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**From Isolation to Engagement: A Comparative Analysis of Uzbekistan's Central Asian  
Regionalism Under the Presidencies of Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev**

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### **Abstract**

The late 2010s marked a pivotal turning point in Uzbekistan's political scene, depicted by revived perspectives on regionalism, distinctly in Central Asia. This paper studies how the foreign policy discourse exhibits greater shifts in governance, identity politics, and national priorities through a comparative lens focused on the presidential tenures of Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev and contrasting leadership styles, particularly in approaches to regional integration. Based on qualitative analysis via open coding technique with auxiliary quantitative measures, this paper brings the thirty most crucial presidential speeches (fifteen per president) to trace the distinguishing narratives in foreign policy discourses of both leaders.

Despite significant similitude in the narratives of Mirziyoyev and Karimov, particularly concerning Central Asia's shared identity and Uzbekistan's role as a leader of regional integration, the findings reveal significant differences in their approaches. If Karimov concentrated on sovereignty before multilateral structures, Mirziyoyev underscored multilateral cooperation with domestic issues. This variance in approach is the essence of this study, which reveals how the change in leadership impacts Uzbekistan's perception of its relationship with Central Asia.

## Introduction

Academics such as Buranelli (2021), Moldashev and Qoraboyev (2018), and Tolipov (2024) have noted developing trends in regional connectivity within Central Asia while recognizing the challenges that remain despite these successes. In 2018, the leaders of Central Asian countries resumed Consultative Meetings to maintain stability and constant dialogue among states to discuss important regional issues, geopolitical changes, future projects, and initiatives. It creates a platform for greater interaction and cooperation among Central Asian countries and sustainable economic development. Uzbekistan, a country bordering all Central Asian countries and having a border of 137 km with Afghanistan, is one of the key players in promoting regionalism.

Uzbekistan was reluctant to join international and regional organizations during the first President Islam Karimov. Uzbekistan was one of the last countries to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, withdrew from the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and continues to remain distanced from the Eurasian Economic Organization. Islam Karimov adhered to the idea of self-reliance in Uzbekistan, especially in the economic field, with limited intervention from foreign actors. Self-reliance (or *mustaqillik*) means non-dependence in political, economic, and cultural matters for autonomy and equal status (Fazendeiro, 2017). Despite membership within multilateral organizations, President Karimov's policy and perceptions on various regional integration projects encompass isolationism. Official Tashkent utilized this isolationist stance with its neighbors in Central Asia (hereinafter - CA) (Kazhenova, 2024). According to the memoirs by Joseph A. Presel, who served as the U.S. Ambassador to Uzbekistan, President Islam Karimov had complicated relations with the other leaders of Central Asian countries even in the early stages of his administration. Islam Karimov criticized the President of Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akayev, calling him not a politician but "only a

physicist” considering his background. He also held a contemptuous attitude towards the President of Turkmenistan, Saparmurat Niyazov, and competed with the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, especially regarding relations with the USA (Presel, 2020).

However, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, coming to power in 2016, noticeably made changes to the existing foreign policy, making the country more open to cooperation with other countries, particularly prioritizing the Central Asian region in Uzbekistan’s foreign policy, with the promotion of joint projects in the fields of transport and energy. As Buranelli (2021, p. 13) puts it: “regionalism” refers to a “specific logic of order...based on a set of goals, rules, and institutions aimed at fostering cooperation and advanced coordination between states and societies in a limited and well-defined geographical area”. It refers to the attempts of CA states to build joint economic, security, or diplomatic structures to address mutually exhaustive challenges and opportunities. There is a broad agreement that Central Asian regionalism is limited and ineffective. Moreover, the regional actors are overwhelmed by distrust and covert disputes (Buranelli, 2021).

Starting from the earliest periods of Mirziyoyev’s administration, the President visited Turkmenistan in 2017 as his first official trip. The same year, he also attended the Kazakh-Uzbek Business Forum held in Astana, which outlined strategic partnership goals between the countries, focusing on increasing trade turnover. In April 2017, Uzbekistan Airways launched direct flights to Tajikistan, even though relations between these two states remained complicated due to challenges in water management and the construction of the Rogun Dam project (Öğütçü, 2017). One of the most complicated issues to note between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan due to ethnic conflicts along the border. President Mirziyoyev took on the

resolution of the problem, and already in September 2017, the President signed the Treaty on the State Border between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. This issue had been sensitive for 26 years, and the signing of the agreement proved that both countries strive for dialogue and cooperation (Mirziyoyev, 2017).

This study explores Uzbekistan's main foreign policy priorities and focus areas under the two administrations. It uses content analysis of presidential speeches and open coding to identify key themes and understand how frequently the presidents mentioned regionalism and Central Asia in their rhetoric. The study also highlights key differences in their approaches.

This paper addresses the research question: "How has Uzbekistan's approach to regionalism shifted from isolationism under Islam Karimov to engagement under Shavkat Mirziyoyev, as reflected in political discourse?"

## **Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

Statements made by a country's leaders stimulate discussion, which can subsequently change the narratives of many people in society. As Omelicheva stated, Uzbekistan has a strong presidential authority, meaning that almost every word the president speaks can potentially transform not only narratives but also legislative initiatives (Omelicheva, 2016). Therefore, the leaders of Uzbekistan can structure the country's identity and their understanding of the realities and adhere to a certain point of view.

