one').

Proceeding from this, the problems are thoroughly studied on the spot, not based on some abstract indicators, but taking into consideration the problems of each family and citizen, women and youth who need help and support, thus we tackle them timely and effectively.

Our noble values – the support for the elderly, disabled people, people in challenging situations, giving them attention and care – today have a new substance, practical actions. In this regard, such programs as «Obod Qishloq» ('Prosperous village') and «Obod Makhalla» ('Prosperous Community'), «Five important initiatives», «Every family is an entrepreneur», «Youth is our future» shows especially positive results.

In the framework of the «Obod Qishloq» and «Obod Makhalla» programs alone, in 2021, the construction, repair and improvement works for 20,8 trillion Uzbek soums will be carried out in 7 794 villages and makhallas (the local neighborhood community area) of all cities and regions. It should be noted that such funds have never been allocated for the improvement of villages and makhallas, and most importantly, their development has not been given serious attention in the history of our country.

To carry out such a large-scale work, executives do not sit in their comfortable offices, but



work directly on the «ground», at the level of the makhalla. The fact that the social support is targeted allows everyone in need to receive the assistance according to his or her real needs. At the same time, we attach a particular importance to ensure that nobody of this category is left out.

The proposals and initiatives continue to come from not only the higher, but more from the lower levels. The interaction of the lower, middle and higher levels of power gives a good effect in their implementation. On this basis, the social landscape of our society is completely changing, the efficiency of management is increasing, and most importantly, people's confidence in life, work, in their destiny and future is growing. I consider such changes to be the main qualitative indicators of the development of society.

Certainly, there are still some shortcomings and weaknesses in the social protection system. We will gradually eliminate them, improve this system until it reaches a satisfactory level in all respects, until all the vital forces of society rally around this goal. When implementing the systematic measures aimed at direct and targeted material support of low-income citizens, the main emphasis is placed not on subsidizing the poor, but on creating the necessary conditions and opportunities for them to earn income.

The second priority task: the identification of growth points in the field of economic development and giving them a special attention,

thereby increasing the competitiveness of the economy of the New Uzbekistan are of high importance. For example, the textile industry, which is very important to us. Our enterprises will be able to compete with manufacturers from leading countries only if they fully master all technological processes from cotton cultivation to its extensive processing, to the production of the final product, and dramatically increase exports and profits.

In order for the rich raw materials and mineral resources of our Motherland to work for the benefit of our people, the highly efficient production facilities based on the modern technologies are being created.

Owing to our efforts, in recent years, such large and unique facilities as the Kandym Gas Processing Complex, the Tashkent Metallurgical Plant have been launched, and along with these, the Navoi Mining and Metallurgical Plant and the Uzbek Metallurgical Plant have been expanded. As a continuation of this work, as you know, in cooperation with leading foreign companies, the construction work of a new copper-enrichment factory at the Almalyk Mining and Metallurgy Plant for \$2 billion has begun.

In the process of privatization, which is of a particular importance in the modernization and diversification of our economy, not only do we give a priority to the sale of state-owned enterprises, but also apply completely new approaches that serve to increase their competitiveness and strengthen our national economic interests. It is of a paramount importance to create the guarantees to ensure transparency and efficiency of the sale of state assets, as well as broad public participation in this process.

The third priority task: under current conditions of global pandemic, we see our main goals as protecting public health and preventing entrepreneurship from being left alone with its problems. Since, there are jobs, family incomes, their current and future life in every business structure.





The number of small businesses and private entrepreneurship in the New Uzbekistan has more than doubled in recent years. More than 50% of these enterprises were established only in the last three years. Moreover, this serves as a solid foundation for strengthening an important social layer – the middle class in our country.

Therefore, the support for business, protection of entrepreneurship and private property remain the main issue of all the economic reforms. The entrepreneurs have heard many beautiful words about their support, now it is necessary to make them feel the practical effect and results of these words in their daily activities. Gone are the days when business was remembered only when it came to paying taxes and inspections. So, we have done a lot to optimize the tax legislation, however, there are still challenging tasks ahead, and we will definitely realize them.

There are still cases when some local authorities interfere in the work of entrepreneurs, put pressure on them, using the «telephone right». This must be admitted. We are working to finally eradicate such problems. If we do not support the entrepreneurs, create favorable conditions for them, increase the number of private enterprises, the local budgets of cities and districts will remain insolvent. All of us should deeply realize that supporting entrepreneurship is the most effective way to improve the well-being of citizens, our people, and at the same time, it is the ultimate goal of building the New Uzbekistan.

I am confident that further liberalization of the life of our country, further promotion of openness and transparency, expansion of public control will play an important role in eliminating the existing shortcomings and deficiencies in this area. The fourth priority task: the pandemic has coincided with a period of fundamental changes in the agriculture. It has made it clear that ensuring the food security and developing the agricultural sector in accordance with the modern requirements is becoming the most topical task for all mankind, including us.

Our country has enormous potential, experience and traditions in the sphere of agriculture. However, there have been no market approaches and financial incentives, sufficient funds and scientific innovations have not been attracted for the development of the industry for a long time. As a result, the soil degraded and the fertility of the land declined.

Imagine that during the years of independence, that is, over the past 30 years, the population of Uzbekistan has increased by 15 million people. This is the population of one average country. Moreover, over time, as life changes, consumer demand and people's demands grow. And certainly, the land and water resources do not

get more. These resources are limited not only to us but throughout the world. Henceforth, we must build up our intellectual potential, knowledge, and experience, turn these factors into points of economic growth and a resource of development.

How can this be achieved? Certainly, through the knowledge and experience, constant self-improvement, research, the desire for innovation, the introduction of high technologies and effective implementation of reforms.

Therefore, we have begun a comprehensive and systematic transformation of the agricultural sector. Our main goal is to make this industry to be one of the main drivers of the economy. For this purpose, the Agriculture Development Strategy for 2020-2030 clearly defines the main objectives of the industry development. In particular, a plan is envisaged for the accelerated development of agriculture, the food sector and villages in the coming decade.

The important steps are being taken to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of the agricultural sector by organizing work on a completely new basis, creating thousands of new jobs in this area, and improving the standard of living in rural areas.

The fifth priority is to protect the health and life of our people during the pandemic. For this, a reserve of 3 trillion Uzbek soums was formed in the state budget for 2021. With these funds, many measures are being taken in the field of medicine, including vaccination of the population from coronavirus. A special attention is being paid to the expansion of remote services in all medical institutions, the transition of clinics and hospitals to electronic office management, the introduction of telemedicine between specialized medical centers and their branches, and further expansion of diagnostic and treatment capabilities in the field.

The measures are being taken to strengthen the primary healthcare system, especially the quality of healthcare in rural areas and makhallas (the local neighborhood community areas). In particular, instead of a general practitioner, the medical teams consisting of a family doctor and 5 middle-class medical

workers are introduced in the primary sector. Despite the extensive conditions created in our country for opening private clinics, there is a shortage of medical organizations providing hemodialysis, diagnosis and rehabilitation services. In this regard, a practical work has begun to increase the number of public-private partnership projects, provide 170 district and city medical associations with computer homographs, and improve the skills of staff in their use.

Another challenge in the sphere of medicine is the lack of highly qualified personnel. Therefore, from the new school year, the quota for admission to clinical residency will be doubled. The regional khokimiyats (the governor's offices) will allocate subsidies from the local budget for the training of specialists in demand in their region. We have also started to develop a legal framework for human organ transplantation operations in our country. Due to the lack of regulatory framework in this area, transplantation was not previously permitted unless the donor was a close relative of the patient. Many of our citizens went abroad for such operations, and those who did not have such an opportunity were in a hopeless situation.

One of the problems that worry us most is corruption in the health sector. In the last year alone, more than 30 billion Uzbek soums were plundered in the system. The perpetrators were brought to justice. Therefore, a serious attention is paid to the creation of an effective control system in this area, first of all, to strengthening public control.

Improving medical culture, widely affirming the principles of a healthy lifestyle is an urgent task not only for the medical sphere but also for our society as a whole. Everyone should, firstly, think and take care of their health. This is especially important today, as the coronavirus pandemic continues throughout the world, including in our country.

Therefore, we have no right to succumb to indifference and carelessness. The coronavirus is still among us. In this context, our country has formed a sufficient reserve of hospital beds, medicaments and protective equipment. The







work is underway to launch 60 oxygen stations in the regions and ensure the uninterrupted oxygen supply to the critical care and intensive care units. The practical work has begun on the production of vaccines in our country. Since April 1 this year, the vaccination of our population against coronavirus has started and is ongoing. Taking this opportunity, I once again call on our compatriots to take responsibility for their health and take an active part in vaccination activities against this dangerous disease.

The sixth priority task: we strive to strengthen the spiritual and educational work in the new conditions. This approach is a solid foundation for our current and future development. In this regard, the construction of the New Uzbekistan means an in-depth study of our recent and distant history, our unique cultural wealth and, relying on this, continue our path of independent national development at a new stage.

Certainly, our people are well aware of the work that we have been carrying out over the recent years in the cultural and humanitarian fields – to promote the culture, cinema, dance and fine arts, literature and book-reading. In particular, the organization and holding of International Festivals of Maqom Art (the Uzbek national classical combination of music and song), Bakhshi Art (Bakhshi is a narrator of folk epic, who combines in himself the art of story-telling, music, singing and acting skills) and handicrafts at the top-level played an important role in promoting the New Uzbekistan in the world.

Today, for an objective and unbiased study of our national history, there are the Cultural Values Research Center of Uzbekistan located abroad, the Center of the New History of Uzbekistan at the Academy of Sciences, and the «O'zbekiston tarixi» ('The History of Uzbekistan') TV Channel. With the aim of study and popularization of the religious and scientific-spiritual heritage of our great muhaddith-ancestors ('the Hadith Scholars'), who made immense contributions to the development of Islamic civilization, the International Research Centers of Imam



Bukhari in Samarkand and Imam Termiziy in Surkhandarya, as well as the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan in Tashkent and the Imam Maturidi International Research Center are operating.

The Center for Islamic Civilization, which is being constructed in Tashkent, will play an important role in an in-depth study and international promotion of the rich religious and spiritual heritage of our people, as well as educating the young generation in the spirit of national and universal values.

In view of the growing role and influence of spiritual and educational work in the current difficult and rapidly changing times, we are paying a special attention to further strengthening our activities in this direction. The Presidential Decrees adopted in March this year «On the Establishment of the Trust Fund to Support the Spheres of Spirituality and Creativity» and «On Measures to Radically Improve the System of Spiritual and Educational

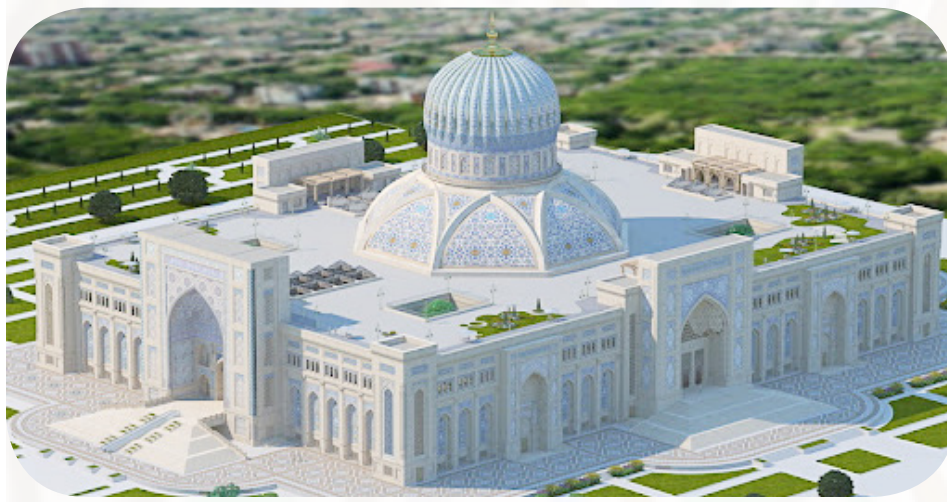
Work» are aimed at effectively solving problems in this area.

At the distinguished international and regional organizations, the New Uzbekistan confidently puts forward initiatives in all areas, including spiritual and educational issues. Thus, the initiative put forward by our country at the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly to adopt the Resolution «Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance» received broad support from the international community.

It should be noted that this resolution was recently adopted. Along with this, at the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States Summit, which was held in the videoconference format, another important initiative of our country was adopted – on the establishment of an Alisher Navoi International Turkic Council Award. This award will encourage the distinguished figures who have made a huge contribution to the development of science, education, culture and art, as well as the cohesion of the Turkic world. For us, this as an expression of high respect for our ancestor Alisher Navoi, of whom all Turkic peoples are proud, and for our people, who have nurtured such great personalities.

**Question:** *In the course of building the New Uzbekistan, a special attention is paid to foreign policy, the development of friendly cooperation with neighboring and other countries. What are the interconnectedness and harmony of domestic and foreign policies in this direction?*

**Answer:** First of all, it should be noted that from the early days since our country has embarked upon the new era, we attach a priority importance to the implementation of





an open, pragmatic and constructive foreign policy, strengthening close friendly relations and cooperation with all progressive countries of the world, especially with neighbouring states.

Uzbekistan has been and remains committed to this strategic course and fully accomplishes its obligations to its partners and international organizations. Over the past short time in historical terms, the political role and status of our country in the Central Asian region and in the international arena have increased significantly. The spirit of trust in Uzbekistan and the desire for cooperation with our country have increased in the world.

First, the problems accumulated over the years in our relations with neighboring countries have been resolved. The borders were opened. The broken bonds between the neighbors, brothers, a father and a son, relatives were restored. The people began traveling freely from one country to another. The visa issues have been resolved. The trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian ties are developing at an accelerated pace. Our countries, since the ancient times linked by the ties of friendship and fraternity, have started to closely cooperate on the regional and global issues, the socio-economic development.

The term «the Central Asian spirit» has appeared in the world political science. The regular Consultative Meeting of the Heads of the Central Asian States, which took place on August 5-6 this year in Turkmenistan, filled this process with new substance.

These examples alone show how interconnected and consonant domestic and foreign policies are. The main thing is that such harmony in domestic and foreign policy is realized in the name of the interests of our people, the results of which are felt by ordinary citizens in their lives and destiny.

Another aspect is that Uzbekistan today, with

its far-sighted policy, has become an active participant in the political processes in our region and in the world. Our cooperation with the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Islamic Cooperation Organization and other international and regional organizations has risen to a new level.

Our country became a member of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States, gained an observer status at the Eurasian Economic Union. For the first time in its history, Uzbekistan was elected a member of the UN Human Rights Council and has successfully participated at its 46th session held in Geneva on February 22, 2021, via videoconference. Last year, our country chaired the Commonwealth of Independent States for the first time and, despite the pandemic, all international events envisaged within the CIS were successfully held. About 70 important documents were adopted.

Uzbekistan is playing an increasingly important role in enhancing the processes of integration and cooperation. At the international conference «Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities», our country has advanced the new proposals and initiatives, which aroused interest not only in the states of these regions, but also in the world community. In particular, the issues of creating new transport corridors connecting Central Asia with the Indian Ocean were discussed. The conference has once again demonstrated the «Tashkent spirit» of cooperation. Currently, the Foreign Policy Concept of the Republic of Uzbekistan is being improved. This important document pays a special attention to strengthening the centuries-long ties of friendship and good-neighborliness, strategic partnership and mutual trust.

The multifaceted and mutually beneficial relations with the main foreign partners of Uzbekistan such as Russia, China, the United States of America, Turkey, Germany, France, the Great Britain, South Korea, Japan, India, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates and other states are further expanding. Uzbekistan, as the closest neighbor of Afghanistan, is interested in the early establishment of peace and stability in this country.

As it is well known, Uzbekistan will chair the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2021-2022. Thorough preparations are underway for this important high-level political event. In order to support our compatriots in many countries in the world and further strengthen ties with them, the «Vatandoshlar» ('Compatriots') Foundation was established.

Our work to strengthen the interethnic accord and magnanimity is taken to a qualitatively new level. July 30, annually celebrated as the International Day of Friendship, is declared the Peoples' Friendship Day in Uzbekistan. This year, it was widely celebrated in our country for the first time.

This can also be called an event that brings together the internal and external political factors. As in the rest of the world, Uzbekistan pays a serious attention to addressing environmental problems. In cooperation with neighboring states and the international community, we are resolutely continuing our actions to mitigate the impact of environmental disasters resulting from the destruction of the Aral Sea.

On a thousand hectares of the dried bottom of the sea, the forests and shrubs are being created. An important role in this is played by the activities of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Human Security for the Aral Sea Region in Uzbekistan, jointly created with the United Nations. As far as it is concerned, it is appropriate to recall the major initiative of Uzbekistan on the adoption of a special resolution of the UN General Assembly on declaring the Aral Sea Region a zone of environmental innovations and technologies, which was unanimously approved by the Assembly on May 18, 2021.

The countries such as the United States, Russia, China, Turkey and Azerbaijan took part in the development of this resolution, in all 50 countries acted as its co-authors, which indicates that this initiative has aroused enormous interest in the world community.

**Question: As it is well-known, the efficiency of reforms mostly depends on the knowledge and experience, political consciousness and awareness of the managing cadres, and khokims (governors and mayors) in particular. From this point of view, does the activities of khokims, who are the representatives of the President on the ground, satisfy You?**







**Answer:** I have also spoken about it in particular in my Address to the Oliy Majlis last year. This complex question utterly concerns me – the lack of knowledge and experience, organizational abilities and the feeling of responsibility for the people's cause is being observed not only in khokims, but also the leaders of various level and the status.

You are right, the effective implementation of the reforms on the ground, firstly, depends on the khokims, on their experience and knowledge, organizational abilities. Most important is that they must gain the trust of the people. The population assesses the state power proceeding from the activities of the heads at the local level, their working culture and ways to converse, political, legal and moral level.

