

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF UZBEKISTAN

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Annotation: The Republic of Uzbekistan conducts an open, mutually beneficial and constructive foreign policy based on the national interests of the country. Current foreign policy of Uzbekistan is formed taking into account the dynamic changes in the world and the region as well as large-scale reforms within the country.

Key words: diplomatic relations, international organizations, membership

The main goal of the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan is strengthening of the independence and sovereignty of the state, further enhancing the role and place of the country in international arena, joining the ranks of the developed democratic states, creating security, stability and good neighborliness belt around Uzbekistan. The Republic is adherent to the policy of non-alignment with military-political blocs, preventing the deployment of foreign military bases and facilities on its territory, as well as the participation of the country's military personnel in peacekeeping operations or military conflicts abroad. Uzbekistan stands for the solution of all contradictions and conflicts exclusively by peaceful means. Uzbekistan is open to dialogue and is interested in expanding cooperation with all partners in the name of peace, progress and prosperity, relying on the following basic principles: sovereign equality of states, non-use of force or threat, inviolability of borders, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states; fulfillment of international obligations in good faith, respect and protection of human rights and other generally recognized principles and norms of international law; indivisibility of security, openness and pragmatism, development of comprehensive good-neighborly relations with contiguous countries, strengthening of regional and international cooperation.

The United States established diplomatic relations with Uzbekistan in 1992 following its independence from the Soviet Union. Since then, the United States and Uzbekistan have developed a broad-based relationship, cooperating in such areas as border and regional security programs, economic relations, political and civil society issues, and English language training. Uzbekistan is important to U.S. interests in ensuring stability, prosperity, and security in the broader Central Asian region. Regional threats include illegal narcotics, trafficking in persons, terrorism, and violent extremism. Uzbekistan is a key partner supporting in the provision of international humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, and it continues to support the country through

provision of electricity, economic assistance, and infrastructure development. Relations improved slightly in the latter half of 2007, but the U.S. continues to call for Uzbekistan to meet all of its commitments under the March 2002 Declaration of Strategic Partnership between the two countries. The declaration covers not only security and economic relations but political reform, economic reform, and human rights. Uzbekistan has Central Asia's largest population and is vital to U.S., regional, and international efforts to promote stability and security. Trade relations are regulated by a bilateral trade agreement, which entered into force January 14, 1994. It provides for extension of most-favored-nation trade status between the two countries. The U.S. additionally granted Uzbekistan exemption from many U.S. import tariffs under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP status) on August 17, 1994. A Bilateral Investment Treaty was signed December 16, 1994; it has been ratified by Uzbekistan and received advice and consent of the U.S. Senate in October 2000. However, the Bilateral Investment Treaty will be unlikely to enter into force until Uzbekistan embarks on economic reform. The government is taking some modest steps to reduce the bureaucratic restraints on the nascent private sector. The United States' humanitarian and technical assistance to Uzbekistan has decreased markedly since 2004, both as a result of government actions against U.S. implementing partners and U.S. Government restrictions on aid. Since its independence, the U.S. has provided technical support to Uzbekistan's efforts to restructure its economy and to improve its environment, education, and health care system, provided support to nascent NGOs, and provided equipment to improve water availability and quality in the Aral Sea region. Through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the embassy's Public Affairs Section, the U.S. Government continues to support educational and professional exchanges and other programs that offer Uzbeks the opportunity to study in the United States and to establish professional contacts with their American counterparts. The Departments of State and Defense provide technical assistance in the form of equipment and training to enhance Uzbekistan's control over its borders and its capabilities to interdict the illicit movement of narcotics, people, and goods, including potential weapons of mass destruction-related items. Uzbekistan has been expanding its economic cooperation with China as it aims to connect to world transportation and trade routes. Uzbekistan's economic engagement with China is mainly about infrastructure. An important area of cooperation is the much anticipated China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway project (commonly known as the CKU), a 4,380-kilometer multimodal railway that aims to connect the Chinese city of Lanzhou to Uzbekistan's capital, Tashkent. While the railroad has been in the making since the 1990s, no rail connection exists to directly link China and Uzbekistan via Kyrgyzstan. At both ends of the trip, in China and Uzbekistan, cargo on the corridor is moved by rail, and in the middle part, in Kyrgyzstan, it is transported by trucks. As envisioned,

the CKU would start from Lanzhou City, Gansu province in eastern China, exit through Irkeshtam Port, Xinjiang, cross to the southern city of Osh in Kyrgyzstan, and travel on to Tashkent. In October 2017, the route was officially opened. Until recently, the project faced significant roadblocks over financing and administration and was held up by the ongoing border dispute between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Additionally, the full vision for the CKU requires the construction of new railway lines as the existing railway infrastructure between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan relies on the Soviet-era Russian Gauge. As a result, the CKU currently still requires trucks for the portion of the route running across the Kyrgyz border, despite there being working railways on both the Chinese and Uzbek ends.

Uzbekistan supports the activities of the Human Rights Council. The country has been engaged in a regular and constructive cooperation with UN human rights bodies, especially with the Universal Periodic Review mechanism of the Human Rights Council which is today the only universal process ensuring to all states an equal and a non-discriminatory treatment when their respective human rights situations are assessed. Uzbekistan passed through the second cycle of the UPR on April 24, 2013, which resulted in 115 recommendations adopted by the country. In

November 2014 the Government of Uzbekistan adopted a comprehensive National Plan of Action on implementation of recommendations of the second UPR and UN treaty bodies.

Through the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Program of Actions Uzbekistan was the first Central Asian State to set up a system of national human rights institutions. The country has been continuing its efforts to improve the activity of national human rights institutions in accordance with Paris principles. Uzbekistan has been engaged in a constructive cooperation and regular dialogue with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. In May 2013 a delegation headed by Mr. Ivan Simonovic, the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights visited Uzbekistan. He met representatives of law enforcement bodies, national human rights institutions and civil society to discuss cooperation on implementation of recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review and UN treaty bodies.

Uzbekistan joined the WHO on May 25, 1992. In 1993 WHO Country Office for coordination of relations was opened in Uzbekistan. Since December 2012 Dr. Asmus Hammerich is the Head of WHO Office in Tashkent. Priorities for joint work are set out in the biennial collaborative agreement (BCA) between WHO/Europe and Uzbekistan for 2014–2015. The aim of the BCA is to raise the level of health in the country and strengthen national health care system. The 2014–2015 BCA priorities are as follows.

- Communicable diseases (HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, vaccine preventable diseases);

- Noncommunicable diseases (prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases, mental health and substance abuse, violence and injuries, nutrition);
- Promoting health throughout the life-course (reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, social determinants of health, health and the environment);
- Health systems (national health policies, strategies and plans, integrated people – centered health services, health systems information and evidence); Preparedness, surveillance and response (alert and response capacities, epidemic-and pandemic-prone diseases, emergency risk and crisis management, food safety, polio eradication).

Uzbekistan intends to sign international agreements in order to further develop and strengthen its international relations. because because of the pandemic, not only Uzbekistan, but the whole world has lost connections. All countries are working hard to fill this gap

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