Presidential narratives were foundational in shaping post-Soviet countries' foreign policy direction. Following the dissolution of the USSR, Regionalism in Central Asia was widely regarded as fragmented because of low institutional trust. Buranelli (2021) defined regionalism as a logic of order based on well-coordinated cooperation through common goals,

norms, and institutions. However, post-Soviet Central Asia could not quite do this in the early years. Divergent national identities and their different visions of sovereignty and cooperation shaped regional relations. The isolationism in Uzbekistan - which Islam Karimov expressed and the country's domestic policies during these years - was articulated as a strategy of resisting dependency after the common path pursued by regional actors (Fazendeiro, 2017). These ideational factors played a crucial role in framing regional strategies. Constructivism, therefore, provides a convenient theoretical lens by stressing that evolving identity narratives and socially constructed meanings shape foreign policy more than purely material interests (Wendt, 1999, pp. 24-25). Consequently, this framework helps explain how leaders' rhetoric plays a vital role in shaping public perceptions of international orientation (Silvan, 2020; Rakhimov, 2018). Theoretical instruments, as such, allow us to assess how discourse constructs Uzbekistan's foreign policy course under different leaders.

For instance, in comparative studies of leadership discourse, Fayaz and Khan (2021) utilized considerable differences in foreign policies between Barack Obama and Donald Trump, directly distinguishing their doctrines. The study explores the personalities of both leaders and links them to their style of rule. In much the same way Perez's (2023) paper was concentrated on a comparative analysis of Brazilian leaders Lula (2003-2010) and Bolsonaro (2019-2022), the shift in foreign policy focus from the Global South to the Global North through a discourse that centered on Christianity and conservative nationalism. In Daghigh and Rahim's (2020) research, the authors compared two contrasting approaches to the political discourse regarding Muslim minorities through a comparison of a speech by New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and President Donald Trump. The identification of the main themes of Muslims by the two leaders resulted in revealing that Trump tends to portray Muslims as a threat to security. At the same time, Ardern's language constructs Muslims as

victims, accentuating the significance of multiculturalism in society. Therefore, those are relevant findings because they demonstrate the role of leaders in shaping identity narratives via language. Resembling circumstances observed in the discourse of Uzbekistan's presidents. This comparison spotlights the substance of the constructivist approach, which considers language a focal point in shaping foreign policy.

This framework, applied to Uzbekistan, highlights how presidential rhetoric under Karimov and Mirziyoyev constructs identity and regional orientation toward isolation or engagement.

## **2.2 Literature on Uzbekistan's Foreign Policy Discourse**

### **2.2.1 Islam Karimov's Foreign Policy in Literature**

Since independence, Karimov's rhetoric has largely embraced the narrative of ethnicity and the unification of the nation (including Uzbeks outside the country) to achieve economic progress (Akbarzadeh, 1996). In addition to themes of economic development, democratic motives were to preserve legitimacy and demonstrate constitutional reforms (Omelicheva, 2016). According to Tunçer-Kılavuz (2009), most Uzbeks do not live among the people of their tribal past. They tend to construct closeness not by kinship ties but by literal geographical proximity - in forms such as "makhalla" and "kishlak". In studying Uzbek identity, it is important to consider the term "makhallachilik," which is often used to describe the loyalty of locals to one another. President Karimov has argued that the concept of makhalla shapes the collectivism of the Uzbek people (Omelicheva, 2016). It soon began to take on a different form under the concept of "mustaqillik" - translated from Uzbek as "independence."

This construction of identity influenced foreign policy as well. As Olcott (2011) pointed out, Karimov had little sympathy for some of his regional counterparts. He repeatedly expressed frustration with the ineffectiveness of regional agreements (Rakhimov, 2018). It

indicates a skepticism towards multilateral cooperation and a preference for bilateral relations (D. Spechler & M. Spechler, 2010). Such a stance underpinned the Uzbek foreign policy engagement model, which focuses on bilateral rather than regional and multilateral relations (Cooley, 2012). According to Allison (2008), Karimov viewed regional organizations as potentially threatening sovereignty and domestic power. Kazhenova (2024) posited that Karimov's reluctance to engage in regional initiatives was also due to his rivalry with Nursultan Nazarbayev, the first president of Kazakhstan. As a result, it led to an exaggerated perception of the relationship between the two states as a struggle for regional leadership (Rakhimov, 2010). Karimov initially supported the idea of a united Central Asia but could not reconcile his differences of opinion with his Kazakh counterpart. The EU-inspired idea of CA integration subsequently faded away. He also criticized Nazarbayev for openness to various integration projects (Marat, 2008, cited in Kazhenova, 2024). In 1994, Uzbekistan, alongside Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, stood at the origins of the Central Asian Union, renamed the Central Asian Economic Community after Tajikistan's accession. This organization later was transformed into the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO), with broader objectives in economic integration and counter-terrorism cooperation, but failed to achieve the desired results and effective coordination due to disagreements and competing interests of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, following the withdrawal of Uzbekistan from the organization. Under Karimov, Uzbekistan was very cautious in cooperating with regional neighbors, focusing on combating religious extremism (Mesheryakov 2012, cited in Krapohl & Vasileva-Dienes, 2019). Additionally, in the security sphere, Karimov strongly resisted using CIS mechanisms in military conflicts in Central Asia and favored interaction with international structures such as the UN.