However, frankly speaking, not all of the khokims and not all of the low-level managers as a whole enjoy the due level of authority among the people. Unfortunately, the task of working in the immediate contact with the people is of a low-priority for many heads at the local level. Therefore, they are ending up being shortsighted and unfit. Yet in fact, the first and foremost, as well as a sacred duty for each leader must become the task to live with the people's problems and concerns in their minds. What does the leadership culture, the lifetime experience and knowledge of a leader start from? It does start from the immediate contacts with the people.

If the leaders, and especially, those at a low level, won't change their worldview, won't become the assistants, the friends of ordinary citizens and entrepreneurs, whatever we do, how much strength and means we channel, whatever decrees and resolutions we adopt, whatever conditions we create for them, - it will be difficult to achieve progress at the local level.

It should be admitted – we are living in extremely difficult and uneasy time, in the epoch of toughest competition. The world is changing rapidly to an extent that yesterday's political and economic analyses and prognoses are now losing their topicality. The standoffs, the trade wars and the ecological problems are exacerbating. The officials, who in these complex conditions do not comprehend the necessity to live alongside the people, their concerns and needs, do not comprehend the simple truths put forward by life, do not have a future as leaders. They cannot be trusted any responsible task.

At some time back I have also served as a khokim. The conditions of those times cannot be in any way compared to the current ones. In many issues we were the powerless. Everything was addressed depending on the mood of the higher leadership.

The saddest thing about it was that the decisions on the problems of lower level were taken by the managers who used to sit back in their air conditioned offices, for whom the problems and concerns of the people residing in tough conditions in the villages or auls had been totally strange. They were incapable to even comprehend the real situation on the ground. At present, the khokims have the powers to make decisions on their own and set up the work on their own. They are no longer required, as it was before, to seek endorsement for every action from Tashkent and the officials at the head offices.

If a khokim as a manager, as a human being does not know something or has made a mistake, this can be understood. However, if he does not admit his mistakes, does not want to correct them, does not strive to develop, to work anew, to raise his knowledge and experience, and is set after personal interests and indulges in enjoyments, then such a thing cannot be forgiven.

What I ask of them most is that one should understand the people, live with their joys and needs in mind, look at the situation around and assess it from the standpoint of ordinary citizens and not to distance from the people. It is only in this case that the management of the region or a sector, and the decision-making will yield a specific result. The criteria of activity of each manager is to set as his major priority the dreams and aspirations and their consistent implementation.

I am getting pleased that among the khokims and ministers, the company and bank managers there are many active representatives of the new generation who know the business and think broad. They go for an open dialogue with people. They do not wait for instructions from above.

They are doing their work on their own and in a confident manner. Unfortunately, some leaders and responsible executives are so much self-opinioned that they do not notice the way how they have distanced themselves from the people. Certainly, we cannot tolerate such leaders. This is not only a demand of the President, but also the entire people. This is an

imperative of the time.

**Question:** *You always highlight that direct dialogue with the people is extremely important for the Head of State. However, is there a real opportunity to talk with the people on all of the issues, to get their feedback? How do you manage to fill this «vacuum»?*

**Answer:** From the early days in office as the President, I have seriously warned my team that I do not like the tumid words and «beautiful» numbers that have nothing to do with reality. No matter how bitter and inconvenient it may be, I want to know only reliable and correct information. It helps me to make the right decisions.

Certainly, not everyone has fully understood this requirement. There are the attempts to report to me in the same old way. However, I try to avoid such situations. We said goodbye to many, who did not realize this truth, and in this matter the demand will always be strict.

This is also required by the process of reforms aimed at ensuring the interests of our Homeland, the future of society, the happiness of our children. We have no right to do otherwise.

I reiterate once again: if one of the leaders and responsible executives does not understand this, no matter how difficult it is, we will have to part with them. The key objective of my every trip around the country is to learn about how people live, what are their concerns. It is vital. Therefore, during the trip, we change the route unexpectedly. I believe that these unscheduled «visits», not mentioned in the protocols, will teach the leaders not to relax, to maintain a working spirit.

Unfortunately, in spite of my repeated remarks and warnings, on the ground, only prior to my arrival they begin to improve the streets and squares, create «lawns» and «flower gardens» in one night, in general, the practice of embellishing the reality continues. Over the years, the eyewash, oppression of people, bravado and magniloquence have soaked into the blood of some leaders that it is difficult to eradicate these vices. However, we must put an end to them, completely. Since, this is





completely contrary to the nature of our people, which does not accept lies and falsehood.

The work of local authorities should not end after the completion of the President's trip. Instead, the work should be started all over again, on an even larger scale than before. Only in this case we will achieve the necessary dynamics and quality. We will become result-oriented. Previously, the khokims (governors and mayors) lived carefree, from visit to visit, one might say, they just had a rest, now they have specific goals and objectives. They work, consulting with the people. Since, they know: during his next visit, the President will definitely ask about the results on each issue.

At a new stage in the development of the country, in order to solve the outlined urgent tasks, we attach a particular importance to strengthening the personal responsibility of deputy heads of ministries, the state committees, government bodies and business associations, as well as introducing a new system to improve the efficiency of their activities. We have adopted a special resolution in this direction.

It was identified that the deputy heads of these categories are personally responsible to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan for the effectiveness of activities in the areas and sectors, which were assigned to them and report to the Cabinet of Ministers. In other words, the time has passed when the deputy chiefs of various levels hide behind the backs of their chiefs. Now they will also be responsible for the specific tasks. A personal responsibility will be the main criterion for employees of all the administrative departments.

Currently, a special attention is paid to the solution of the problems of the population on the ground, in the makhalla (the local neighborhood community area) itself. The khokims (governors) of regions, districts and cities allocate two days a week to receive citizens. The daily reception system is also being established.

In general, the office of each khokim (governor and mayor) must turn into a «the people's reception». Only in this way each executive will be fully informed about the true state of affairs and achieve efficiency in work.

Now, of course, there are many open sources, information networks that help to learn about the people's problems. Especially television, the press and the Internet make it possible to feel the breath of life, the pulse of every sphere. Personally, I try to get acquainted with topical opinions, events which are becoming the focus of public attention through the news in the mass media and social networks as far as possible.

In a word, it is impossible to break away from the real life during the development of the modern

information technologies. Nevertheless, I consider it necessary to have a direct dialogue with the people in any format, for example, during a planned event or an unplanned visit to a makhalla (the local neighborhood community area), district or an institution. All the problems that are the subject of the active discussion by citizens and the public require attention.

Moreover, they should not be ignored. Certainly, it is unacceptable to turn a blind eye to the violations of the law, injustice in society, violation of human rights, the situations which are related to the corruption. It does not matter whether the problems are systemic or minor. Each of them requires a response, study and solution.

For example, in recent years, a sustained effort has been made to combat the corruption – an illness which is hindered the country's development in the era of the fundamental reforms. Let me give an example. In 2020, 1,723 officials of the different levels were brought to the criminal liability for the committed crimes. The damage was amounted to 500 billion Uzbek soums. Moreover, for five months of 2021, the criminal cases have been launched against 1,696 officials, the damage by whom amounted to 450 billion Uzbek soums. Certainly, the material damage will be recovered from the perpetrators. The policy of eradicating corruption from the society will be resolutely continued in the future.

**Question: A profound attention is being paid in the country to the topical and vitally important issue for the population – the construction of housing, and particularly, the accessible housing. What will be the scale of this work in the future?**

**Answer:** We can speak with full confidence that for over the last years the new epoch of modern housing construction has begun in the country. This is confirmed by the growth in the number of housing in the last four years to 4-5 times as compared to the previous period, as well as the large-scale work being carried out this year, which aims to provide 54 thousand

families with housing in the current year.

The tasks and reforms aimed at achieving the good objective, which we have set before us, and that is to say – to make people happy, require of us to stir up the pace and increase the quality of housing construction. It is worth a special mentioning that before such a broad approach towards the construction, which corresponds to the modern requirements of housing, was not applied and this work did not have such a scale.

We are making the first steps in this direction and gaining experience. There is a housing construction in all of the regions with all modern amenities. The mortgage market is on the rise. The new concepts are being introduced into life «accessible housing», «smart house», «smart city» and «digital services». In the days to come we need to take a housing stock to such a level so that all layers of the population could be able to acquire housing on their preferences.

Certainly, there are still problems pertaining in this direction and we are addressing them with the bodies of governance at the local level. For instance, the people are getting displeased of the case of construction at a free space in-between the many-storey buildings and cutting off the trees in spite of the moratorium as well as reduction in the land territories.

Due to carelessness or greed of some executives, there are no more resting places for the people being left on the territories of residential areas to go in for sports and taking walks on a clean air with children.

Certainly, we cannot but react and take strict measures towards such cases. Therefore, the measures are being taken in Tashkent and other cities to ensure that the construction be undertaken beyond the limits of a city. It is not allowed for construction of new buildings in the residential areas without modernization of the public utilities infrastructure – the gas pipelines, power-lines, water pipelines and the sewage systems.

**Question: The necessary conditions are**







***being created in the country to ensure the youth rights and interests, so that they can be educated, work, demonstrate their knowledge and abilities. One of the practical demonstrations of this was the announcement of 2021 as the Year of Supporting Youth and Strengthening Public Health. What do You think is the role and main tasks of the youth in the process of building the New Uzbekistan?***

**Answer:** The youth is the nation's hope and support. The young people act as a decisive force in the effective implementation of the large-scale reforms. The youth with modern knowledge, demanded professions, the knowledge of foreign languages and innovative technologies play a leading role in the further development of the country.

As it is well-known, the young people tend to think in a new way, confidently come up with new ideas and implement them, take a creative and unconventional approach to a problem

solving. Therefore, today we attach a priority importance to training representatives of the younger generation, realizing their talent and potential in science, innovation, literature, art, sports, ensuring their active participation in public and political life.

One of the sacred hadiths that collected by Imam Bukhariy states: «A science learned in young age is like a pattern engraved on a stone». As history showed, our profound thinkers, following this postulate, made great scientific discoveries and made an invaluable contribution to the development of universal human thought.

In the continuation of these glorious traditions the upbringing of the followers of Khorezmiy, Ferganiy, Beruniy, Ibn Sino, Mirzo Ulugbek and Navoiy is not only our task but also a sacred duty to history and the future.

We have started an extensive work in this direction. In order to train competitive

personnel with in-depth knowledge and high skills, we have increased the number of universities in the country to 141, and opened up branches of 26 foreign higher educational institutions. Meanwhile, in 2016, there were only 77 universities in the country. Almost doubling their number in a short period of time is undoubtedly the result of our efforts to increase the intellectual potential of young people, society, as well as to expand their access to modern knowledge and professions. Over the past five years, the quotas for admission to higher education institutions have been increased threefold.

This year, 182 thousand young people were given the opportunity to become students. This means that the overall educational coverage has reached 28%. Just compare: 4 years ago, this figure was only 9%. An example of practical attention aimed at ensuring the future of our youth is the increase in State scholarships from 21 thousand to 47 thousand. Our last years' experience was brought to a new stage – in the current academic year, we have allocated 2 thousand scholarships separately for girls from needy families for admission to the institutions of higher learning.

We intend to increase the enrollment rate of school, lyceum and college graduates in higher education to 50% by 2030. We will definitely achieve this. This year, the «New Uzbekistan University», which meets the highest international standards, was organized in Tashkent. This university will become a model for all higher education institutions in the country.

The most gifted and brightest youth will study here. We pay a particular attention to the harmonious and balanced development of all stages of the national system of continuous education and upbringing. Over the past four







years, the coverage rate of children in the pre-school education has grown from 27.7% to 60%, that is, it has doubled. And the number of kindergartens has tripled and exceeded 14 thousand – these are the results of our reforms.

Currently, our country is undergoing major changes in the school education system based on the idea «The New Uzbekistan starts from the school threshold». In Tashkent and in the regions, the number of Presidential, creative and specialized schools is growing.

This year alone, in the framework of the «Barkamol Avlod» Centers ('Harmoniously Developed Generation') through the Five Important Initiatives Program for the meaningful spending of leisure time 36 thousand educative clubs were additionally organized for the young people, to which about 874 thousand children were attracted. Also, almost 100 thousand musical instruments and sports equipment, computers, about 600 thousand books were delivered to the educational institutions, libraries and training centers.

A particular importance on a national scale is given to the implementation of ideas and initiatives of the younger generation, providing them with jobs and sources of income.

Thanks to this care, over the past four years, the number of entrepreneurs under the age of 30 has increased 5 times and exceeded 500 thousand, which undoubtedly plays an important role in the development of this sector. Last year alone, the preferential loans in the amount of 2 trillion 300 billion Uzbek soums were allocated for more than 92 thousand entrepreneurial projects of the youth, which

will serve to further expand the ranks of such youth.

At the vocational training courses organized in makhallas (the local community areas), thousands of young men and women study modern professions that are in demand on the labor market. Beginning this year, based on the possibilities and development directions of a district the allocation of land to young people from 1 ares to 1 hectare of land in rural areas has begun. As a result, more than 230 thousand young people living in the countryside were allocated 61 thousand hectares of land.

In addition, 75 thousand hectares of land released from grain were distributed to 170 thousand young people for re-sowing. The work carried out by us in the framework of the youth programs and the «Youth book» aimed at reducing poverty among the youth and encouraging self-employment is of a profound importance. For the 8 months of this year, funds for 300 billion Uzbek soums were channeled to tackle the problems of 430 thousand young men and women included in the «Youth book». In particular, the contracts for education of more than 2 thousand students from families included in the «Iron book» have been paid.

From this year, a procedure will be introduced for the complete social tax refund from the budget to employers paid by them on behalf of the employees under the age of 25. As a result, in the second half of this year alone, the entrepreneurs who recruited 240 thousand young people will have 170 billion Uzbek soums at their disposal, and next year – 500 billion Uzbek soums.

On the basis of the new system aimed at supporting the student youth, 62 thousand young men and women, who are not provided with dormitories, 50% of the rent for housing will be reimbursed from the budget. Certainly, the work carried out in this direction not only continues consistently, but also rises to a new stage. This idea is confirmed by the Decree «On Additional Measures for Comprehensive Support of the Youth and Further Increase of their Social Activity» adopted on July 13, 2021.

This document provides for the introduction of more than 30 additional benefits and opportunities for the youth. I would like to speak about one of these opportunities. The tuition fees for higher educational institutions for children whose families are included in the «Iron book» the first academic year in 2021-2022 will be paid from the state budget. This opportunity can be used by the children from more than 4 thousand families throughout the country. For this purpose alone, about 29,2 billion Uzbek soums will be allocated from the budget.

In our country, a significant attention is being paid to the issues related to supporting children who have lost their parents and in need of care, getting an education, employment and housing, finding a worthy place in the society, strengthening the material and technical base and human resources of Mercy homes, special boarding schools and children's townships. Moreover, bringing up the children in Mercy homes with a family-like environment as highly spiritual and patriotic individuals with a profession in hand is a sacred duty to all of us. Taking all these into account, we are introducing a new system to increase the effectiveness of educational work in the Mercy homes and special boarding schools.

To study and tackle the problems of foster-children of such institutions, to realize their strives and aspirations, a new system «Book of Kindness» is being introduced. The procedure for providing housing for orphans and children left without parental care has also been established.

In accordance with it, children of these categories who do not have a housing assigned to them, and registered as in need of housing when reaching the age of 18, a studio apartment with a total area of at least 25 square meters is allocated, and in these cases when a marriage is made between the adults, a two-room apartment of at least 50 square meters will be allocated.

I believe that our reforms being carried out in the spirit of humanitarianism are in line with the words of the great poet Alisher Navoi: «He who extends a helping hand to the exhausted, his help equals the reconstruction of the Holy Kaaba», harmoniously combine with the qualities of our people, such as magnanimity,





generosity and care.

No matter what city or village in our Motherland I visit, I always try to meet with local youth. In an open and sincere conversation I am interested in their health, education, aspirations, conditions created in their villages and makhallas (the local neighborhood community areas). As it is well-known, there are many evaluation criteria and parameters for the development of countries and peoples of the world.

However, to me, the most important criterion in this regard is the happiness and well-being of our youth. I see the spirit, dynamics and energy of the New Uzbekistan, above all, in the fearlessness, bold thinking and proposals of our dear young men and women, in their first victories.

Quite recently, on June 30, on the Youth Day, I met with members of our younger generation and was pleased to see their achievements and research in various fields. I am certain that the people and the country, whose children are always striving for something new, set ambitious

to it. Since, the development level and the culture of people, the country and the society, primarily, are defined by an attitude towards a woman. A sacred abode by the name of a family and our priceless wealth – the children are linked with a woman.

If our women are happy, then a society will be happy. In a country, where women in all of the spheres and branches enjoy the same rights as men, where they are respected and esteemed, there will be peace and tranquility, the development and the progress. It is therefore that our people from of old have glorified a woman – a symbol of Motherhood.

It is a woman that for over a span of the entire history of humanity imbues to it a feeling of beauty, loyalty, love and patriotism. All of the successes and results of our life are achieved thanks to our mothers. In conducting the state policy in ensuring the lawful rights and interests of our dear mothers and lovely sisters, who make up a near half of the country's population, as well as raising their role and the status in the society we rely on these very values. The

At present, an important role in the protection of women's interests belongs to such structures as the Commission for Gender Equality, the Committee of the Senate of Oliy Majlis for Women and Gender Equality and the Republican Public Women's Council. A particular attention is being paid to providing women with jobs, housing and improving the quality of health services.

In this, it is of a special importance the establishment of the centers for vocational training of women and implementation of the accessible housing construction program. Annually, the initial installments for procurement of housing by women, who are in difficult living conditions, are made by the state budget funds.

Our dear sisters, who are taking an active part in the public life, are achieving the high results in various fields of activities. They are making a commendable contribution to upbringing a healthy and harmoniously developed generation.

On the occasion of March 8 – the International Women's Day, the Independence Day and various professional holidays they are decorated with high awards, including the badge «Mo'tabar ayol» ('An esteemed woman').

The work in this direction is being supplemented by the fact that the number of young women awarded the Zulfiya State Prize has reached 367.

As it was noted in the beginning of our conversation, based on the system of «The women's book» we have been carrying out a consistent work to reduce poverty and unemployment among women.

**Question: A special respect and attention are shown in our country towards the representatives of the elder generation. I would like to know Your opinion about further development of the practical work in this direction.**

**Answer:** Every time, when I ponder about today's peaceful, free and prosperous life, I recall with a feeling of gratitude that these bright days became possible thanks to tireless labor of our ancestors, their endurance and patience in overcoming all trials and difficulties. The way they have ensured a peaceful and tranquil life for us – the descendants is an enormous feat, heroism and selflessness, which cannot be measured by anything and impossible to assess.

Therefore, it is our sacred duty to honor the memory of our brave and noble ancestors, remember them with deep respect and esteem, as well as thoroughly care about the representatives of the elder generation, who are now living with us.

Most importantly, these noble deeds will



goals and strive for progress, will surely achieve the set goals. Since, such efforts will turn into a powerful wave tomorrow, our present life will be better than yesterday's and tomorrow's better than today's, our consciousness and thinking will take on a new dimension.

**Question: When we speak about the achieved successes for over the last years in the sphere of ensuring the human rights and freedoms in our country, firstly, there is a point about the undertaken large-scale work in terms of creating the conditions for education, labor, protection of health of women, realization by them of their talent and abilities, protection of motherhood and childhood, and the gender equality. What is the reason behind this?**

**Answer:** Certainly, there is very simple reason

adoption in the last years of 24 documents aimed at implementation in practice of this most important task, and particularly, 2 laws, 6 decrees and the resolution of the President and 16 resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers stand as a reflection of enormous attention and care towards our mothers, sisters and daughters. The women are actively participating in all of the spheres and sectors of our life. They are making an invaluable contribution to establishing the New Uzbekistan.

All of us are well-aware that there are the deputies and senators, ministers and khokims (governors and mayors), academicians and professors, the Heroes of Uzbekistan, the people's teachers, the people's poetesses and the people's actresses among them.





become an example for the youth. There is no doubt, you are – the journalists, well-aware that a big work is being carried out in our country to support the representatives of the elder generation, create necessary conditions to ensure a purposeful life for them.

In particular, we have addressed the difficulties and problems related to registration of pensions and allowances, their timely payment with using various social services. The «Nuroni» Foundation is both materially and morally stimulating the elderly.

It became a kind tradition the care about the health of the elderly, presenting them the subsidized passes to various sanatoria and holiday-homes, individually congratulating them on holidays, showing them a big respect, constant attention and care.

Let me reiterate, we are always in debt before those, who devoted all of the strengths, knowledge and potential to the development of our Homeland and the well-being of our people.

We will create the additional capacities to make life of the elderly brighter and more joyous so that they could take more active part in the life of our society with their rich experience and useful advices, and in particular, in upbringing the youth of the New Uzbekistan.

It is not for nothing that I am making a certain focus on these issues. Since, in building the New Uzbekistan, we have set as our supreme goal to achieve happiness for the people and it is utterly important for each member of the society to feel it.

The holding at all regions of the country sincere meetings of the representatives of three generations, the active participation of our elderly in them, who are sharing their labor and lifetime experience, the views about the value

and significance of today's peaceful and bright days serve as a true school of life for the youth.

**Question: On the eve of the greatest and the dearest holiday – the Independence Day, we publish in our newspaper the best wishes of our fellow citizens of the most diverse professions. You, as a renowned leader, who since the early days of independence have taken an active part in building a new state and society in our country, and today – as an initiator of the concept of constructing a New Uzbekistan and the national leader, who has confidently been leading our nation along this path, as the President of the country, what would You wish our people in this sacred holiday for all of us?**

**Answer:** Certainly, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of our country we sum up the outcomes of development of all spheres and branches, as well as set the specific plans for the future. In particular, we will stick to our main goal of ensuring the rights and freedoms,

as well as the lawful interests of each person in our country, achieving a more free and prosperous life to our people.

The highest goal for me, in which there is my mission as the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, to serve from the bottom of my heart and diligently for the sake of a dream of our people about the peaceful and prosperous, free and flourishing life.

We are in unmeasured debt before our Homeland, which has risen us and commendably brought us up. The achievement of comprehensively prosperous life of our dear and beloved people is the greatest happiness. Since, if people are pleased with us, then the Almighty God will always help and support us.

The chance bestowed by destiny to undertake such great deeds, which many generations of our ancestors dreamt about, – isn't it a true happiness and honor to every citizen, who realizes that he belongs to this nation? I am confident that under the sacred flag of boundless love and devotion to one's Motherland, by using all our knowledge and experience, as one people, as one nation – we will certainly achieve the set noble goals.

The New Uzbekistan will turn into a comprehensively flourishing and well-off country with a strong potential and worthy authority on the world arena.

I not only believe in this, but stand ready to put to use along this path all my knowledge and experience. I call on all of our fellow citizens to join these great ranks – the ranks of the builders of the New Uzbekistan.

Taking today's opportunity, I sincerely and cordially congratulate our multinational people on the forthcoming holiday of Independence. I want to wish every family, each fellow citizen a peace and tranquility, well-being and happiness.







## ***Uzbekistan and the UN: New facets and contours of cooperation***

By Akmal Saidov, Director of the National Center for Human Rights

**T**he UN and the Republic of Uzbekistan have an almost 30-year history of cooperation, which began with the entry of our country into the UN as a full member of this universal international organization on March 2, 1992.

Our country fruitfully cooperates with the UN and its specialized agencies in various areas: combating modern threats and security challenges; stabilization of the situation and reconstruction of Afghanistan; non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; solving environmental problems, in particular, mitigating the consequences of the Aral Sea tragedy; sustainable socio-economic development; protection of human rights and freedoms, etc.

In recent years, as part of the implementation of the objectives of the Action Strategy for the five priority areas of Development in 2017-2021, Uzbekistan's contacts with the UN have noticeably intensified.

Our country has started to participate more actively in the activities of the UN General Assembly and specialized agencies.

In particular, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al-Hussein, UN Special Rapporteurs on freedom of religion or belief Ahmed Shahid, as well as on the independence of judges and lawyers Diego Garcia-Sayan, UN Secretary General's Special Representative, Head of the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia Natalia German and many other high-ranking representatives of the UN and its specialized agencies visited Uzbekistan.

As a result of these visits and meetings, a number of practical action plans for the development of Uzbekistan's cooperation with the UN have been adopted and are being implemented.

The UN system has significantly stepped up support to Uzbekistan in addressing a wide range of development issues in various fields, including health, education and social protection, preservation of cultural values, protection of natural resources and biodiversity, combating drug trafficking and the spread of HIV/AIDS.

A significant event was the participation of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the 72nd and 75th

anniversary sessions of the UN General Assembly.

Thanks to the new atmosphere of cooperation, Uzbekistan has become an active participant in the processes in all areas of the UN's activities, which has a positive effect on the relations of the member states to the republic.

All the initiatives put forward by Uzbekistan within the framework of the UN have found full support from the world community and today make a significant practical contribution to ensuring universal peace, stability and sustainable development, protection of human rights.

At the initiative of the leadership of Uzbekistan, three resolutions were developed and adopted within the framework of the UN General Assembly.

In particular, on December 12, 2018, the UN General Assembly adopted a special resolution "Education and religious tolerance".

The document, the draft of which was developed by Uzbekistan and adopted in record time, was unanimously supported by all UN member states.



The document was co-authored by over 50 countries of North and Latin America, Asia, Africa and other continents, which testifies to the high recognition by the international community of the relevance and timeliness of the initiative of the Head of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

The elaboration of another resolution of the General Assembly on the declaration of the Aral Sea region as a zone of environmental innovations and technologies and the Convention on the Rights of Youth for their further adoption within the framework of the UN continues.

In particular, in August 2020, the Samarkand Forum on Youth Rights was held under the auspices of the United Nations. It discussed the draft Convention on the Rights of Youth prepared by Uzbekistan, adopted the Samarkand resolution "Youth 2020: Global Solidarity, sustainable development and Human Rights", which is presented as an official document of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly, posted in the UN official Documents system under the number A/74/998.

Uzbekistan highly appreciates the efforts of the UN Human Rights Council and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to strengthen the protection of human rights around the world.

And the protection of human rights is considered as one of the priorities of interaction with this universal international organization.

For without ensuring human rights, it is impossible to solve the problems of socio-economic, political, legal, cultural and humanitarian development of states.

Our country maintains an active and constructive dialogue with the UN charter and treaty bodies, specialized agencies and special procedures of the UN Human Rights Council.

Timely submits periodic reports on the implementation of the main international human rights treaties, as well as on follow-up measures to implement the recommendations of treaty bodies (41 reports have been submitted so far).

Uzbekistan has developed national indicators for the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, the Action Strategy is a "road map" for the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

A stable political system has been created in the country that meets modern criteria

of democracy and human rights, legislative, executive and judicial authorities at all levels are actively working.

Most importantly, respect for the principles of the rule of law is being established in Uzbek society, and a culture of human rights is being formed.

Uzbekistan was the first of the Central Asian States to create an effective system of national human rights institutions, which includes a parliamentary Ombudsman, a children's Ombudsman, a Business Ombudsman and a National Human Rights Center.

Taking into account the recommendations of the HRC and the UN treaty committees, the National Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Human Rights was adopted and consistently implemented in June 2020 for the first time.

In general, the election of Uzbekistan to the UN Human Rights Council was a clear evidence of the recognition by the international community of the achievements of the republic and the observed progress in implementing reforms in the field of liberalizing society, strengthening fundamental human rights and freedoms, as well as international and regional initiatives of the head of our state in the field of human rights and freedoms protection.

In his speeches at the 75th anniversary session of the UN General Assembly, the High-level Segment of the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council, as well as in a Message to the country's parliament, the President of Uzbekistan identified the key priorities of the New Uzbekistan in the field of human rights, which cover such areas as:

- ensuring the right to health;
- gender equality;
- protection of the rights of persons with disabilities;
- protection of the rights of youth;
- Human rights education;
- strengthening the independence of the courts;
- fight against torture;
- development of regional cooperation in the field of human rights.

#### HISTORICAL FACT:

For the first time in history, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev

took part and made a report at the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC).

Since the creation of the UN Human Rights Council in 2006, the heads of only 20 states have directly addressed the delegates of the annual sessions of the world's main human rights body, while Uzbekistan was the first among the post-Soviet countries to use such a privilege.

The President of Uzbekistan has put forward a number of important initiatives on a global, regional and national scale, which practically cover all mechanisms for ensuring the rights and legitimate interests of each person, existing problems and ways to solve them.

New initiatives of Uzbekistan in the field of human rights of a global nature.

First initiative: Promotion of the UN initiative "Call to Action for Human Rights".

On February 24, 2020, UN Secretary-General A. Guterres announced an initiative entitled "High Aspiration: A Call to Action in the interests of human rights".

The Appeal emphasizes the need to strengthen civil society, ensure gender balance, equal participation of women and men in political, economic and social life, as well as freedom of information.

This UN initiative is in tune with the reforms being implemented in Uzbekistan in these areas.

Second initiative: today, intellectually and spiritually developed, initiative youth is becoming a driver of sustainable progress. There are about 2 billion young people in the world.

This year in Uzbekistan has been declared the Year of Youth Support and Public Health Promotion.

Solving most of the problems facing humanity, such as threats to peace and security, terrorism and extremism, racism, climate change, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, should not happen without the active participation of young people.

As noted above, the initiative to adopt an International Convention on the Rights of Youth, put forward by the President of Uzbekistan from the high rostrum of the UN General Assembly, is supported by the international community.

As part of the implementation and continuation of this initiative, the Head of Uzbekistan proposed:

Firstly, the holding of the World Youth Conference on Human Rights under





the auspices of the UN. It will allow to exchange views and develop proposals on improving existing international and regional instruments and mechanisms for the protection and promotion of the rights of youth; Secondly, the establishment of the institute of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Youth.

The institution of a Special Rapporteur on youth rights has not been established in the UN human rights structure, and the establishment of a treaty Committee on youth rights is envisaged by the draft International Convention on the Rights of Youth.

Third initiative: fulfilling the obligations under the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Upbringing.

This UN Declaration, adopted exactly 10 years ago, covers all types of educational, vocational, and educational activities in the field of human rights, and is also aimed at the formation of a culture of human rights.

The main provisions of this UN Declaration are implemented in the National Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Human Rights.

Taking into account the state and prospects for the development of Uzbekistan's cooperation with the UN in this area, the head of state outlined new initiatives that take our relations to a qualitatively new practical level:

\*Organization of the Global Forum "Human Rights Education" jointly with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Uzbekistan actively participates in the UN World Program in the field of human Rights education. A National Action Program has been adopted to implement the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Upbringing.

During the proposed Global Forum, it is planned to discuss international experience and approaches to the implementation of educational programs in the field of human rights in accordance with the UN Declaration;

\*Contributing to the United Nations Voluntary Fund in the Field of Human Rights.

Similar contributions were made by Uzbekistan to the UN Fund within the framework of the 60th and 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Making a contribution to the UN budget demonstrates to the world community the commitment of Uzbekistan as a member country of the HRC to the promotion of human rights at the global level.

The fourth initiative is the development of international principles on the status and activities of judicial councils.

To date, there is no international document regulating the activities of judicial councils.

Uzbekistan pays priority attention to

deepening reforms in the judicial and legal sphere, as a result of which concrete measures have been taken to implement international standards in the field of judicial independence and protection of the right to a fair trial.

The implementation of the recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers has begun.

This initiative of the President testifies to Uzbekistan's readiness to participate in the development of universal norms in the field of human rights and to promote effective international cooperation, as well as to raise cooperation with the UN in this area to a qualitatively new level.

In general, Uzbekistan supports the leading role of the UN in preserving and promoting international peace, cooperation and security, as well as in promoting sustainable development and ensuring human rights.

All these and other initiatives of the head of Uzbekistan are imbued with this principled position of our country.

New initiatives of Uzbekistan in the field of human rights on a regional scale.

According to UN experts, three important initiatives in this direction, outlined by the President of Uzbekistan, deserve special attention.

The first initiative: in 2021, the chairmanship



of the Dialogue of Women Leaders of Central Asian Countries established last year passed to Uzbekistan.

It should be noted that, according to the UN, the dynamics of GDP growth directly depends on the level of development of women's entrepreneurship.

In this regard, the head of our state proposed the organization of a meeting of the Dialogue of Women Leaders of Central Asian countries, as well as a business forum.

Their holding will allow exchanging the best practices and practices in the field of women's empowerment, creating conditions for ensuring their decent employment and business development, preventing any forms of violence against women, and will also contribute to strengthening cooperation in this area at the international and regional levels.

The second initiative is the creation of a Regional Council for the Self-realization of people with Disabilities.

The President of Uzbekistan emphasizes the importance of strengthening the social protection of the population, including through a gradual transition to a "social model" that meets international standards for determining disability.

The Regional Council will make it possible to discuss and develop solutions on a regular basis to ensure the rights of people with disabilities, their integration into society, and the creation of favorable conditions for their self-organization.

Third initiative: Uzbekistan consistently supports the creation of a regional human rights mechanism in the Asian region.

In particular, on his initiative, a permanent platform was created - the Samarkand Forum on Human Rights.

However, there is no universal model of development in the world that is equally suitable for all States at the same historical period.

The sad experience of a number of countries clearly shows that attempts to impose "unified standards" of democratic development without taking into account specific historical, social and other aspects, as well as national and religious traditions, are counterproductive.

The creation of the proposed regional mechanism contributes to improving the provision of human rights and freedoms in the Asian region, strengthening relevant regional and international mechanisms.

New initiatives of Uzbekistan in the field of human rights on a national scale.

**The first initiative:** the implementation of national sustainable development Goals within the framework of the 2030 Agenda in accordance with the UN principle of "Leaving no one behind".

Uzbekistan is firmly committed to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The priorities of the Action Strategy implemented in Uzbekistan in 2017-2021 are fully consistent with the SDGs.

The fight against poverty, ensuring the social, economic and cultural rights of citizens are the priorities of the New Uzbekistan.

**Second initiative:** Ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).

This convention is so far the only convention adopted in the XXI century. Uzbekistan signed it in 2009, which testifies to its commitment to protecting the rights of persons with special needs and persons with disabilities.

This year, a new Law "On the Rights of persons with disabilities" came into force. The ratification of the convention contributes to raising the measures implemented in Uzbekistan in this area to a qualitatively new level.

**The third initiative:** the adoption of the law on the Children's Ombudsman.

This law at the legislative level will establish the main ideas, goals, primacy, the circle of persons to whom the law applies, their basic rights and obligations.

Its adoption in the current International Year of the Elimination of Child Labor will consolidate and emphasize the inviolability and irrevocability of the principle of Uzbekistan's commitment to the protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of children.

**Fourth initiative:** support for the appeal of the UN Secretary General A.Guterres on taking decisive measures to reduce the number of stateless persons.

In 2020, 50 thousand of our compatriots were granted citizenship of Uzbekistan. In 2021, it is planned to grant citizenship to another 20 thousand people.

Uzbekistan's policy of reducing the number of stateless persons is positively noted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In its reports, the UNHCR sets Uzbekistan as an example for studying its experience in this area.

**Fifth initiative:** The fight against torture

is a priority area of judicial and legal reforms in Uzbekistan. Work has begun on the introduction of a national preventive mechanism for the prevention of torture. The closure of the specialized penal colony located in the village of Jaslyk was an important humane event.