### 2.2.2 Shavkat Mirziyoyev's Foreign Policy in Literature

After Shavkat Mirziyoyev was elected president in 2016, he introduced several policies to liberalize the economy in the country, beginning a greater transition towards a market economy. Moreover, close attention has been paid to improving the financial intermediation and banking sector and investments in education to train qualified human capital (Ruziev, 2021). Saud (2018) highlights Mirziyoyev's experience as Prime Minister, which he held since 2003, exposed him to many of the shortcomings of the previous administration, especially in foreign policy, explaining his priority in strengthening cooperation and regional stability in Central Asia. Intensification of intergovernmental interactions in solving many problems in the region and more frequent coverage of regional issues in the media and the discourse of regionalism characterized the regionalism policy. There is also interaction between the leaders of the Central Region, such as multilateral meetings in the format of "Central Asia + 1 Dialogue" (Moldashev & Qoraboyev, 2018). In May 2018, Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted during his visit to Washington that achieving the C5+1 agreement with the USA is beginning a new era of strategic relations between Central Asia and the United States (Tolipov, 2024).

In 2018, President Mirziyoyev restructured the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, criticized their work, and identified three main tasks in the face of expanding external relations and attracting investment, coordination of activities on trade and economic cooperation, and tourism development. This foreign policy reflected domestic reforms such as economic liberalization, creating a favorable business climate, improving legislation, and restructuring the judiciary (Kobilov, 2023). Thus, the primary focus of Shavkat Mirziyoyev's policy inherited the economic priorities of the Karimov administration period with the increased importance of improving the country's production and good neighborliness (Dadabaev, 2018).

Constructivist views, on the other hand, focus on how the political rhetoric of a leader changes upon examining national identity. It might demonstrate how the values of a country shape its relations with other countries (Silvan, 2020; Rakhimov, 2018). For instance, even the speech by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the ceremony dedicated to the 33rd anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan makes a clear difference from isolated politics. At this ceremony, the president made repeated mentions of international organizations such as the World Bank, regional organizations with Central Asian countries, and his aim to portray Uzbekistan as a supporter of economic integration, diplomatic relations, and historical and cultural ties with Central Asia, indicating a conscious attempt to restore Uzbekistan's regional identity (Mirziyoyev, 2024).

In addition, to gain further insights into the economic priorities of a country, it ought to study the perspective of regionalism. The shift towards regional cooperation shows the economic importance of CA countries in the national objective (Kobilov, 2023; Saud, 2018). By strengthening trade ties with neighboring states and participating in international infrastructure projects, the country strives for deeper integration into regional economic structures (Molchanov, 2011). This shift aligns with more general trends in economic diplomacy as Uzbekistan positions itself as a vital transit point between Europe and Asia, using its advantageous location to improve connectivity and trade (Weitz, 2018). According to scholars, this shift in Uzbekistan's foreign policy from political to economic regionalism is significant because it reinforces its long-term commitment to free trade and investment (Saud, 2018).

According to constructivism theory, state behavior is shaped by identity, constructed through social interaction and presidential discourse meanings that constitute a central element in forming state self-image and its role in international affairs (Wendt, 1999; Hansen, 2006).

The rhetoric of Mirziyoyev constructed the national identity of Uzbekistan towards regional engagement, building the image of a reliable international partner within Central Asia and on the global stage (Mirziyoyev, 2023; Silvan, 2020). The discourse analysis demonstrates that language is not merely a reflective tool but an active instrument in shaping Uzbekistan's foreign policy by reinforcing its regional role (Rakhimov, 2018).

While interest in Central Asian countries, particularly in Uzbekistan's foreign policy, has increased, more of it has focused on institutional dynamics. Thus, while the existing literature provides a foundation for understanding, few have compared discourse analyses of the Presidents to explain Uzbekistan's regional priorities. In addition, the application of constructivist theory and discourse analysis methods in Central Asian foreign policy studies remains insufficient. Drawing on the literature, this study advocates that Uzbekistan's discourse shifted from Karimov's bilateral pivot to Mirziyoyev's integrative multilateralism.

The purpose of the comparative case study is to contrast how Uzbekistan's political discourse on Central Asian regionalism has evolved during the presidencies of Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The comparison included thirty presidential speeches, using qualitative content analysis and the constructivist theory to explore how official discourse framed themes such as sovereignty, national identity, and regional cooperation.

### **Methodology**

This paper applies a comparative case study method to analyze the changes in Uzbekistan's perspective on regionalism. It examines the transition from isolationism under the first president to active engagement with CA countries during the presidency of the second Uzbek leader. The comparative case study systematically compares political phenomena within two different leadership periods, revealing elements of continuity and change in Uzbekistan's regional policy (Halperin & Heath, 2020).