As a result of the measures taken, the number of convicts held in places of deprivation of liberty has decreased by almost 3 times.

Over the last short period, we have managed to make significant progress in cooperation with special procedures. Visits of 2 special rapporteurs were carried out.

Within the framework of deepening cooperation with the UN in this area, the Head of state initiated:

- Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture;
- Implementation of the visit to Uzbekistan of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Special Rapporteur on torture.

**Sixth initiative:** further development of civil society institutions, support for freedom of speech and information in Uzbekistan, deepening cooperation with UN committees and commissions in the field of human rights.

In this regard, Uzbekistan has decided to:

- continuation of the preparation of codes on non-governmental non-profit organizations and mass media;
- organizing the visit of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Michelle Bachelet, to our country;
- sending a standing invitation to all mandate holders to visit Uzbekistan. Of course, working together with them will be a good prerequisite for the effective implementation of reforms in Uzbekistan.

In general, the interesting speech of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the HRC session and the initiatives of the leader of our country supported by the forum participants indicate Uzbekistan's readiness for broad and mutually beneficial cooperation with all countries of the world and practical dialogue with the UN, including as an active member of the Human Rights Council.

The implementation of Uzbekistan's initiatives will create a unique model of interaction at the global and regional levels, which will become an example for the entire international community on the way to ensuring and realizing the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of every person.





## ***Speech by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly***

**D**istinguished Mr. Chairman Abdullah Shahid!

Esteemed Secretary-General Antonio

Guterres!

Dear heads of delegations!

Ladies and gentlemen!

First of all, I sincerely congratulate Mr. Antonio Guterres on his re-election as the UN Secretary-General.

Today, humanity is at a turning point in its path of development and the nature of international relations is changing dramatically. The transnational threats to peace, security and sustainable development are growing. The climate is rapidly changing. The mass migration flows are increasing and traditional values are declining.

I am convinced that in such a complex environment, the importance and role of the United Nations and its specialized agencies on a global scale is growing. It is the United Nations that must continue to play a leading role in these important processes of global destiny with new substance and quality.

We support the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen solidarity and accord in the international relations, increase the efficiency and transparency of the Organization.

Dear participants of the session!

Today, the COVID-19 pandemic, which became a global disaster, and its not only social and economic, but also spiritual and political consequences are in the focus of our attention.

We fully support the United Nations' approach that ensures equal and fair access to vaccines based on the principle of «no one should be left behind».

I would like to take this opportunity to express my special gratitude to our foreign partners, who have provided us the practical assistance in the framework of the COVAX global platform.

We are committed to further strengthening the coordinating role of the World Health Organization in effectively combating pandemic in the international recognition of vaccination results. The Code of Voluntary Commitments of States during Pandemic, developed on the initiative of the Republic of Uzbekistan and distributed as an official document of the UN

General Assembly, is our practical contribution in this regard.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen! The large-scale and rapid democratic reforms that underway in our country became irreversible in recent years.

Ensuring and protecting the human rights, freedoms and legitimate interests are the basis of our democratic reforms.

The strict measures are being taken to ensure the freedom of speech and mass media, freedom of religion and conscience, gender equality and interethnic harmony.

For the first time in its history, Uzbekistan was elected as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council. We have developed the New Uzbekistan Strategy to continue the reform path.

The concept of this Strategy is to strengthen the role of civil society institutions, protect human rights, reduce poverty, provide each citizen with a guaranteed source of income and achieve sustainable environmental development.

Our main goal is to become one of the countries



with above-middle income in terms of the per capita income by 2030.

It should be emphasized that this plan is in line with the spirit of the UN Sustainable Development Goals until 2030.

In this regard, we propose to hold an international conference in Tashkent dedicated to studying the problems of global economic recovery, the implementation of the best practices in poverty reduction in the post-pandemic period.

It is well-known that the World Conference on Involving Youth in Global Action was successfully held in our country.

We are going to organize a Global Educational Forum in the framework of a regular dialogue on human rights in the ancient city of Samarkand in Uzbekistan to continue our efforts in this direction.

Dear friends!

We are consolidating a completely new political environment in the Central Asian region in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect, good neighborliness and strategic partnership.

Our main objective is to make Central Asia a place of prosperity and sustainable development, trust and friendship. To this end, we attach priority to strengthening the interactions with neighboring and adjacent regions.

In this regard, we have put forward a proposal to adopt a special Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on strengthening the interconnectivity of Central and South Asia.

I would like to underscore once again that Afghanistan is an integral part of Central Asia. It is not only us and the neighboring states, but also the whole world are interested in the establishment of peace and tranquility in this country. Therefore, we are always doing our best to help the Afghan people.

We have recently opened the Uzbek-Afghan border and resumed the supply of basic-needs

and oil products, as well as electricity to this country.

During these challenging times, it is impossible to isolate Afghanistan and leave it within the range of its problems.

As it is well known, last year, from this high rostrum, we proposed to establish a permanent UN Committee on Afghanistan.

The influence and voice of the United Nations on Afghanistan must be heard louder than ever.

The growing number of threats and conflicts, transnational threats in the world requires further strengthening of the international cooperation.

The presentation of the results of the ten-year plan of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia in Tashkent in November this year and holding an international conference on the prospects will undoubtedly serve these noble purposes.

The signing of a Regional Program for Central Asia for 2022-2025 with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime will lay a solid foundation for the actions in this direction. As we continue our efforts in this regard, we intend to develop a joint action plan against drugs with the participation of this UN Office, covering the countries of Central and South Asia.

Dear participants of the session!

Uzbekistan pays a special attention to combatting the climate change, protecting the environment and biodiversity. This is our noble human duty not only for today, but also before the future generations. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to all Member States for the adoption of a Special Resolution of the UN General Assembly declaring the Aral Sea Region as a zone of environmental innovation and technology. We are determined to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. We are taking concrete steps to move towards the renewable energy

sources.

In particular, it is envisaged to double the energy efficiency of our economy by 2030, increase the share of renewable energy by 25% and develop environmentally clean transport.

By 2025, it is scheduled to commission the new solar and wind power plants with a total capacity of 2,900 megawatts.

In 2022, we intend to hold a High-Level International Forum in cooperation with the United Nations on «green energy» in the Aral Sea Region in the city of Nukus. We support the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Program in the near future.

In addition, in the future we stand ready to host one of the meetings of the parties to the Biodiversity Convention in our country.

Along with this, we propose to hold the Sixth High-Level Assembly under the auspices of the United Nations in 2023 in Uzbekistan for in-depth discussions of the priorities of global environmental policy.

The participants of the Assembly will have an opportunity to learn about the difficult situation in the Aral Sea Region, which is the center of an ecological disaster caused by the drying up of the Aral Sea, and draw the necessary conclusions.

In addition, we intend to put forward an initiative in the Assembly to develop a Global Environment Charter aimed at laying the foundations of a new environmental policy of the United Nations.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen!

Uzbekistan is always ready to develop the mutually beneficial, long-term and multifaceted partnership with all countries of the world and global organizations.

I am confident that we will continue to strengthen our close cooperation aimed at sustainable growth, safe and a prosperous future. Thank you for your attention!







# 24 ОКТЯБРЬ 2021 йил ЎЗБЕКИСТОН ПРЕЗИДЕНТИ САЙЛОВИ

## Uzbekistan's Presidential Election 2021

By Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

Continuation of electoral process, holding of free, fair and transparent elections and last but not least rigorous participation of regional as well as international observers are the real attributors of pure democracy.

Moreover, vertical & horizontal expansion, evolution of human civilization and institutionalization of modern concepts of state and society have been interconnected and intertwined with the just electoral process, for which the Republic of Uzbekistan having rich socio-political culture, century old rich traditions and democratic norms has been striving hard to initiate numerous structural reforms in terms of electoral unified codification, further befitting & beneficial politicization & democratization, political tolerance, formation of opposition, new political parties, further empowerment of women, political scope of the youth, active role of judiciary, civil society, vibrant media and last but not least, popular support of common people.

Resultantly the Republic of Uzbekistan is now sitting on the "apex" of politicization & democratization in the CIS and beyond.

According to Central Election Commission of Uzbekistan (September 2021), the 6th presidential election will be held on October 24, 2021. It has registered five candidates for the upcoming presidential election.

According to the CEC (September 2021), the pre-election campaign for the presidential elections will start on September 20. In this regard, according to Uzbekistan media (September 18, 2021), Uzbekistan's incumbent President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has been nominated by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

Moreover, Bakhrom Abdukhalimov is nominated



by the Adolat (Justice) Social Democratic Party, Alisher Kadirov from Milliy Tiklanish (National Revival) and Narzullo Oblomurov from the Ecological Party. The only female candidate, Maksuda Varisova is nominated by the People's Democratic Party. The participation of a female candidate for presidential election is a significant political development which is the result of the Uzbek's government constant political structural reforms.

Uzbekistan CEC statistics reveals that incumbent President Sh. Mirziyoyev won the 2016 presidential election, with 88.6 per cent of valid votes. The last parliamentary elections took place in 2019, and all five registered political parties obtained seats: Liberal Democratic Party obtained 53 seats, Democratic Party Milliy Tiklanish 36 seats, Social Democratic Party Adolat 24 seats, People's Democratic Party 22 seats, and Ecological Party 15 seats.

There are 48 women among the current 150

members of legislative chamber of the Oliy Majlis (32 per cent) which shows its diversity, productive and participatory composition/nature.

According to Uzbek electoral code/ laws, the president is elected for a five year term and can serve no more than two consecutive terms. Candidates are nominated only by registered political parties and should be at least 35 years old, fluent in the state language, permanently residing in the territory of Uzbekistan for at least ten years.

Moreover, only political parties registered with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) at least four months prior to the announcement of the election have the right to nominate presidential candidates. A candidate must be supported by signatures from at least one per cent of the electorate (200,000 voters) collected in at least 13 out of 14 administrative units.



According to its constitution, Uzbekistan is a presidential democracy with a bicameral parliament. Uzbekistan's Central Electoral Commission has invited observers from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Even the CEC has formed the District Election Commission (DEC) to conduct the upcoming presidential election 2021.

The OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report (2019-2020) clearly demonstrated credibility, utility, effectiveness and reliability of Uzbekistan democratic reforms in stating, the elections "took place under improved legislation and with greater tolerance of independent voices.

Moreover, citizens were more mobilized around the parliamentary elections and had greater information about candidates than in the past. It shows high levels of political maturity, political diversity, electoral process, impartiality of the CEC and its sub-offices in Uzbekistan.

Citizens aged 18 or older have the right to vote, except for those who have been declared legally incapable by a court decision, including on the basis of intellectual or psychosocial disability, and those serving a prison sentence for serious and grave crimes

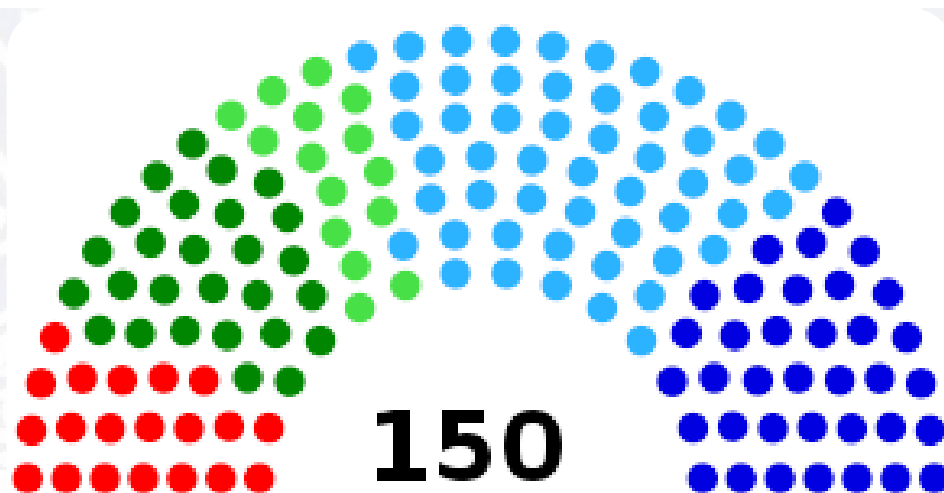
Political and electoral history of Uzbekistan confirms that the first presidential elections were held on December 29, 1991 in which number of voters was 9 million 900 thousand 958 people, while at the fifth presidential election held on December 4, 2016 the total voters was 20 million 461 thousand 805 people.

Moreover, there was only two distinctive political parties nominated candidates for the presidency in Uzbekistan in 1991. But constant socio-political structural reforms having multi-party practices in the past years, the number of parties running in the presidential election this year has increased to five.

According to CEC (September 6, 2021), the number of voters in the upcoming presidential elections has increased up to 21.2 million. The chairman of CEC shared that 21 million 249 thousand 921 people have been included in the unified electronic voter list. There are almost 33 percent i.e. 6 million 993 thousand 924 people are young people under 30 years of age. More than 880 thousand of them will take part in the elections for the first time. It shows people and especially the Uzbek youth rigorous participation in the political decision making of the system.

Moreover, observers from almost 50 countries and dozens of international organizations are expected to participate in the presidential elections.

In mid-June, the CEC approved the cost



estimation for the presidential elections at 300 billion soums. Each party should receive 15.4 billion soums for holding pre-election events, and candidates 3 billion soums. The election campaign started on 23 July.

Critical analysis of election commission reveals that the CEC has 14 District Election Commissions, and 10,764 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs) to administer the upcoming presidential election. To maintain high level of transparency and impartiality political parties are not represented in commissions but can observe all stages of electoral process.

Uzbekistan under incumbent President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has improved its political ratings. According to latest published report of the Freedom House (August 2021), its electoral process has been further improved due to increased toleration of independent more acceptance of debate and free expression, and full access of international observers.

Its civil society rating has been improved due to the increased role played by informal organizations in the country. Last but not least, its judicial framework has also been improved

due to incremental improvements in judicial reform over the past several years which resultantly strengthened judicial independence and transparency. Furthermore, during 2020, 169 countries voted for Uzbekistan to join the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) which shows its strong commitment towards provision and protection of basic human rights in the country. Thus Western propaganda has no substance but all shadows.

President Sh.Mirziyoyev through his presidential decree in April, 2021 declared the establishment of a Public Chamber under the auspices of the president. It vividly reflects his holistic approach to achieve optimal level of good governance, strengthening of dialogue between the state and public through public hearings, examinations, monitoring, and prepare annual reports about the state of Uzbekistani civil society.

It seems that due to constant structural reforms Uzbekistan is surely moving towards further politicization and democratization to achieve the ultimate goal of an open democratic society.

Constitution of Uzbekistan is the custodian







and guarantor of human and civil rights and freedoms. Thus since its inception all politicization and democratization has been pursued legitimately through universal suffrage and free elections.

Even the preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan affirms its commitment to the ideals of democracy and social justice. In this context, its Article 7 states: “The people are the sole source of state power which has been the real essence of building statehood in the country. The people and their free will are the core of democracy because in Uzbekistan stands for people’s democracy.

The Constitution’s Article 32 guarantees that all citizens of the country shall have the right to participate in the management and administration of public and state affairs, both directly and through representation through self-government, referendums and democratic formation of state bodies, as well as development and improvement of public control over activities of state bodies.

Paragraph 6 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document establishes that the will of the people, freely and fairly expressed through periodic and genuine elections, is the basis of the authority and legitimacy of the government. In this regard its constitution’s Article 117 guarantees the right to vote, equality, and freedom of expression. Thus, the 2019 parliamentary elections were held under the slogan ‘New Uzbekistan-New elections which vividly reflected its high spirits of political diversity and impartiality of the state.

In forthcoming elections thousands of representatives of political parties, citizens’ self-government bodies and hundreds of international observers, journalists, including international ones, will observe the process of preparation and conduct of the presidential elections, including the voting of voters.

Being prominent regional expert of Uzbekistan

& CIS I fully endorse that it has a free, fair, transparent mechanism of electioneering and election commission in its country. Since its inception it has been sailing through deep waters to reach the banks of liberalized democracy through constant structural reforms. Its journey towards further and sustainable politicization and democratization is commendable due to which it is successful model of politicization and democratization.

Constant socio-economic prosperity has further broadened the scope, recognition, utility and adoptability of democratic norms in terms of the opposition, political diversity, further empowerment of women, and inclusion of the talented youth in political/electoral process and last but not least, establishment of optimal level of direct dialogue between the state and

people.

Institutionalization of pure and simple democratic norms has been guarantor of its unmatched political stability and societal harmoniousness. Now its economy is more developed, diversified and dynamic. Its society is more vibrant and forward looking. Its media is more connected and consensus. Its political parties are now more active, subjective and productive.

It hopes that upcoming presidential election of Uzbekistan would another giant milestone in the political history. It would further strengthen democratic norms in the country. It would further strengthen Uzbekistan’s incumbent President Shavkat Mirziyoyev’s “Ten Initiatives” holistic approach for achieving the greater regional connectivity.





# Status of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

**S**tatus of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan is determined by **Chapter XIX of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan**

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan:

Is the Head of the State and ensures concerted functioning and interaction among bodies of state authority.

Guarantees observance of rights and freedoms of citizens, the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Takes necessary measures on the protection of sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of the Republic of Uzbekistan, implementation of decisions regarding its national-state structure.

Represents the Republic of Uzbekistan within the country and in international relations. Conducts negotiations and signs treaties and agreements of the Republic of Uzbekistan, ensures the observance of the negotiated by the Republic of treaties, agreements and assumed by it obligations.

Receives letters of credence and recall from diplomatic and other representatives accredited to him. Presents to the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan nominees for appointment of diplomatic and other representatives of the Republic of Uzbekistan to foreign states. Has the right to appeal to the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the most important issues of implementing the domestic and foreign policy of the country.

ensures interaction of the supreme bodies of authority and administration of the Republic; forms and abolishes, upon the nomination of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan ministries, state committees and other bodies of state administration with subsequent submission of decrees on these matters for approval by the chambers of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Represents to the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan a nominee for the post of the Chairman of the Senate.