The study employs a comparative case study design that focuses exclusively on primary sources and applies qualitative content analysis in which government documents, press releases, and speeches of the two Presidents of Uzbekistan, Karimov, and Mirziyoyev, were used to examine Uzbekistan's shift from isolationism policy to regional engagement. The data period commences from gaining independence in 1991 till the latest 2025 year, including both presidencies. The collected data were analyzed using an inductive approach and an open coding technique. Identifying topics from presidential speeches that appear without predefined categories makes this method more flexible and adaptable to the text. Bengtsson (2016, pp. 11-13) explicates the open coding technique by breaking it into steps of 'decontextualization → recontextualization → categorization → compilation sequence.' Open coding begins with collecting information and carefully reading documents and texts of speeches, after which the necessary text fragments are identified that reflect the political position towards regionalism of Presidents Karimov and Mirziyoyev and their policy focuses, ideological shifts, and appeals to the people: 30 speech texts, 15 per president selected for the coding. Certain speeches available only in video format were transcribed and translated into English. Once necessary text is identified, these fragments were labeled with descriptive codes, for example, "border security concern," "economic cooperation appeal," "national sovereignty emphasis," and others. Researchers used Atlas.ti for effective coding procedures.

The categories and frequency of topics were used to draw conclusions and observe the dynamics of changes in Uzbekistan's policy from self-reliance to Central Asia, the priority region for cooperation. This method is particularly convenient to the research as it captures delicate variations in policy rhetoric and underlines rich insights into the transformative changes in Uzbekistan's regional strategy.

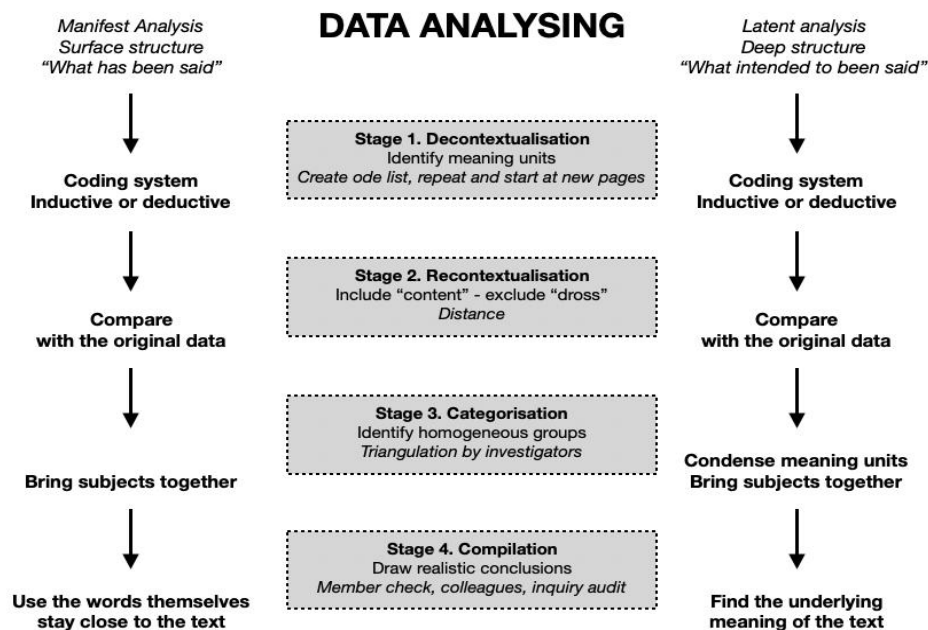
The Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) was applied to interpret Uzbekistan's foreign policy shifts under Presidents Karimov and Mirziyoyev (Halperin & Heath, 2020). Despite almost identical system settings such as autocracy, the exact geographic position, and security solicitude, both presidents differ in approaches to regional engagement. Therefore, the study featured quantitative analysis to bring additional insight into the differences between the leaders. For this purpose, team members used the Yoshikoder software and the Open AI visualization tool. Using various sources or methods for data collection is a different way to implement the triangulations to confirm the findings. (Catanzaro, 1988; Patton, 2002; Rolfe, 2006 cited in Bengtsson, 2016). Therefore, there is an interview with an anonymous academic expert on Central Asia and Uzbekistan to validate the findings. Additionally, Eldaniz Gusseinov, Foreign Policy Analyst from Central Asia and Co-Founder of "Nightingale Intelligence," agreed to be a respondent for the interview. Due to his limited availability, Eldaniz consented to participate in the study as an expert for this research and was authorized to use his name in the thesis via social media correspondence. The received voice message was transcribed and translated with minor corrections to secure the original meaning.

The research team prepared interviews to gather expert insights and include them in the discussion of this research's findings, featuring questions about the presidencies of Karimov and Mirziyoyev for the cause of the triangulation. 'Semi-structured interviews can give greater insight into the meanings of a subject's experiences and hence provide more valid data' (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 313). It is to find validating notions within the context of scholarly perceptions and expand upon the findings of this study. Hence, the interviews were semi-structured, providing respondents with predefined questions and enough space to encourage open discussions. Questions have undergone ethical clearance. The targeted respondents were individuals with relevant expertise in Uzbekistan, including such roles as academic scholars,

professors, a think-tank representative, and CA and Uzbekistan foreign policy experts. The respondents' geography varies from Astana, Kazakhstan, to Tashkent, Uzbekistan; Team members ensured the anonymity of interviewees. The process of recruiting respondents process was through available experts from the team members' networks. Communication tools include email, LinkedIn, messengers, and academic contacts to reach respondents. During the inviting process, respondents received the interview protocols consisting of a research consent form and general information on the interview: context, topic, and duration. The team decided to be flexible on the format and time-frames of the interview because of the vast geography and the main goal being to fit into the tight schedules of the respondents. Hence, interviews were via social media correspondence or face-to-face meetings. Collected interviews duration ranges from 10 minutes to 35 minutes. Recordings are for transcription and analysis purposes.