Represents for consideration and approval by the chambers of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan a nominee of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan and relieves him of his post in case of resignation, passing the vote of no-confidence in Prime Minister adopted by the chambers of the Oliy Majlis of Republic of Uzbekistan or in other cases stipulated by law.

Approves, upon the nomination of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, members of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan and relieves them of their posts.

Appoints and relieves the Procurator-General of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Chairman of the Accounting Chamber of their posts with their subsequent approval by the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

represents to the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan nominees for the composition of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as for the post of the Chairman of the Supreme judicial council of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Chairman of the Board of the Central Bank of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

appoints and relieves, upon the nomination of the Supreme judicial council of the Republic of Uzbekistan, from the posts of chairmen and deputy chairmen of the regional courts and the city of Tashkent, the Chairman of the Military Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan; approves in accordance with the law the members of the Supreme judicial council of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Appoints and relieves, upon the nomination of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, khokims of regions and the city of Tashkent of their posts according to law. The President has the right to relieve by his decision, khokims of districts and cities of their posts, should they violate the Constitution, laws or perform acts discrediting the honour and dignity of a khokim.

Suspends, repeals acts of the bodies of state administration of the republic and khokims in case of non-compliance with the norms of legislation; has the right to preside at the meetings of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Signs and promulgates laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan; has the right to return law, with his objections, to the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for the second discussion and vote. Announces condition of war in case of attack on the Republic of Uzbekistan or in case of necessity of the implementation of contractual obligations on mutual defense from aggression and within seventy two hours submits the adopted decision for approval by the chambers of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic

of Uzbekistan. In exceptional cases (real outside threat, mass disturbances, major catastrophes, natural calamities, epidemics) in the interests of ensuring citizens' security introduces the state of emergency on the entire territory or in the particular localities of the Republic of Uzbekistan and within seventy two hours submits the adopted decision for approval by the chambers of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Conditions and the procedure for introducing the state of emergency shall be regulated by law.

Serves as the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Uzbekistan, appoints and relieves the supreme command of the Armed Forces of the post and confer the highest military ranks. Awards orders, medals and certificates of honour of the Republic of Uzbekistan, confers qualification and honorary titles of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Rules on matters of citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan and granting political asylum. Puts to the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan submission on adoption of acts of amnesty and effectuate pardoning of persons condemned by courts of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Appoints and relieves the chairman of the National Security Service of his post with subsequent submission of decrees on these matters for approval by the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Exercises other powers stipulated by the present Constitution and laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Legislative Chamber, the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan maybe dissolved, by the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan adopted as agreed with the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in case of insuperable disagreements within the Legislative Chamber or the Senate putting under threat their normal functioning or numerous adoption by them decisions contradicting the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as insuperable disagreements between the Legislative Chamber and the Senate putting under threat the normal functioning of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan.







# Presidential Election in Uzbekistan 2021



## *Free and Fair Elections of the President of Uzbekistan are an important condition for democracy*

**O**n July 23 of this year, a major political event was launched – the election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Central Election Commission has designated October 24, 2021 as the election day of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The elections will be held in accordance with the amendments made on February 8 this year to Article 117 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

They will be held on the basis of the new national electoral legislation, in accordance with generally recognized international standards, as well as democratic principles – openly and publicly. They will be a vivid confirmation of the democratic ideas defined by the Action Strategy for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021.

Over the past five years, after the Presidential elections on December 4, 2016, there have been tremendous changes in the life of the people and the state, society, and national electoral legislation. As noted by prestigious international organizations and experts, important reforms were carried out during this period to improve the welfare of the people in the socio-political and economic spheres.

At the elections held for the first time in accordance with the Electoral Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on the basis of constitutional norms and international electoral standards, the election of the head of the country, that is, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, will be ensured on the principle of periodicity. In addition, after increasing the number of political parties by one, inter-party competition will significantly increase. During the election campaign, an environment for

healthy competition and equal conditions will be created for all political parties and their candidates.

Thousands of observers will observe the work on the preparation and conduct of the Presidential elections, including the voting process of voters, political parties that have nominated their candidacy, citizens' self-government bodies, international organizations and representatives of foreign countries, journalists, in particular foreign ones.

In order to hold the upcoming elections at a high political, legal and organizational level, on the basis of the program of measures to prepare for the presidential elections of the Republic of Uzbekistan, approved on April 14 this year, the CEC together with organizations is implementing a number of works.

In accordance with the program, important tasks are defined – bringing to voters and organizers the essence and significance of the importance of the Presidential elections, their features, the Electoral Code, amendments and additions made to the electoral legislation. Similar events held before the announcement of the election campaign reached millions of people.

The calendar plan for the elections of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan has also been approved. It defines step-by-step and everyday tasks that will be carried out by the CEC together with relevant government agencies, political parties and other public organizations.

Among them are the creation of district and precinct election commissions, ensuring the pre-election participation of observers, the creation of a single electronic voter list, the

pre-election participation of political parties, presidential candidates nominated by them and their proxies, campaign financing, election propaganda, coverage of the electoral process, and voting.

According to the amendments and additions made to the Electoral Code on May 31 of this year, now the subjects of the electoral process can appeal against the decisions of election commissions in court within five days after the adoption of these decisions. Decisions of the Central Election Commission may be appealed to the Supreme Court within five days after the decision is made.

Complaints are subject to immediate consideration within three days of their receipt and at least six days before the election. Persons who have filed a complaint have the right to take a direct part in its consideration.

According to the current article 142 of the Code of Administrative Procedure, cases on disputes about the actions and decisions of election commissions are considered by administrative courts. Cases on challenging the actions or decisions of the Central Election Commission are considered by the Supreme Court.

Complaints of this category must be considered by the court no later than three days from the date of filing the complaint. If the election is less than six days away, the complaint must be considered immediately.

According to Article 167 of this Code, the decision of the court in cases of disputes concerning the actions or decisions of election commissions is transmitted to the relevant election commission and the applicant. In this case, the relevant court decision is subject to immediate execution.





## ***Uzbekistan has created all the necessary conditions for holding free, democratic elections***

By Nuriddin Ismoilov  
Speaker of the Legislative Chamber Oliy Majlis

**T**here is no doubt that the main principle of democracy is freedom of choice. The life of a modern democratic state is based on the fact that every citizen has the opportunity to independently and freely determine not only the guidelines for his own life, but also as part of the whole society, based on the priority of the majority's choice, to participate in solving the most important issues concerning the life of the state and society.

Through the participation of citizens of the country in the elections, the formation of various public authorities is ensured.

Thus, in Uzbekistan, citizens directly participate in the elections of the President of the country, deputies of the Oliy Majlis and local Kengashes of people's deputies, heads of self-government bodies.

It is through the electoral process that a competitive political elite is formed in society, the relevance of the political course to public interests is ensured, and the level of political culture of citizens is increased.

Being an invariable attribute of democratic power, elections represent a form of realization of constitutional rights of citizens.

After all, it is through elections that citizens determine the political path and those political personalities with whom they pin their hopes for a better life.

Fair and open elections are the essence and the most important mechanism of the

democratic system, a way to ensure the principle of democracy, civic participation in the system of political governance.

In the life of Independent Uzbekistan, the ongoing presidential elections are not the first.

But the conditions under which this expression of the will of the People is organized are special. We can safely attribute these elections to the number of significant achievements of Uzbekistan in recent years.

The country has created all the necessary political and organizational prerequisites for holding fair elections of the Head of State that meet modern democratic standards.

A solid legal basis for the electoral process has been created, the main role in which is occupied by the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Electoral Code adopted two years ago.

To date, the law fully covers all stages of the electoral process, creates all the necessary conditions for organizing the free expression of the will of citizens.

In organizational terms, elections are a complex, multi-stage process. To date, some stages of the presidential elections in Uzbekistan have already been completed or are close to completion, which makes it possible to draw the first conclusions about the quality of the election campaign.

The entire international community recognizes the legitimacy and democracy of the presidential elections organized in Uzbekistan.

In particular, this is evidenced by the large number of observers who have arrived and are

planning to come to our country to participate in the elections as observers.

The fact that the OSCE/ODIHR has sent a full-scale election observation mission deserves a high political assessment.

Such authoritative international organizations as the SCO, the CIS, and various parliamentary associations expressed their support and decision to participate in election observation.

Such active observational participation undoubtedly positively assesses the course of the preparatory stage of the elections and the state of democracy in our country.

The electoral system is not some kind of frozen, "petrified" formation. It is a living, developing organism.

It is very important that in recent years in Uzbekistan, in accordance with the new political course, a modern national electoral system has been created that meets all democratic standards.

The full use of its great political potential will help our society to use democratic mechanisms even more effectively to build a better life based on the principles of democracy.

Conducting elections is a serious exam. An exam for political maturity, an exam for commitment to democracy and freedom of choice.

We are confident that Uzbekistan will pass this exam with dignity, and will confidently continue the course started on building a New Uzbekistan, building a better life for every citizen of our beautiful Homeland.





## Improving the legislation and practice of elections is an important condition for democracy

Over the past five years, when implementing large-scale and consistent transformations in order to build a New Uzbekistan, the main attention has been paid to the widespread implementation of the constitutional principle of democracy, the expansion of citizens' participation in the governance of the state and society, as well as further improvement of national electoral legislation and electoral practice, bringing it in line with international electoral standards and the experience of advanced democratic legal states. Free and fair elections are an important and necessary condition for democracy.

The elections held in Uzbekistan in recent years, as well as the changes and innovations introduced into the legislation and practice of their conduct, clearly demonstrated that a new political situation has formed in the country. During the elections to the Parliament and local councils of People's Deputies, held in December 2019 for the first time on the basis of the Electoral Code, an important positive experience was gained. The practice of organizing and conducting elections has risen to a qualitatively new level.

At the same time, some shortcomings and gaps in the legislation and practice of elections have been identified. The draft law, developed in order to eliminate them, was adopted after heated discussions on February 8 of this year. In turn, important changes and additions have been made to the Electoral Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Then the norms of the Electoral Code, which incorporated these changes, had to be reflected in the resolutions, regulations and instructions of the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan aimed at the legal regulation of the election process. The Working Group once again analyzed the proposals and recommendations given by observers from reputable international organizations, foreign and domestic experts, scientists. As a result, it became clear that there is a need for further improvement of certain norms of the current Electoral Code and their harmonization with international electoral standards.

The reasoned proposals of the working group formulated on the basis of the analysis have been submitted to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis for consideration in the prescribed manner. And at the initiative of a group of deputies of the lower house of Parliament, a draft law on amendments and additions to the Electoral Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan was developed. On June 1 of this year, the law adopted on the legislative initiative of a group of deputies was published in the press, becoming another important step in the

consistent liberalization and democratization of electoral legislation.

According to the document, amendments and additions to eleven articles of the Electoral Code are indicated. In particular, articles 14, 20, 22, 101 and 102 abolished the consideration of complaints against the actions and decisions of lower-level electoral bodies by higher-level ones. It is established that they can only be considered by the courts. This procedure also corresponds to the recommendation of the Observer Mission of the Bureau for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, given in the Final Report of December 22, 2019 on the parliamentary elections, which emphasized: "in order to prevent repeated



appeals and the adoption of contradictory decisions, it is necessary to review the system of filing appeals to two bodies and file complaints only to the courts". This is consonant with the ongoing reforms in the judicial and legal system of our country.

In accordance with article 21 of the current Electoral Code, the composition of the district election commission for the election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan is formed by the Central Election Commission consisting of the chairman, deputy Chairman, secretary and six to eight members of the commission. And in accordance with Article 9, electoral districts for the election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan are formed by the Central Election Commission in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, regions and the city of Tashkent. It follows from this that 14 electoral districts are being created throughout the country and from nine to 11 members of district election commissions can operate in each of them.

In accordance with article 22 of the Electoral Code, the district Election Commission is entrusted with such important powers as monitoring the implementation of this Code in the relevant territory; formation of polling

stations and coordination of the activities of precinct election commissions; informing voters about the location of polling stations; formation of precinct election commissions and publication of information about their composition; ensuring equal conditions for candidates to participate in the election campaign; hearing reports from representatives of political parties, other public associations, citizens' self-government bodies, heads of enterprises, institutions and organizations on issues related to the preparation and conduct of elections; monitoring the compilation of voter lists and their submission for public inspection; establishment and transmission to the Central Election Commission of election results in the electoral district; consideration of appeals of voters and other participants in the electoral

process and making decisions on them.

If we take into account that more than a thousand polling stations are organized and operate in certain regions of the country, it is not difficult to imagine how difficult it is for election commissions consisting of 9-11 people to perform the above tasks of creating polling stations and coordinating their activities. In order to fill this gap in the Electoral Code, legislators have established a norm according to which the composition of the district election commission may include from 11 to 21 members.

Article 31 of the Electoral Code establishes that the form and text of the ballot for the election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, deputies of the Legislative Chamber are approved by the Central Election Commission. The candidate's surname, first name and patronymic are entered into the ballot in alphabetical order, indicating the year of birth, position (occupation), place of work and the political party that nominated him as a candidate. The ballot paper must contain an explanation of the procedure for filling it out.

As you know, at election campaigning events, meetings with voters held by political parties,



candidates and their proxies, detailed information about the candidates is given, including their position (occupation) and place of work. Posters issued by the Central Election Commission and delivered to each polling station almost a month before the election also contain full information about the biography and election program of candidates. These posters are hung at every polling station and on election day.

Based on the above, it is established that only the surname, first name and patronymic of the candidate, the year of birth and the name of the political party that nominated him are entered into the ballot in alphabetical order. As a result of the reduction of information entered in the ballot, convenience for voters is being created by reflecting the data in a larger font, and the possibility of ensuring the principle of equality in elections by providing the same information about candidates has also expanded.

Article 38 of the Electoral Code stipulated that voters have the right to sign in support of one or more political parties or presidential candidates of the Republic of Uzbekistan, while the voter indicates his surname, first name, patronymic, year of birth (at the age of eighteen - additionally the day and month of birth), address of residence, passport series and number, as well as the date of signature, and that the specified information is entered by handwriting.

Now, according to the amendment, when entering the above-mentioned information, voters can specify the series and number of the passport or ID card. This innovation is being introduced in accordance with the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to implement the system of registration and issuance of identification ID cards in the Republic of Uzbekistan" dated March 6, 2020. The document provides for the issuance of a standard ID card to citizens of the country from January 1, 2021, instead of a passport, and it is determined that this card is a document certifying the identity and citizenship of its owner.

In accordance with the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to further improve the procedure for organizing and holding mass events" dated July 29, 2014, it was established that socio-political and other events organized with the participation of one hundred or more people and involving the joint participation of citizens are considered mass. To conduct them, it is required to obtain a permit from the relevant authorized state bodies. According to this requirement, the notion has been formed that political parties, candidates or their proxies should also receive a permit from the relevant authorized state bodies during the election campaign to conduct campaigning events and meetings with candidates. In particular, in the Final Report of

the OSCE/ODIHR Observer Mission of December 22, 2019 on the parliamentary elections, it is recommended to adopt a law that meets international standards for holding mass events during the pre-election campaign, introducing a notification system for relevant state bodies for events during the pre-election campaign. For this reason, Article 48 of the Electoral Code has been supplemented with part three as follows: "Mass events, such as meetings with voters, are held with a written notification to the relevant district (city) khokimiyats of the place and time of their holding at least three days in advance".

Article 58 of the Electoral Code contains a provision according to which the results of vote counting are considered at a meeting of the precinct election commission and recorded in the protocol, which is signed by the chairman, deputy chairman, secretary, and other members of the election commission. After that, the protocol is announced by the chairman or deputy chairman of the precinct election commission. A copy of the protocol is immediately posted in the premises of the precinct election commission for public inspection for a period of at least forty-eight hours.

A copy of the protocol of the precinct election commission is submitted to the relevant district election commission through the use of information and communication technologies, and the original is delivered on purpose by the chairman or his deputy accompanied by employees of the internal affairs bodies. According to article 95 of the Electoral Code, the results of elections in the district are determined on the basis of the submitted protocols of precinct election commissions. They are determined at a meeting of the district election commission and recorded in the protocol, then the protocol is signed by the chairman, deputy chairman, secretary, other members of the commission and submitted to the relevant election commission. However, unlike the precinct election commission, there was no requirement that a copy of this protocol should be immediately posted on the premises of the district election commission for public

inspection for a period of at least forty-eight hours.

Therefore, legislators have eliminated this gap in the code. Now it is established that a copy of the protocol is immediately posted in the premises of the district election commission for public inspection for a period of at least forty-eight hours. For reference, it should be noted that in the Index of Democracy of the countries of the world compiled by the British research organization The Economist Intelligence Unit, Uzbekistan ranked 157th among 165 states as of 2019. Therefore, in the Presidential Decree "On improving the position of the Republic of Uzbekistan in international ratings and indices, as well as the introduction of a new mechanism for systematic work with them in government agencies and organizations" dated June 2, 2020, the task is to raise the rating of Uzbekistan in the direction of this index "12.1 - The direction of the electoral process and pluralism" six times by 2022. Summing up, we can say that the changes made to the electoral legislation will become an important factor in further improving our country's position in international rankings, democratizing national electoral legislation and raising the practice of holding elections to a qualitatively new level, active participation of citizens in transparent elections and free expression of will.

Open democratic elections provide an opportunity to realize the political potential of citizens. Positive changes aimed at improving the effectiveness of democratic processes strengthen faith in the future and lift people's spirits. According to international rules, every voter cares about their freedom of choice. So, what tomorrow will be like depends on the political consciousness of each of us, on the electoral system and on how we use our rights and effectively fulfill our civic duty. Only under such conditions, the principles of democratic elections guarantee the progressive development of society.

Central Election Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan







## ***Afghanistan is a source of not only challenges and threats, but also new opportunities - Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan***

**A**fghanistan is a source of not only challenges and threats, but also new opportunities that can be used as the basis for constructive, creative regional projects.

This was stated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov in an interview with the Pravda Vostoka newspaper. The Foreign Minister noted that a difficult situation is indeed developing in Afghanistan.

This is a new reality that we have to deal with. "Obviously, the situation in this country will still remain a factor of tension in the region, especially taking into account the terrorist groups still remaining on the territory of Afghanistan," he said.

"Nevertheless, one should take into account the fact that Afghanistan is a source of not only challenges and threats, but also new opportunities that can be used as the basis for constructive, creative regional projects.

It is in our interests to prevent the international isolation of Afghanistan and the appearance of a "rogue country" on our southern borders, to prevent the scenario of the late 90s of the last century from repeating itself," Kamilov said.

He noted that Uzbekistan proceeds from the need not only to prevent the isolation of Afghanistan, but also to intensify the provision of humanitarian assistance to it. According to him, Uzbekistan opened the border with this country and resumed the supply of essential goods - food, oil products and electricity.

"Tashkent also advocates unfreezing Afghan state assets in foreign banks, calls on the world community to continue the implementation of social, economic and infrastructure projects in Afghanistan," added Abdulaziz Kamilov.

"It was with the aim of solving these problems that the official delegation of Uzbekistan yesterday, October 7, visited Kabul and held constructive negotiations with the leadership and members of the interim government of Afghanistan," he said.

"We are convinced that the continuation of socio-economic assistance and the implementation of development projects are extremely necessary to prevent a humanitarian crisis, stabilize the situation and post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Ultimately, without solving these problems, it is practically impossible to ensure long-term stability in this country and neighboring regions," the head of the Uzbek Foreign Ministry said. "Uzbekistan does not have any hidden or ambiguous agenda in the Afghan direction.

Our position is unambiguous, and our actions are transparent and pragmatic. Uzbekistan is interested in the establishment of Afghanistan as a peaceful and independent state. Afghan soil should no longer pose a threat to the countries of the region and international security.

A stable, peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan meets the interests of the entire multinational Afghan people and

the world community," Kamilov said. He noted that Afghanistan should not become an obstacle, but a bridge for strengthening mutual cooperation between Central and South Asia. This will be facilitated by the trans-Afghan transport and communication projects, which we intend to further promote together with our international partners.

"Implementation of Uzbekistan's initiatives on regional interconnection of Central and South Asia is necessary to address key security problems and build mechanisms for long-term cooperation between the countries of the two regions.

In this regard, work continues with partners to adopt a special resolution of the UN General Assembly on strengthening the interconnectedness of Central and South Asia.

The issues of promoting interregional cooperation in trade, economic, transport, cultural, humanitarian and other spheres are being resolved," the head of the foreign policy department noted.

"In a word, the program of measures to promote cooperation with South Asia presented by the President of Uzbekistan is designed for a long-term perspective.

The ongoing transit of power in Afghanistan poses urgent tasks for the country, the region, and other involved parties to stabilize and politically resolve the remaining problems," he said.



# ***Uzbekistan-Pakistan Online Summit on April, 2021: New realities of mutually beneficial cooperation***



**T**he intensification of Uzbekistan's interaction with foreign countries began with the adoption of the country's Action Strategy on the five priority areas of Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021. The initiatives of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev contribute to strengthening ties with foreign partners. In short, the foreign policy of the republic has acquired a completely different look, it is now based on openness and full readiness for cooperation in all directions.

The country's leader has repeatedly stressed that Uzbekistan places international cooperation as a priority of state policy. During his speeches at various summits and during official visits, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev notes the importance of cooperation, deepening mutually beneficial relations, building them on the principles of friendship and mutual understanding. And on April 14 of this year, the head of Uzbekistan held a summit with the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Imran Khan via videoconference.

The agenda included topical issues of bilateral multifaceted partnership, the development of a constructive political dialogue, the expansion of practical cooperation in the field of trade, investment, transport, education and culture.

Let's turn to history. Pakistan recognized Uzbekistan's independence on December 20, 1991, and diplomatic relations were established on May 10, 1992. Already in June of the same year, the Embassy of the IRP in Tashkent was opened.

The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Islamabad was opened in July 1994. A new stage in bilateral relations began in 2017. In June of that year, within the framework of the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Astana (now Nur-Sultan) President Shavkat Mirziyoyev met with the then acting Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif.

And during the summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Science and Technology in the current capital of Kazakhstan on

September 17, 2017, the leader of Uzbekistan held a meeting with the President of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussein. The second meeting of the leaders took place on the sidelines of the SCO summit in Qingdao (China) in June 2018.

Uzbekistan and Pakistan support each other in the international arena. Several dozens of interstate, intergovernmental and interdepartmental documents have been signed between the states in various fields. In addition, there are more than 50 enterprises in our country, organized in cooperation with Pakistan, which actively supplies agricultural products to Uzbekistan.

Now both countries are mutually interested in the implementation of transport corridor projects. Tashkent considers the prospects of the southern transport corridors passing through Afghanistan as one of the main strategic routes.

For Islamabad, the opening of transport corridors to Central Asia is an essential





component of strengthening its presence in the region.

To work out this issue, on February 2 of this year, Uzbek-Afghan-Pakistani high-level talks were held in Tashkent, where the heads of key international financial institutions took part.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the implementation of the Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway construction project. A “road map” for its construction has been adopted. The project is expected to take five years to implement, it is planned to attract \$ 4.8 billion.

This event became possible after a series of negotiations at the highest and highest levels. Following their results, on December 29, 2020, the heads of Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan sent a joint appeal to international financial institutions with a proposal to support this project.

The World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and the International Development Finance Corporation have already shown interest in the initiative.

The expert community expresses confidence that the openness of Uzbekistan will benefit the development of transport projects in Central Asia. It will also increase the inflow of foreign investment into the region.

The construction of the Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway will significantly reduce the time and cost of cargo transportation between the countries of South Asia and Europe through

Central Asia.

It will provide access to the Pakistani seaports “Karachi”, “Kasem” and “Gwadar”, connect the South Asian railway system with the Central Asian and Eurasian, and will also contribute to a cardinal increase in the transit potential of the region. Central Asia will be able to attract large flows of cargo.

This will revive the historical role of the region as a bridge connecting Europe and Asia by land route. In addition, this project will provide opportunities to ensure peace and order in Afghanistan.

Within the framework of the above-mentioned summit of the leaders of Uzbekistan and Pakistan, an agreement was reached on taking additional measures to promote initiatives in the transport sector and trade, creating favorable conditions for increasing trade turnover.

Industrial cooperation is important, as well as the implementation of major business projects. The parties agreed to hold joint business forums.

As the heads of both countries stressed during the summit, despite the pandemic, intensive exchanges in the field of trade and joint business initiatives continue. What is gratifying is that close ties are being established between the regions of the states.

It is impossible not to mention the expanding bilateral cooperation in the field of culture and tourism. Following the meeting, a joint statement was adopted, and a number of important documents were signed in the field of standardization and metrology, agriculture

and other areas.

It is important to note that Uzbekistan is growing interest in cooperation with Pakistan not only in the field of transport and trade, but also in science.

Thus, the University of World Economy and Diplomacy carries out close cooperation with partners from Pakistan. An agreement was reached on the organization of academic exchange with the Academy of the Diplomatic Service of Pakistan in topical areas of practical interest to both sides.

And the initiatives of the Pakistani side to conduct online lectures, seminars and master classes, the implementation of joint research projects, participation in professional development programs are of great interest from our side.

In addition, a draft cooperation agreement submitted by the Pakistani side is being considered, according to which Pakistani professors will conduct online lectures for students of Uzbekistan.

Thus, we see how far the vector of our country's foreign policy is directed. At the current stage of its development, modern Uzbekistan sees deepening contacts with foreign countries and reputable international financial institutions as a priority.

All this pursues a single goal - to ensure the competitiveness of the national economy, to raise financial indicators, thereby creating favorable conditions for a comfortable and prosperous life of the population.





## Joint statement by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Central and South Asian States on the Development of Regional Connectivity

**M**inisters of Foreign Affairs of the Central and South Asian countries – participants of the International Conference «Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities», held in Tashkent on July 15-16, 2021.

Reaffirming their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the international law, guided by the principles of openness, transparency, equality, mutual trust and respect in the international relations, noting the need for transit and trade among the countries of Central and South Asia in accordance with international norms and regulations, and taking into account various international and regional initiatives to develop regional connectivity, to increase the efficiency of trade and economic relations among the states of the two regions to realize their unique transport, transit and investment capabilities, emphasizing the importance of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) for 2014-2024.

Considering that the revival of the ancient, historical and cultural linkages among the countries of Central and South Asia will promote cooperation in the field of the formation of effective transport and communication network and trade and economic ties throughout the continent, aiming at further strengthening the historically close and friendly ties between the peoples of Central and South Asia in order to improve the living standards and welfare of the population of the two regions, reaffirming their commitment to accelerate collective transformative economic, social and environmental solutions to recover better from the COVID-19 and to achieve the Goals of Agenda 2030 in a Decade of Action.

Recognized the importance of the comprehensive and progressive development of ties in areas of mutual interest between and among the states of Central and South Asia on the principles of equality, mutual assistance, and respect for each other's interests in the spirit of traditional friendship between the



peoples of the two regions.

confirmed the need to increase cooperation in the fields of economy, investments, energy and technological innovation, primarily in the sphere of «green» technologies, and recognized the progress that has been made in the implementation of projects and initiatives in these areas.

Encourage for cooperation in the development and use of the transit and logistics potential of Central and South Asia through expansion of the transport and communication infrastructure under international agreements and conventions like TIR, and the formation of new international transport corridors that open convenient commercially feasible and secure routes to seaports.

Emphasized the importance of Afghanistan's role as the "regional bridge" for connectivity between Central and South Asia and called for economic development of Afghanistan through implementation of joint regional projects in the global economic relations.

Advocated coordination of the efforts of the countries in the two regions on the widespread introduction of promising digital platforms through information technologies in the field of international trade, customs regulation and transport, banking and financial activities, as well as healthcare, education, science and culture, while endeavoring to ensure cyber security for all.

Noted the need for mutual exchange of experience of Central and South Asian countries in the study, preservation and strengthening of the historical, cultural, spiritual and national values.

Highlighted the importance of establishing

tourist routes, covering the ancient, historical and cultural sites of Central and South Asian countries.

Expressed their readiness to further contribute to strengthening of the good-neighborly and friendly relations and mutual understanding among peoples, deepening ties in the field of education, science and technology, innovation, tourism, culture, art and sports.

Emphasized the importance of sharing experiences and joint development responses to the environmental and natural calamities management issues, while also exploring cooperative initiatives that contribute to the protection of the environment and the ecosystems.

Welcomed the development and signing of bilateral and multilateral documents that contain mutual interest and create conditions for strengthening relations between and among the countries of Central and South Asia.

Agreed to consider the possibility of jointly drafting a special UN General Assembly resolution on strengthening the Central-South Asia connectivity in accordance with respective national legislations and regulations.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Central and South Asian States noted, that the High-Level International Conference held in Tashkent provided a unique opportunity for an open discussion of the whole range of topical issues related to the development and strengthening of regional connectivity in Central and South Asia.

In conclusion, the participants expressed their gratitude to the Government and the people of Uzbekistan for their warm hospitality and hosting the Conference.







# CENTRAL & SOUTH ASIA<sup>2021</sup>

JULY 15-16, TASHKENT



## Uzbekistan's Ten Commandments for greater regional connectivity

By Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

While addressing the international conference “Central Asia and South Asia: regional interconnectedness: Challenges and opportunities”, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev pinpointed ten initiatives to achieve greater regional connectivity. Being regional expert of Uzbekistan and CIS, I term it Ten Commandments of Modern World.

It is indeed a “Strategic Road Map” to foster trade and commerce activities, joint ventures, mutual investments, new jobs and eradication of poverty. It is a modern Transportation Network Modeling and Calibration to create modern, efficient and safe transport and logistics infrastructure in Central Asia and South Asia. It is a Blue Print of socio-economic prosperity, massive industrialization, persuasion of green energies, sincere efforts of de-carbonization, formation of economic and logistic corridors, paradigm shift in trade tariffs, integrative mechanism of preferential and free trade.

It is Bible of Commercial Diplomacy which eschews conspiracies, conflicts and contradictions and promotes spirits of cooperation, coordination and collaboration among the main stakeholder in the region. It is a Das Kapital for modern era in which rights are protected through development orientations, regulatory bodies and investments are made to bring comforts in the lives of common people. It is a new “Magna Carta” for

the 21 century in which equity of finances creates equitable business propositions and sustainable partnerships for all the regional countries. It is an Aurora Supercomputer to stimulate digitalization in the region to enhance virtual connectivity and provide platform of locomotive of economic cooperation between the two regions of Central Asia and South Asia. It is a comprehensive outline of digital transformation, techniques of survives and thrives in an era of mass extinction.

It is a new version of Neo-Malthusian Theory which argues that food security and sustainable development are intrinsically linked. It formulates a holistic approach by involving all main regional as well as global stakeholders to devise a joint development research to institutionalize usage and utility of advanced technologies and of course implementation of industrial cooperation.

It is a Grand Green Book of simulation of green development in Central Asia and South Asia which has now instrumental to human survival, productive channels, booming trade and commerce and maintenance of appropriate balance between Divine and Development. It is a new Blue Book of tourism to promote Sustainable Tourism Supply Chain Management System (STSCMS) between both the regions. It is a journey towards beautification of collective cultures, traditions, brands and products.

It is vivid reflection of new adventures, adjoining strategies and holy policies to promote tourism in the new age of virology in the age of dawn of science and technology.

It is a new Quantum Theory of scientific discipline and development to expand scientific, cultural and humanitarian exchanges. It is also a new “Trust Receipt” of mutual trust, friendship, peace, stability and harmony in the entire region. It is new Rethinking of youth, nurturing, education and value of human capital among the regional countries.

It is a new Newtonian Spirits to promote science, technology and innovations between Central Asia and South Asia. It is of course depiction of human survival through scientific means, induction of modern and smarter technologies to accelerate spells of development in the region.

It is a new “Richer, Wiser and Happier” thoughtfulness process in the crucial decision making for the betterment of common people to achieve immense socio-economic prosperity and of course regional connectivity. As a renowned strategist President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev also suggested comprehensive plans and programs to make these ten initiatives successful.

He suggested creating simulative and supportive mechanism and conditions to foster development of economic ties and mutual investments between Central Asia and South Asia. As a practitioner the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev coined practical contribution of development orientation and institutionalization of effective means for free movement of investments, good and services through the development of advanced Integrative Transport System (ITS) and



befitting propositions of energy infrastructure.

He also used holistic approach and dissemination of “Effective Communication Theory” to translate deities and traditions of common heritage to promote spirits of cooperation in both the regions. It is indeed a new Grand Diagnostic Dialogue which would be transformed into specific programs and projects for the creation of new jobs and achieving of stability and sustainability of regional economies. As an expert of jurisprudence the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev suggested to initiate joint study for the formulation and conclusion of multilateral agreement of economic cooperation among all the regional countries.

As a champion of modern logistics and integrative transportation system the Uzbek president suggested to start trans-regional railway project of “Termez-Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar” and termed it real architecture of the interconnection between Central Asia and South Asia.

It will full realize the transit potential of the entire region having shortest and smoothest route of regional connectivity. Moreover, it is a time and cost effective project for transporting goods between South Asia and Europe through Central Asia and Commonwealth nations. It would be inclusive economic development project of both the regions.

Moreover, it would be revival of ancient Northern trade route of “Uttarapatha” which used to connect Indo-Gangetic Plain with the Southern territories of Eurasian continent through the historic cities of Taxila, Garndhara and Termez. Furthermore, proposed trans-regional railways project is fully in line with the goals of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The Uzbek President proposed to develop specific measures to implement digital connectivity in diverse fields of trade, transit and border management through devising a Joint Action Strategy (JAS).

As an experienced Economist & Technologist, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev chalked out comprehensive policies to achieve the goal of optimal food security in the Central Asia and South Asia.

He proposed Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to hold a meeting of the regional agriculture ministers to develop of program to overcome serious issue of food security. In the name of humanity, stability, security and of course peace the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized the need to consolidate efforts of anti-terrorism, extremism and transnational crime including cyberspace.

He presented Multidimensional Strategy to counter all these looming threats to human existence, prosperity and sovereignty through Joint Anti-Drug Action Plan with the help of UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

He was of the opinion that joint efforts should

be started in the fight against terrorism. He envisioned holistic approach to eradicate menace of terrorism through the help of regional experts. As a protectionist of nature, environment, ecology and biodiversity the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev suggested taking all possible measures to mitigate devastating effects of climate change which has already produced havocs in terms of water scarcity, air and environment pollution, soil degradation and desertification.

In order to strengthen the tourism potential the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev showcased economic value of regional tourism which would be utilized in creation of new jobs, increase in revenues, GDPs, GNPs and of course grand benching mark of cultural diplomacy in the days to come.

As a Guru of international marketing and advertising the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev pinpointed structural reforms and integrative steps for the development of regional tourism in terms of recognizable travel brands with elements of attractiveness and affordability, and safe routes in the ongoing human sage of COVID-19 with various variants.

He suggested developing a comprehensive popular program with the framework of the World Tourism Organization for Central Asia and South Asia Regions.

As an Applied Scientist the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev rightly emphasized to follow scientific ways and means for cultural and humanitarian exchanges and cooperation for achieving ultimate goal of trustworthy friendship among all the regional countries.

He suggested initiating joint programs for regional education, science, culture and sports by involving and participation of young generations. He proposed formation of a permanent Youth Council of both the regions.