**Figure 1**

*"How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis"*



*Note.* Reproduced from “How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis” by M. Bengtsson, 2016, *NursingPlus Open*, 2, p. 9. Copyright 2016 by Elsevier. Adapted under fair use for educational purposes.

## **Qualitative Analysis Findings**

### **4.1.1 Findings on Karimov**

The office of the first president of independent Uzbekistan was held for 25 years by Islam Karimov. Given that this term was even longer than that of the second president, President Karimov played a key role in shaping the foundation for the country's foreign policy. Expert 1 (Personal Communication, May 2025) spotlighted that Karimov's early regionalism was quite proactive, promoting concepts such as "Turkestan is our common home," although this later shifted toward isolation due to domestic and geopolitical shifts. By analyzing his public speeches, volumes of books, and interviews following the methodology outlined above, this study has identified key narratives and rhetoric that reflected his position and that of the country.

The analysis revealed that about 117 meaning units were identified and recontextualized. These quotations were combined into 27 unique codes repeated at least several times and codes mentioned up to 30 times. Those codes later merged into seven sub-categories, which were subsequently extracted into three categories. Three categories are: “Collective Efforts of Central Asia,” “Uzbek Nation Building,” and “Uzbekistan Foreign Policy Maneuver.” The final categories were carefully analyzed to identify the main themes: “Security-Centric Regionalism and Sovereignty Preservation” and “Pragmatic Multilateralism focusing on Counterterrorism.” The following main themes are to be addressed.

Islam Karimov consistently started his speeches by stating the importance of national sovereignty for Uzbekistan and the countries he called “New Independent States” (Karimov,

1998, pp. 29-30). As he mentioned, protecting sovereignty, safeguarding national interests, and non-interference in any independent country's politics was his “entire logic” (Karimov, 1998, p. 32). By that, he emphasized the necessity of Uzbekistan's independent growth. Besides these, he equally stressed that Uzbekistan would not be part of any militarized bloc as this era has already passed with the end of the “Cold War.” With this rhetoric, referenced in most of his addresses and given as superior to other topics, it signaled that the foreign policy pursued by President Karimov was an isolationist one, with minimal external influence from other states while enhancing internal stability. Both experts concur that Karimov adopted an increasingly isolationist tone after 2005, mainly due to internal threats and regional instability (Expert 1, personal communication, May 2025; E. Gusseinov, personal communication, May 2025). The majority of his speeches involved the concept of Uzbek Identity; codes such as “Identity,” “Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan,” and “Uzbekistan’s Central Role in CA Regional Leadership” were mentioned more than 30 times. Through these, President Karimov lets his nation know who they are, what qualities the Uzbek people should have, and what Uzbekistan's place in the world is as a country. He endeavored to strengthen the national consciousness based on the people's cultural heritage and unique path. President Karimov's policy used this to strengthen the country's sovereignty.

As for cooperation with countries, there was a noticeable caution in these matters, especially with international organizations. For Karimov, such structures seemed to interfere in the internal affairs of independent states. “In our deep conviction, the practice of international relations must recognize the right of every sovereign state, based on its national interests, to determine the extent of its participation in various international structures and collective security agreements, to safeguard its independence and stability” (Karimov, 1998, p. 37). At the same time, when sensitive subjects such as terrorism or the situation in Afghanistan

were raised, Karimov made it clear that these problems needed to be addressed by institutions, but, again, without interfering with the country's sovereignty. Gusseinov notes (personal communication, May 2025) that Karimov's leadership style was shaped mainly by personal perception of external threats and internal legitimacy concerns, especially after 2005. While regional cooperation remained a theme in the rhetoric, it was only a small part. These topics emerged after mentioning that the Central Asian countries are linked by history, land, and people. From this, it is worth realizing that cooperation in the regional context was an important consideration but was only seen after the pursuit of resilience as an independent country. Gusseinov validates (personal communication, May 2025) that Uzbekistan's foreign policy priorities were shaped by resource constraints and security concerns, often leaving deeper regional integration in the periphery in favor of state stability.

The rhetoric of the First President of Uzbekistan concerning national self-sufficiency was carefully intertwined with the cooperation of neighboring countries. Expert 1 (Personal Communication, May 2025) stated that although Uzbekistan was present in multilateral frameworks, Karimov preferred bilateralism as the most stable tool for managing relations to sustain state sovereignty. These have shaped the country's foreign policy. The approach helped to strengthen domestic identity but slightly limited the country's international initiatives in the early years of independence. The table below demonstrates a detailed qualitative analysis of President Karimov's rhetoric across speeches.