In order to stimulate science and technological innovation the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev highlighted strategic importance of science, technology and innovations. In this connection the president of Uzbekistan proposed Facilitated

Visa Regime (FVR) for regional scientists and researchers. Online connectivity among the regional universities would also be vital for economic developed, he further added. For the purposes of rational thinking and accumulate decision making the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev proposed formation of permanent expert pool of prominent scientists and researchers from all the regional countries to promote cooperation.

Being prominent regional expert of Uzbekistan I fully endorse futuristic vision of President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev’s immense socio-economic prosperity, sensible massive industrialization, systematic persuasions of decarbonization, digitalization, journey towards green energies and induction of scientific thinking.

I admire holistic approaches and scientific policies of head of the state of Uzbekistan to spread the spirits of interconnectedness between Central Asia and South Asia regions. Innovative trans-regional railways project is the need of hour because any other economic or transport corridor is economically and financially not viable. It is the only safe heavens in which migratory birds (investors & businessmen) can make their nests (investments).

I really appreciate in-depth knowledge of Uzbekistan president about Cultural Diplomacy which is indeed antidote for reducing prejudices, biases and discriminations in the both the regions. Fallacies of religion and wrong notions of different phobias are the potential threats to regional peace and stability that is why he strongly recommended to joint fight against terrorism, extremism and radicalization through tolerance, education and scientific thinking.

To conclude rapidly changing socio-economic orientations, geopolitical conditionality and last but not geo-political compulsions there is an urgent need to start new journey towards greater regional cooperation, coordination, collaboration and connectivity in which President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev ten initiatives may be act as “ten commandments” of modern world.







# Uzbekistan and Pakistan: a new era of relations strategic partnership



**A**t the invitation of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Imran Khan paid an official visit to Uzbekistan on July 15-16, 2021.

Friendly relations between the peoples of Uzbekistan and Pakistan have a long history. They are rooted in the depths of the past and today they receive a new impetus for development.

The immortal heritage and enlightened views of great thinkers and poets, such as Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur and his dynasty, Muhammad Iqbal and Mirza Golib, are a solid spiritual bridge connecting our peoples.

In this regard, this visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan is considered as an important political event that will open a new page in the history of our relations.

The main events of the visit were held at the Kuksaroy residence.

After the meeting ceremony, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Imran Khan held talks in a narrow format.

The Head of Uzbekistan stressed that the first visit of the distinguished guest to Uzbekistan opened a new era of bilateral partnership.

Pakistan is our time-tested and reliable partner.

Relations between our states are based on mutual respect and trust. Today we will raise them to the level of strategic partnership. Our cooperation, despite the current difficult situation, is developing at a dynamic pace. We are interested in further expanding ties in all directions

Shavkat Mirziyoyev said.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan, expressing satisfaction with his stay in Uzbekistan, noted that this is his first foreign visit since the beginning of the pandemic.

The meeting focused on strengthening the political dialogue and expanding trade and economic cooperation between the two countries, especially in the field of investment and implementation of major regional infrastructure projects.

In recent years, bilateral dialogue and contacts have noticeably intensified. The meetings of Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Imran Khan in Beijing and Bishkek in 2019, the leaders' online summit in April this year opened up new prospects for interstate cooperation. As a result of mutual visits at the level of governments and regions, bilateral ties are filled with practical content.

At the meeting, an agreement was reached on regular political consultations, maintaining dialogue at the highest and highest levels. It is proposed to develop a strategic cooperation program for the full-scale development of

interaction.

During the exchange of views on topical issues of the regional and international agenda, the coincidence or proximity of the positions of the parties was confirmed.

Both countries support each other in the international arena. Contacts within the framework of the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation contribute to strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

It was stressed that Uzbekistan and Pakistan, as close neighbors of Afghanistan, are interested in establishing peace and stability in this country, which will contribute to the formation of transport routes, accelerated development of trade and economic ties in the region.

The issues of increasing mutual trade turnover, establishing air cargo transportation, providing mutual benefits and preferences were discussed. The issues of ensuring regional security and strengthening military-technical cooperation were also considered.

Imran Khan expressed gratitude for the warm welcome and invited the head of our state to visit Pakistan.

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Imran Khan continued



negotiations with the participation of official delegations of the two countries. They discussed issues of developing cooperation in the political, trade and economic, investment, transport and transit, and tourism spheres.

The Head of our state noted the increasingly strengthening relations of traditional friendship and multifaceted practical cooperation between Uzbekistan and Pakistan, as well as the similarity of the reforms carried out in the two countries.

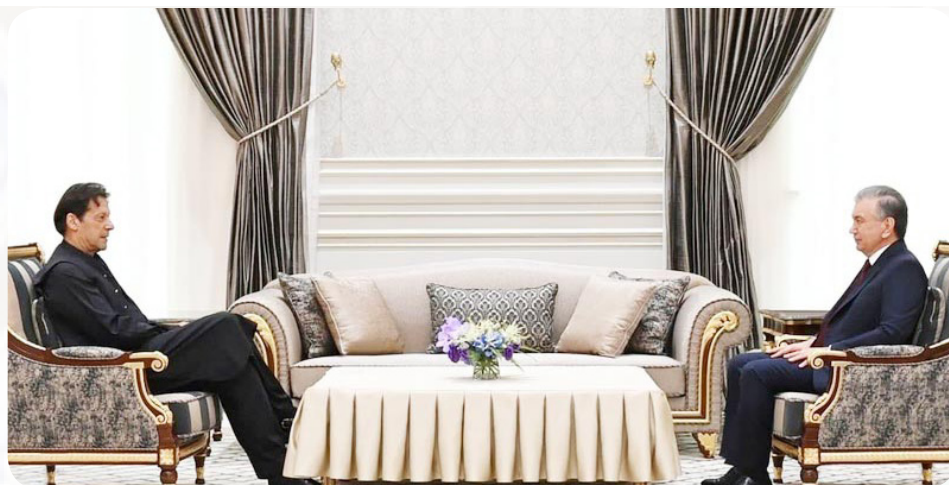
Pakistan, which has a high reputation in the world, is a promising partner with great potential for Uzbekistan. You and I are building a new Pakistan and a new Uzbekistan. The content and spirit of our socially oriented reforms are similar and consonant in all spheres. Your visit will open a new era in the history of our multifaceted relations – Shavkat Mirziyoyev said.

The sides confirmed their firm course to expand and develop bilateral cooperation and readiness to take concrete measures in this direction. Since the last summit meetings and the leaders' online summit, there has been a significant breakthrough in the relations between the two countries. Mutual multifaceted contacts and cultural exchanges have intensified.

A meeting of the joint Intergovernmental Commission was held on July 14. As part of the visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, a business forum of business people of Uzbekistan and Pakistan was organized in the capital for the first time.

In recent years, the trade turnover between our countries has increased fourfold. The number of joint ventures has increased by more than a hundred. Today, 163 enterprises with the participation of Pakistani investors operate in Uzbekistan.

Pakistan is an important bridge for Uzbekistan to enter the major markets of South Asia and the world. The construction of the Termez-Mazar-I-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway will serve not only to develop trade, economic and



investment cooperation, but also to strengthen the interconnectedness of both regions.

In February of this year, in Tashkent, the delegations of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan, with the participation of representatives of international financial institutions, discussed this large-scale project and signed a joint action plan – the “road map” for the construction of the railway.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted that our countries have a large untapped potential in the trade and economic sphere and the opportunity to increase the volume of bilateral trade four to five times.

Special attention is paid to cooperation in the fields of agriculture, mechanical engineering and construction, pharmaceuticals and chemistry, light industry and other priority sectors. The implementation of projects in these areas in close partnership between the two countries will open up new opportunities for the economies of Uzbekistan and Pakistan.

During the negotiations, an agreement was reached on comprehensive stimulation of such projects and mutual provision of all necessary assistance and benefits for their implementation in the shortest possible time. The expanding interregional cooperation should also be noted. In February of this year, the Governor of Punjab

province visited our country, and the delegation of Namangan region visited the provinces of Punjab and Sindh.

The leaders stressed the need to connect other regions of the two countries with partnerships. Flights between Tashkent and Lahore have been resumed since June 16. Further activation of new air routes will also serve to expand cargo transportation and the development of mutual tourism.

Our countries are ready to make joint efforts to prevent the aggravation of the negative situation in Afghanistan, to facilitate the resumption of peaceful inter-Afghan negotiations.

It was proposed to form a joint security group and hold its first meeting in Tashkent. During the talks, issues of developing cultural and humanitarian ties, joint study of our common spiritual heritage, strengthening cooperation in science, education, culture and sports were also discussed.

There is a growing interest in the rich history, culture and art of Pakistan in Uzbekistan, in particular, in the study of the Urdu language. Thus, the life and work of the great poet of the East, the outstanding thinker Mirza Golib, the founder of the Urdu literary language, are deeply studied.

In turn, Pakistan pays great attention to projects aimed at studying the Uzbek language and literature, studying the history of our country. In particular, the Babur Heritage Center has been opened at Punjab University, and the Alisher Navoi Center for the Study of Uzbek Language and Culture has been opened at Peshawar University.

There are many people in our country who want to visit the unique Shah Kala architectural complex in Lahore, the beautiful Shalimar gardens.

Today there are about 10 million followers of the Naqshbandi teachings in Pakistan, as well as many fans of the work of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. Readiness was expressed to create all conditions for them to visit shrines in







Bukhara, Samarkand and Andijan.

An agreement has been reached to co-produce a film dedicated to Babur. Strengthening cooperation in the field of medical education in the name of preserving human health will naturally serve the interests of our peoples.

In this context, it is gratifying that in the last three years there has been a growing interest among Pakistani youth in getting an education in medical universities in Uzbekistan. Today, more than 750 Pakistani young people are studying in this direction in our country.

It was stressed at the meeting that such relations between our countries are the embodiment of sincere aspirations, mutual respect and attention of our peoples to each other.

Following the talks, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Prime Minister Imran Khan signed a Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. 8 documents signed during the visit were exchanged. Among them, intergovernmental agreements on transit and trade, as well as on simplification of visa procedures for representatives of business circles and tourist groups are of particular importance.

They also signed a Protocol on cooperation in the field of military education between the Ministries of Defense of the two countries, a program of cultural exchanges for 2021-2026, a protocol on the exchange of preliminary information on goods and vehicles crossing the state border, as well as a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of World Economy and Diplomacy and the Pakistan Academy of Diplomatic Service, which will serve to bring cooperation between our countries to a new, higher level.

It was noted that following the meetings of the



Intergovernmental Commission and the Uzbek-Pakistani Business Forum held during the visit, agreements worth more than \$ 500 million were signed. At the end of the talks, the leaders of Uzbekistan and Pakistan held a briefing for media representatives. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev called the official visit of Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan an important political event that opens a new page in the history of interstate relations.

We are pleased that in recent years our multifaceted relations have been rising to an even higher level of quality and content. The negotiations that have just concluded in a narrow and expanded format have proved the firmness of our intentions to develop relations of friendship and cooperation.

Given the current high level of cooperation between Uzbekistan and Pakistan, we have signed a Joint Declaration on strategic partnership between our states. We can say with confidence that this important step will open a new era in the history of our relations Shavkat Mirziyoyev said.

This is my first visit to Uzbekistan, and I hope it will not be the last. Mr. President and I had a very meaningful dialogue. The sincerity and

duration of the conversation were such that at the end I began to understand Uzbek. After all, Urdu and Uzbek are similar. Today, both Pakistan and Uzbekistan are carrying out consonant work to support low-income segments of the population, reduce poverty, and develop education. We have thoroughly discussed the possibilities of cooperation in trade, economic, transport, educational, cultural and tourism spheres, and reached strategic agreements – said Imran Khan.

It was noted that during the fruitful negotiations held in an atmosphere of mutual trust and openness, sincere and pragmatic spirit, new opportunities for partnership were considered and “points of growth” were identified. It was emphasized that the volume of bilateral trade has increased fourfold in recent years, and the parties agreed to increase this figure by another four to five times.

The Transit and Trade Agreement will serve to achieve the ambitious plans outlined by our countries.

An agreement was also reached on the implementation of new joint projects in agriculture, seed and animal husbandry, mechanical engineering and construction, pharmaceuticals and chemistry, light industry and other priority areas, as well as on the establishment of direct links between the regions. The issue of construction of the Termez–Mazar-I–Sharif–Kabul–Peshawar railway was considered in detail.

As noted at the briefing, the parties also agreed to expand cooperation in the field of security and confirmed their continued mutual support within the framework of reputable international and regional structures. Prospects for cooperation in the fields of tourism and culture were also discussed.

On July 16, the Head of the Government of Pakistan took part in the international conference “Central and South Asia:

Regional Interconnectedness. Challenges and Opportunities”, which took place in Tashkent. He also visited Bukhara and Samarkand.







## *The Heads of Uzbekistan and Pakistan speak for the fullest use of the cooperation potential*

**O**n September 16, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev met with the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Imran Khan on the sidelines of Heads of Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

The two leaders exchanged views on Pakistan-Uzbekistan relations, and regional and international issues.

The wide-ranging talks covered bilateral cooperation, with a special focus on trade and economic relations, and regional connectivity.

The issues of practical implementation of agreements on the development of Uzbekistan Pakistan multifaceted cooperation, reached during the summit of the leaders of the two countries in the city of Tashkent in July this year, were considered.

It was noted that since the beginning of the year, bilateral trade has increased 2.5 times. More than 30 new joint ventures have been created. Air traffic between Tashkent and Lahore has been resumed.

The sides underscored the significance of enhancing structured political ties, fast-

tracking trade and economic cooperation by operationalizing Uzbekistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (UPTTA), enhancing defence and security cooperation, and further increasing collaboration in the fields of education, culture and tourism.

The Prime Minister underlined the importance of early finalization of the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA).

The importance of further joint work to create favorable conditions for the expansion of fruitful business exchanges was emphasized.

This is primarily about the early adoption of an agreement on preferential trade, the implementation of the provisions of the agreement on transit and trade relations, the implementation of investment projects in various sectors of the economy in accordance with the adopted roadmap.

Stressing the importance of multi-modal connectivity, the Prime Minister Imran Khan reaffirmed Pakistan's full support for the visionary Trans-Afghan Railway project and assured all possible support for its early realization. Once completed, this project would effectively link the Central Asian countries with

the world through the seaports of Karachi and Gwadar.

At the meeting, the sides also exchanged views on the situation in the region in the context of the current situation in Afghanistan.

An agreement was reached to continue close cooperation on the issues of ensuring regional security, supporting of a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Imran Khan thanked President Mirziyoyev for Uzbekistan's support to Pakistan's initiative on engagement of Afghanistan's immediate neighboring countries for a coordinated approach.

The importance of the international community's positive engagement with Afghanistan to address the urgent humanitarian needs and stabilize the economic situation was also stressed. Noting that a coordinated approach among Afghanistan's neighbours was important, the two leaders agreed to remain in close consultations to take the process forward.

The Prime Minister reiterated his cordial invitation to President Mirziyoyev to visit Pakistan at his earliest convenience.





## ***The bilateral meetings of Leaders of Uzbekistan and Pakistan gave an impetus for the revival of the dynamic dialogue between two countries”***

**F**irst step was the confidence building measures, develop security, stability and economic integration processes in the Central Asia, and its remains as main priority direction of foreign policy of Uzbekistan.

At the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan, a new format of high-level meetings – the Consultative Meeting of the Heads of the Central Asian countries, was created for strengthening political confidence and mutual solidarity in Central Asia. As a result, a completely new political environment has been created in the region.

Consequently the proactive regional policy brought the opportunity for the active relations with developed foreign countries and international organizations, this process is going on reaching a new level, the domains of the cooperation have significantly expanded. Next step for Uzbekistan, which is double landlocked country, was the development of partnership in political sphere, trade and industrial cooperation with the countries of South Asia.

In this regard President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and the Government of the country pay special attention to Uzbek-Pakistani relations – Pakistan is the closest South Asian partner as from the history, geography and religious points of view.

In this domain the development of mutually beneficial relations with Pakistan is very important. The expansion and strengthening of cooperation between Central and South Asia is in the interests of all countries of both regions.

This year by the initiative of the President of

Uzbekistan the International Conference

**«Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities» was held in 15th and 16th July in Tashkent.**

As you know it very well the history itself has created the preconditions for the establishment and strengthening of a fruitful dialogue between the states and regions of Central and South Asia. In the 15th century the closeness of cultures and religion facilitated the emergence of a powerful empire on the territory of modern Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and southeastern Afghanistan.

The founder was Zakhiriddin Muhammad Babur, from Ferghana and Samarqand regions of Uzbekistan who was a grand son of Amir Taimur from Barlas tribe. The richest cultural, historical and scientific heritage of that era will forever remain as the asset of present and future generations.

That period the close contacts between our peoples paved way to a vibrant intellectual and spiritual progress. Outstanding scholars and thinkers as Charaka and Sushruta, Brahmagupta and Al-Khorezmi, Al-Fergani and Farabi, Biruni, Avicenna and many others. They have predetermined the development of scientific and philosophical thought for several centuries to come.

The works of such classics of our national literatures as, first of all, Khosrow Dehlavi, Alisher Navoi, Abdurakhman Jami, Muhammad Haydar, Mahtumkuli, Mirzo Golib, Abay, Rabindranat Tagore, Sadridin Ayni and Chingiz Aitmatov are well-known all over the world.

They have made an enormous contribution to the development of ideas of peace, freedom and humanism, friendship and mutual understanding among various nations. The works of such great scientists as Abu Raihan Beruni and Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur are considered to be the true encyclopedias on the history, science and culture of Central and South Asia regions.

In particular, Babur wrote in his fundamental work «Baburname» that there was a regular caravan route in the sixteenth century between India and Central Asia through the territory of Afghanistan, on which thousands of camels transported various goods every year.