Table 1.

*"Qualitative analysis on Karimov's speeches (1991-2016) using open-coding technique"*

Meaning Unit	Condensed Meaning Unit	Code	Sub-Category	Category	Theme
A very hospitable people lives in Uzbekistan, and we would like you, our distinguished guests, to feel it, every one of you in their own example (Karimov, 2014).	Very Hospitable People of Uzbekistan	Identity	Uzbek Identity		
Samarkand, which for its nearly three-thousand-year history has been a crossroad of civilizations and cultures of peoples. The ancient and eternally young Samarkand is widely known in various corners of our planet as a majestic city with an inimitable Eastern flavor, the richest history and the surviving extraordinary and amazing monuments of the past. It is hardly accidental that Samarkand, along with Rome, is famed across the world as the "eternal city" (Karimov, 2014).	Samarkand's global renown as the "eternal city" parallels Rome's enduring cultural legacy	Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan			
As for the concept of "Central Asian states", which appeared in Tashkent in January, it is an objective, natural process. The peoples living in this region are united by a common history, culture, language, and religion. The historical roots of our peoples are so fused with each other and their modern realities are so similar that we will only work together, in close cooperation, to find ways out of the recent crisis. And together we will think about using our natural resources, which is a completely natural process. It is no coincidence that I spoke about Tashkent as a city with a special status. So it is quite logical that he was chosen as the information center of the region, from where operational information will be distributed throughout the planet. I hope that you should be interested in this too. There is another reason for the increased attention to Uzbekistan. The fact is that our republic occupies a central place in the Central Asian region. The future of the region largely depends on Uzbekistan. The choice of the path of development that the Uzbek people will make determines the likelihood of choosing the same path in our neighboring countries. This, in turn, imposes a special responsibility on each of us (Karimov, 1996, pp. 97-98).	Karimov underscores the cultural and historical unity of Central Asia, frames Uzbekistan as the core driver of regional development, and emphasizes Tashkent's symbolic and strategic leadership role.	Uzbekistan's Central Role in CA Regional Leadership			
The years of the Great Patriotic War. There were opinions that this is not arithmetic, this is not accounting. I believe that it is not tactful to make such remarks, firstly, and secondly, it is incorrect. And the fact that our friend Atabayev, Almaz, is here, seems to be reproaching someone for trying to forget something else, this is also an inappropriate remark in itself, which will not bring anything good except one thing, I am very pleased with your opinion, we have known for a long time. So, I say again, to reproach for these things, or somewhere to moralize on this topic, I would consider it incorrect (Karimov, 2015)	Karimov, in a sarcastic undertone, indirectly criticizes Atabayev's remarks on historical memory, calling them tactless and unhelpful to regional dialogue.	Ironical Dismissal of Historical Narrative Critique	Uzbek Sovereignty	Uzbek Nation Building	
Today, as the newly independent states of the post-Soviet space consolidate their national sovereignty and pursue democratic reforms, they need the world community's help and support to implement change and accelerate integration into international political, economic, and financial structures. I mean, ladies and gentlemen, not only material and financial assistance, but above all moral-political support for our sovereignty and independent development path (Karimov 1995, cited in YT video, 2020).	Post-Soviet states require international assistance to reform and integrate globally	State Sovereignty			
The Central Asian Community for us is neither a tribute to integrational fashion nor an attempt to dominate or expand our sphere of influence. It is our path to independence and progress in the twenty-first century. I am convinced that realizing this community unquestionably serves the interests of our peoples and will help to strengthen stability and peace in our region (Karimov, 1998, p. 176).	Central Asian Community is a strategic, non-expansionist initiative essential for achieving regional independence, progress, and lasting peace.	Uzbekistan's Independence	Uzbek Sovereignty		Security-Centric Regionalism and Sovereignty Preservation
Are there threats to interethnic harmony in Uzbekistan and Central Asia? Objectively, the ground for conflict exists—rooted in the territorial-administrative borders drawn by Tsarist Russia and maintained by the Soviet Union (Karimov, 1998, p. 75).	Territorial-administrative borders drawn under Tsarist and Soviet rule create latent grounds for interethnic conflict	USSR Dissolution			
Crucially, Uzbekistan has always been and remains to be an advocate of peace-loving policy that envisages, first of all, non-alignment to any kind of military blocs, barring the deployment of foreign military bases in our territory and the deployment of our military service men and women beyond the borders of the country (Karimov, 2015).	Steadfast non-alignment—no foreign bases or overseas deployments	Uzbekistan's Conflict Prevention			
The entire logic of the past years compels us now to turn to three fundamental questions upon which Uzbekistan's future depends: how to preserve security, how to ensure stability, and by what means to achieve sustainable development through progress (Karimov, 1998, p. 32).	Uzbekistan's future hinges on preserving security, ensuring stability, and achieving sustainable development	Uzbekistan's Security			
We support non-interference in the internal affairs of this country and the establishment of lasting peace there. Just the other day, I spoke by phone with President of Tajikistan E. Rakhmon and once again confirmed this position. Based on this position, I emphasize that we condemn any actions aimed against the establishment of peace in this country. It is concerning that the situation in Tajikistan may lead to a repetition of the Afghan tragedy. This must not be allowed under any circumstances (Karimov, 1998, p. 296).	Karimov reaffirms Uzbekistan's non-interference stance on Tajikistan, expressing concern over escalating conflict and warning against a repeat of the Afghan tragedy.	Tajikistan's Peace and Independence	Afghani stan and Regional Cooperation		
The withdrawal of international security assistance forces from Afghanistan can lead to mounting threats and growing instability, expanding terrorist and extremist activities as well as increasing scales of drug trafficking not merely in the wider Central Asian region, but also far beyond its rims (Karimov, 2014).	International troop withdrawal risks broader instability, terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking across and beyond Central Asia	Afghan Tragedy Warning			
Uzbekistan—and indeed all of Central Asia—has a stake in turning into reality the promising projects, supported by many international institutions and companies, to build rail and road links and communication corridors across Afghanistan, giving Central Asia direct access to the ports of the Indian Ocean (Karimov 1995, cited in YT video, 2020).	Trans-Afghan transport corridors are vital for Central Asia's access to global markets	Afghanistan's Economic Importance			
First. The rapidly changing situation and the continuing threats of destabilization of the situation in individual countries and in the entire Central Asian region, as well as the capabilities and resources of the forces behind all this, cannot but cause concern and alarm to all States and people who worry about the fate of the peoples living in this region. The situation in the whole region can be described as a state of strategic uncertainty and a tangle of complex contradictions that need to be resolved. In recent events in the region, only isolated manifestations of a large strategic, far-reaching plan have come to the surface, the ultimate goal of which is to change the political and economic balance of power and dominate the region (Karimov, 2005, p. 258).	Karimov expresses deep concern about regional instability, describing Central Asia as trapped in strategic uncertainty warning of hidden geopolitical agendas aiming to alter the region's balance of power.	Strategic Uncertainty and Fate of Central Asians			

The path to global security lies through ensuring regional security—in other words, we believe that the path to globalization runs through regionalism. Only by fostering mutual understanding and cooperation among states in specific regions—especially those today labeled “hot spots”—can we chart a course toward peace and stability worldwide. (Karimov 1995, cited in YT video, 2020).	Global Security through Regional Security	Global Security		Collective Efforts of Central Asia	
First, let us note that the integration of Central Asian peoples is not a dream or a future project; it is a fact and a reality that only requires organizational, legal, and political frameworks (Karimov, 1998, p. 240).	Regional integration already exists. It needs formal frameworks	Regional Cooperation			
Uzbekistan accords great significance to stepping up interaction in security issues between Nato member-states and the countries of Central Asia (Karimov, 2002).	Uzbekistan prioritizes enhanced security cooperation between NATO and Central Asian states.	Regional Security			
Central Asian states — with all their socio-political, ethnic, and cultural diversity — collectively create a favorable environment to confront external security threats and to ensure the region’s sustainable development, thereby shaping it into an area of security and stability (Karimov, 1998, p. 29).	Diverse Central Asian states jointly bolster security and a development	Regional Stability	Realms of CA Regional Cooperation		
Only the principle of maintaining and supporting both internal and external balance is acceptable today for ensuring the sustainable and stable development of the entire region and preventing conflict situations, given that Central Asia is a nexus of political, economic, military, transport, and ecological issues (Karimov, 1998, p. 33).	Maintaining and supporting both: external and internal balances can ensure the stable development of CA	Regional Development			
Furthermore, we face common security threats—such as the Aral Sea’s desiccation; the influx of narcotics, weapons, terrorism, and religious fundamentalism; the risk of escalating tension and instability emanating from Afghanistan; and other factors (Karimov, 1998, p. 241).	Shared threats (Aral crisis, trafficking, extremism, Afghan instability) affect the region	Regional Problems			
Owing to the joint efforts of member states as well as observer nations, we have continued to work together to maintain peace and security in the region, combat terrorism . . . and other challenges and threats emerging today in the light of the mounting confrontation and tension in various corners of the world (Karimov, 2014).	SCO members and observers jointly uphold regional security and combat terrorism etc.	Collective Action Against Terrorism	Anti-Terrorism Measures	Anti-Terrorism Measures	
Only by fostering mutual understanding and cooperation among states in specific regions —especially those today labeled “hot spots”—can we chart a course toward peace and stability worldwide (Karimov 1995, cited in YT video, 2020).	Peace and global stability depend on regional cooperation and mutual understanding in conflict zones.	Conflict Prevention			
It is important to grasp and assess the uniqueness of the era in which we live, to understand the historical significance—both for the present and the future—of the profound changes that have recently reshaped the geopolitical structure and map of the world (Karimov, 1998, p. 29).	The uniqueness of our era and recent geopolitical shifts must be understood for their present and future significance	Geopolitical Changes			
At the turn of the twenty-first century, new independent states, facing enormous internal and external challenges, seek solutions by relying on their own resources while inviting the engaged participation of the international community (Karimov, 1998, p. 58).	New independent states balance reliance on their own resources with active engagement of the global community	Relying on Resources	Geopolitical and Economic Dynamics		
I would like to emphasize that Uzbekistan is interested in expanding cooperation with all international organizations and financial institutions, foreign banks and companies, scientists and experts in the implementation of the task, namely, a radical transformation of the village, a further gradual increase in the level and quality of life of the rural population, approaching the standards of advanced countries (Karimov, 2013).	Uzbekistan seeks to expand cooperation with global organizations and experts to transform villages and raise rural living standards	International Cooperation		Uzbekistan Foreign Policy Maneuvre	
The second alternative I mentioned, - The CIS will remain in the same amorphous form in which it exists today. Of course, some people like this, but I, for example, don't. It seems to me that we should not get together just to talk, make various statements and, as they say, "make fun". You know, it's very fashionable now to use the CIS rostrum to come up with another high-profile initiative. To take the initiative for the sake of achievement. Then, for a long time, they advertised on television with the help of their journalists, how this statesman performed great, that he made critical remarks, etc. But it turns out that this was a repetition of what had already been said hundreds of times (Karimov, 2005, pp. 201-202).	Karimov criticizes the CIS for being ineffective and mocks leaders who use it for self-promotion and performative initiatives without substance.	CIS Future and Superficial Initiatives	Early Uzbekistan Multilateralism		