According to his orders, alongside the trade

routes the caravanserais were improved and wells were constructed. Unfortunately, in the nineteenth century, due to historical circumstances, the connectivity between the two neighboring regions were disrupted.

Between Central and South Asia various obstacles emerged, borders were closed, tensions became more acute which have frequently led to conflicts. The era of cooperation and understanding has given way to a period of confrontation and mistrust.

We have been still feeling its negative consequences – there are no effective trans-boundary routes, the **trade-economic ties** are poorly developed and the potential of the cultural-humanitarian relations has not been put into effect in full.

The bilateral meetings of Leaders of Uzbekistan and Pakistan from 2019 in the framework of the International events gave an impetus for the revival of the dynamic dialogue between our countries. This year, three big political events were held.

The **first** event is the online summit of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan which was held on April 14.

The **second** event is the official visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan to Uzbekistan on July 15.

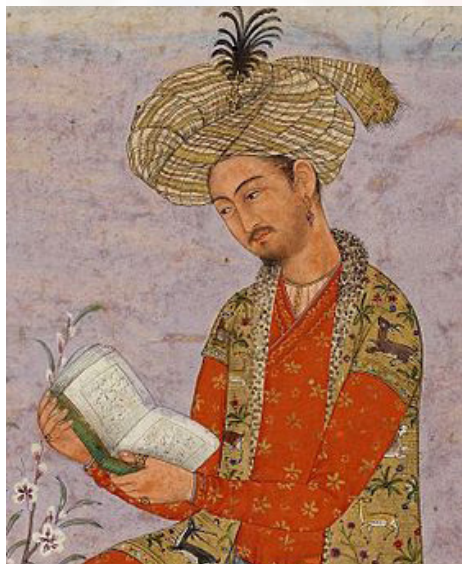
The **third** event is the bilateral meeting of the leaders of Uzbekistan and Pakistan on the sidelines of Heads of Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on September 16.

The consistent development of Uzbek-Pakistani relations meets the long-term interests of not only our two countries, but also has a positive impact on strengthening security, developing trade, economic, communication and humanitarian ties in the region as a whole.

Today Uzbekistan, Pakistan and Afghanistan are actively cooperating in the implementation of joint economic and infrastructure projects.

One of these is the project for the construction of the Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar trans-Afghan railway, the prospects for which to become part of the New Silk Road have already taken shape.

Undoubtedly, the construction of direct transport corridors between our countries







will contribute to the expansion of mutual trade and economic ties and investment cooperation. They are developing quite intensively even today.

#### **The drivers of long term partnership**

If we talk about active phase of the development of the trade-economic relations between Uzbekistan and Pakistan, we can say that its intensification started over the last 4 years when governments of both states concentrated their efforts on mutually beneficial economic partnership.

Since 2018, because of economic reforms held in Uzbekistan and in Pakistan by respective governments, the trade and economic cooperation between two countries started to dynamically increase. For instance, if in 2017 trade turnover between Uzbekistan and Pakistan amounted just 36 mln. USD. In 2018 it became 98 million, and in 2019-2020 it amounted around 120 mln.

Even despite the hard pandemic situation of the last year, we could keep such high indicator of trade without any decrease.

By the end of this year, we expect more than 150 mln. trade volume between our countries.

In this regard, nowadays Uzbekistan has become the largest trade partner of Pakistan in Central Asia. In turn, Pakistan took the place among top 10 main foreign trade

partners of Uzbekistan. Developing this direction matches the core interests of both countries.

Pakistani importers are interested in Uzbek textile yarns, petrochemical products, food stuff, pure Uzbek silk products and agricultural machinery. Uzbek importers are interested in Pakistani textile and leather garments, pharmaceutical products, sugar and potatoes as well as mango and kinnows.

Government of Uzbekistan created favorable and attractive investment climate for Pakistani business community. As the result of this, around 166 joint venture companies with Pakistan are successfully operating in Uzbekistan.

At the same time, we are negotiating with Ministry of Commerce and Board of investments of Pakistan to establish in the territory of Pakistan the joint manufacturing units for agricultural machinery and home appliances products. Implementation of these projects in Pakistan can help for the mechanization and modernization of agricultural sector and decrease of the prices for electronic products within the country.

Moreover, as priority areas with Pakistan, I can mention the following directions: Pakistan has developed textile industry, Uzbekistan has supreme and noncomparable unique quality of cotton. So, this direction can be very attractive for your textile industry for

long term joint manufacturing projects;

Uzbekistan has large quantity of high-quality raw leather and silk. Pakistan has well developed expertise on these. In perspective, they can open wide range opportunities for business development.

Additionally, Uzbekistan is interested in expanding cooperation with Pakistan in transport sector and joint implementation of so called Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway line.

Main goal of this railway project is to reach Pakistani sea ports like Gwadar and Karachi and ensure regional connectivity between Central and South Asia.

Pakistani sea ports can provide for Central Asian states good opportunity to further expand their export geography to the whole world market.

That's why, we are grateful to Pakistan Government for supporting such connectivity efforts for the sake of sustainable development of both regions.

#### **Intraregional cooperation**

In order to continue to effectively expand Pak-Uzbek bilateral economic and cultural cooperation, we also developed strategy for intra-provincial partnership. That means, direct relations, cooperation and communications between respective territories, provinces of two states





without involvement of central or federal government.

In February of this year, Governor of Punjab province Chaudhary Muhammad Sarwar visited Uzbekistan, especially Namangan province. During this visit, parties have signed an agreement on the establishment of first time ever intra-provincial cooperation between Namangan and Punjab provinces.

The first intra-provincial business forum, as well as “B2G” and “B2B” meetings were also conducted. As the result of this visit, Lahore University established in this Namangan province the first Pak-Uzbek joint medical institute where from next year both Pakistani and Uzbek students can study together.

By using this good experience, as an additional project, now we are working with Honorable Governor of KPK province in order to organize his visit to the relevant province of Uzbekistan to continue new pages of intra-provincial cooperation.

### Regional integration

Regional integration will help reduce the costs of producers and promote the production of goods that are competitive in foreign markets. In addition, when the Central Asian countries carry out trade operations within the region, they have the shortest distances to deliver goods, which gives them advantages in savings on transport costs.

The interests of the Central Asia countries also meet the joint creation of international transport corridors and international transport infrastructure in the region, which will help to reduce transport costs for export products from Central Asia to world markets.

It should be noted that all countries in Central Asia are interested in increasing export volumes and diversifying their foreign trade, entering new foreign markets, as well as creating and using new transport routes.

Currently, the main trade routes of Central Asian countries lie in a northern direction, encouraging areas of economic cooperation in the southern direction, including South Asian countries, which geographically include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

Uzbekistan's trade volume with South Asian countries in 2020 was \$1.38 billion or 3.8% of the total foreign trade. In the commodity turnover of Uzbekistan with the countries of South Asia, the largest volume goes to Afghanistan (56.2%), India (32%) and Pakistan (8.9%). Trade with the Maldives and Nepal is insignificant, while there is no trade with Bhutan.

Uzbekistan's exports to Afghanistan make the main share (99.7%) of Central Asia's trade



with Afghanistan, which makes Afghanistan a profitable trade and economic partner. The main share of Uzbekistan's exports to Afghanistan is electricity (30% of exports), wheat flour and legumes (24.1%), as well as metallurgical products.

There is also a plan to implement the investment in the “construction of a 500-kW power transmission line” in Surkhan-Puli-Khumri in Afghanistan. The length is 260 km and the cost is about \$150 million, and will be accomplished with loans from ADB and \$45 million financed by Uzbekistan. This transmission line will connect the power system of Afghanistan to the unified power system of Uzbekistan and Central Asia.

The documents provide for the signing of an agreement on preferential trade between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan and will bring the annual volume of mutual trade to \$2 billion by 2023.

For these purposes, a free trade zone, the “International Trade Center Termez,” is being created in the territory of Termez with Afghanistan, with an appropriate logistics infrastructure and a special visa-free regime.

On February 2, 2021, a meeting of the trilateral working group was held in Tashkent with the participation of the government delegations of Uzbekistan, Pakistan and Afghanistan on the implementation of the Mazar-i-Sharif–Kabul–Peshawar railway project.

As a result of the meeting, a joint roadmap was signed for the construction of the Mazar-i-Sharif–Kabul–Peshawar railway. The expansion of interregional trade through Afghanistan will bring economic benefits to

the country in the form of transit fees.

In this context, the opinion of the observers of the American edition of Project Syndicate is interesting, according to which the Trans-Afghan railway can carry up to 20 million tons of cargo per year, and transportation costs will decrease by 30-35%.

Thus the construction of the railway will significantly reduce the time and cost of transporting goods between the countries of South Asia and Europe through Central Asia.

I believe that it is a high time – proceeding from an enormous historical, scientific and spiritual-cultural heritage of our peoples, the complementarity of economies and intellectual capacity to consolidate our joint efforts, which will undoubtedly have a powerful synergy effect.



**Oybek Usmanov,  
Ambassador of Uzbekistan  
in Pakistan**



# Ziyorat tourism objects

On the territory of Uzbekistan, there are many Holy places belonging to the Islamic culture and its current of Sufism, as well as other religions. The most valuable monuments are recognized as UNESCO World Heritage sites. Among them is the city of Bukhara, called in the Islamic world Bukhara-Sharif, which means Blessed Bukhara. The city of Samarkand, which has a huge number of priceless monuments. Shakhrisabz is the birthplace of Amir Temur. Of course, these cities have an ancient and rich history and have undergone significant changes throughout their lives.

The idea of immortality is associated with these cities. There was one episode in the biography of the prophet Muhammad. He was making a Mirage. He had a celestial horse and he ascended to the sky on this horse. First he visited Jerusalem, then Mecca. On his way to Mecca, he saw the sun's rays illuminate the entire world. Then he saw only two points on the ground, from which the rays came up from below. These rays were Bukhara and Samarkand.

Bukhara is the birthplace of the seven great Sufis of the Nakshbandi order. The great representatives of Sufism lived here, led religious and social life, which contributed to the formation and prosperity of the fertile Bukhara, to the education of spirituality, raising the emotional spirit. The Muslim sanctuaries, the burial places of Sufi saints can be found here. Most of the pilgrims of Bukhara begin their journey with a blessed visit to the mausoleum of Khoja Abdalkhalik al Gijduvani, a spiritual mentor who paved the path of Nakshbandi teachings. Abdulkhalik al Gijduvani is connected with the spiritual parts of the tenth generation of the prophet. The terrace of the mausoleum with ten columns and props is a symbol of the mentioned dynasty.



In the time of Khoja Abdalkhalik al Gijduvani, the mausoleum was a "chillahona", where people came to pray during forty-day of sweltering heat. The Holy place of prayer then became a cherished place of worship. This sacred place was abandoned for a long time. It took several generations before the mausoleum acquire today's exemplary appearance. Now the "mausoleum of Abdalkhalik al Gijduvani", as the part of the ancient East, is the connection of the earth and the sky. The mausoleum of Khaji Mukhammad Arif al-Rivgari is the burial place of Murshid Khaji Mukhammad Arif Rivgari. He was born in the village of Revgar in the middle of the XII century. He was a disciple of the great Murshid Abdulkhalik Gijduvani. After the death of the great teacher, he received permission to be a spiritual mentor for others. For the rest of his life, he led his religious activities. He liked to pray Zikr aloud. There is a legend that Khaji Arif lived for 150 years. He was buried in the village of Shafirkan in the Bukhara region. The mausoleum of Khaji Makhmud Anjir-Fagnavi is the burial place of the great Sufi spiritual master. He was born near the town of Vabkent. At the beginning of his career, he was

a craftsman and carpenter. After completing his apprenticeship, he became the Murshid. Makhmud Indir Fagnavi was the first to pray Zikr loudly, believing that "people asleep must wake up". He was buried in his native village of Anjirbog.

The Khaji Ali Ramitani memorial complex is the burial place of the most famous spiritual master of the Khajagan Sufi School. The people called the Sufi "Azizkhon" – the venerable Sheikh. He was born at the end of the XII century in the city of Ramitan. He was professionally engaged in weaving throughout his life. He was a disciple of Makhmud Fagnavi. Ali Ramitani managed the impossible – he converted the Mongols to the Islamic faith. He helped to restore scattered lands after the Mongol invasion, and was engaged in healing. The legend says that the Sufi was able to read people's thoughts and answer a question before it was asked. Throughout his long and righteous life, he had many disciples, including his sons. He bequeathed his younger son, Khaj Ibrakhim, to continue his teaching. The memorial complex of Khaja Makhmud Babai Sammasi is the burial place of the famous Sufi, a follower of Khaji Ali Ramitani. Khaja Sammasi made an invaluable contribution to the development of Sufism, predicted the birth of a great person, Bakhautdin Mukhammad Nakshbandi. The legend says that once passing by the native village of Bakhautdin Kasri in Khinduwan, the mystery was dawned up. He said that the greatest son of Sufism and enlightenment will be born in this place, and the place will be called "the village of the enlightened".

The teacher died at the age of 95 in 1354. The Holy burial place is located in the village of Simmas, Romitan district of Bukhara region. The mausoleum, the mosque, the well and the beautiful garden were built here – all that this non-trivial man personified with his teachings.







The Khajji Sayyid Amir Kulal Bukhari memorial complex is the burial place of Sayyid Amir Kulal. During his life he had the nickname Kalon, which meant "Great". He was professionally engaged in pottery. He was famous long before he became the Great teacher. He was a well-known and talented potter.

Sayyid Amir Kulal was a spiritual authority and had more than a hundred followers, including Bakhautdin Mukhammad Nakshbandi. He acquainted Nakshbandi with the basics of Sufism and the traditions of the mystical way of Khajagan, as well as with the correct reading of Zikr.

It is believed that the teacher was acquainted with the great disciple by Sheikh Khaja Sammasi, who already understood that he entrusted the most valuable and expensive spiritual son.

Sayyid Amir Kulal was buried in 1370 in his native village of Sukhar. Bakhautdin Nakshbandi complex (XVI century) is a unique memorial complex located 12 km from Bukhara. The complex was built in honor of the famous "Teacher of Sufism" Bakhautdin Nakshbandi. There is a museum in the complex of Bakhautdin Nakshbandi that features interesting exhibits and information related to the life and work of this remarkable man.

## Imam al-Bukhari Mausoleum

Imam One of the most prominent hadith scholars of the Muslim world, Imam al-Bukhari, was born in Bukhara on July 21, 810, and died in the village of Khartang (present-day Chelak district of Samarkand region), 25 km from Samarkand, where he was buried in 870. However, this place has been abandoned for centuries. The complex was restored with the Independence of Uzbekistan.

On April 29, 1997, a Decree of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the celebration of the 1225th anniversary of the birth of Imam al-Bukhari according to the Hijra-lunar calendar" was adopted. In November of the same year, the UNESCO General conference

adopted a resolution on participation in 1998 in the celebration of the memorable date - the 1225th anniversary of the birth of the scientist Ismail al-Bukhari. In this regard, a memorial complex was built at the tomb of Imam al-Bukhari, made in the traditions of ancient architecture of Central Asia. The total allocated area of the monument is 10 hectares. The complex is adjacent to the Samarkand-Imam al-Bukhari highway (25 km).

The construction of the complex and landscaping works were carried out under the leadership of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov. Folk craftsmen from Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Tashkent, Andijan, Kokand and Shakhrisabz participated in the construction of the complex.

On the basis of national architectural traditions, a mausoleum, a mosque, an administrative building and others were built. The main facade of the administrative building of the complex faces to the south. The entrance to the complex is made through three large carved gates of the arched structure. The main entrance through Darvaza-khana is built with an arched large terrace in the national style.

On the front part of the entrance portal, the text of the history of the construction of the complex is written in Arabic and Uzbek. At the entrance of the big Darvaza-khana, on the right, there are administrative and other rooms. The mausoleum of Imam al-Bukhari is located on the central axis of the complex. This cube-shaped structure is topped by a seventeen-meter dome.

The walls are decorated with light green, blue, white glazed tiles, marble, onyx and granite. On the right, under the light blue onyx tombstone (Sagan) of the upper floor, there is the grave of al-Bukhari, covered with marble. On the left side of the courtyard there is a mosque with an area of 786 sq. m. The total area of peshayvans is 214 sq.m. 1500 worshippers can pray in the mosque at the same time.

At the mihrab niche hangs the Kiswa – the

covering of the Kaaba, presented to the President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov by king of Saudi Arabia Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. In the left side of the courtyard is a hall with utility room (miyansaray).

The dome of miyansaray like other domes of the same size and volume. This building houses the library, research staff offices, and other rooms. Its total area is 946 sq. m. the library contains unique samples of manuscripts of the Koran, various editions, as well as samples of the work of Imam al-Bukhari. Next to the Imam al-Bukhari complex is the building of the Imam al-Bukhari International center, founded by the decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov on May 23, 2008.

The Imam al-Bukhari complex is one of the largest and most unique structures of this type created in our country in recent centuries. This complex, as President Islam Karimov said, is not only a place of holy worship, it is one of those places in Uzbekistan that glorifies our homeland and plays an important role in the education of the younger generation, makes every person think about life and eternity.

## "Uzbekistan. Safe travel GUARANTEED"

Priorities for safety and cleanliness. In addition, it is worth to note that the State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for tourism development, together with the Ministry of healthcare, compiled a list of "safe sites", which, in turn, was transferred to tour operators for drawing up tourist routes. In addition, all staff of tourist facilities, tour operators and related infrastructure have been trained to comply with sanitary and hygienic requirements. All tourist sites are strictly monitored by the authorities.

Safety and cleanliness are a requirement of the time. Agree, each of us is already used to wearing a mask, handling hands and keeping a distance. Disinfection and frequent treatment of everything are necessary measures that we no longer notice, because they are performed not just by special services, but by modern fighters for cleanliness.