*Note.* This table summarizes meaning units, codes, categories, and themes derived from President Islam Karimov’s speeches (1991–2016) using open coding in a qualitative content analysis framework. Codes and categories were inductively developed to capture recurring themes in state rhetoric.

#### 4.2.2 Findings on Mirziyoyev

Since Shavkat Mirziyoyev came to power, Uzbekistan’s foreign policy has been characterized by more “openness” than Islam Karimov’s isolationist policy. Expert 1 (Personal

Communication, May 2025) accentuated that Mirziyoyev's foreign policy receives broad consensus across Central Asia and internationally for its pragmatic and multilateral engagement. In speeches, Mirziyoyev paid great attention to the topics of transport corridors, trade, and energy projects that can only be developed through cooperation between Central Asian countries, which is why the President emphasized this region as the main priority in Uzbekistan's policy during a speech at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly in 2017.

By conducting a qualitative content analysis of Mirziyoyev's public speeches using the Atlas.ti analytical platform, 59 quotations were identified across 15 collected speeches in which the rhetoric was directed at Central Asian integration, regional projects, and existing challenges in the region. According to Expert 1 (Personal Communication, May 2025), these discursive shifts were not merely words but were followed by tangible institutional results such as the revival of regional consultative meetings, infrastructure collaborations as Kambarata-1, and the strengthening of both bilateral and multilateral formats within the CA region. The quotations were combined into 28 unique codes, which were merged into six sub-categories, from which three categories were subsequently extracted. The categories included: "Economy and Ecology," "Regional Unity Fundamentals," and "Strategic Security and Afghan Integration." The final categories were carefully analyzed to identify the final main themes: "Strategic Connectivity and Ecological Responsibility in Regional Policy" and "Fostering Regional Cohesion through Cultural Heritage and Social Empowerment."

The first theme: "Strategic Connectivity and Ecological Responsibility in Regional Policy," includes codes related to economic integration in Central Asia, transport and transit corridors, and Afghanistan's role as a strategic partner for connectivity between Central and South Asia that were mentioned more than 30 times. The topic of Afghanistan is the most

common in President Mirziyoyev's rhetoric with the call of Central Asian countries and the international community for peace-settlement efforts in Afghanistan, as well as for anti-terrorism and preventive measures against drug trafficking. Both experts emphasized the strategic centrality of Afghanistan in Uzbekistan's policy under Mirziyoyev (Expert 1, personal communication, May 2025; E. Gusseinov, personal communication, May 2025). Expert 1 noted (Personal Communication, May 2025) the firm foundation of Uzbekistan to Afghanistan. Hence, this is Mirziyoyev's realpolitik – neighbors cannot be ignored, but also the significant presence of ethnic Uzbeks in Afghanistan (Expert 1, personal communication, May 2025; E. Gusseinov, personal communication, May 2025). The President emphasizes that Afghanistan's security is the same as that of Uzbekistan and Central Asia. In addition to the aspect of national security, Mirziyoyev sees Afghanistan as an important economic partner, especially in trans-Afghan transport-communication projects to promote trade and economic relations through transit routes across Uzbekistan–Turkmenistan–Iran–Oman and Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan–China. The close relations between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan started with the visit of President of Afghanistan Mohammad Ashraf Ghani to Uzbekistan in December 2017, which was the first high-level meeting in 16 years where two presidents signed a trade agreement (Silvan, 2020). Moreover, it includes codes connected to ecology and environmental issues, primarily focusing on the Aral Sea Crisis. Water management remains one of the priority topics in Uzbekistan policy, especially with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, upstream countries of two major regional rivers, Syr Darya and Amu Darya (Silvan, 2020).

The second theme: “Fostering Regional Cohesion through Cultural Heritage and Social Empowerment,” includes codes related to common history, culture, and regional identity that connect Central Asian countries; these bonds create the fundamentals of good neighborliness and regional cooperation. Despite the policy of “good-neighborliness” promoted by

Mirziyoyev, it does not contradict the two core principles of Uzbekistan’s foreign policy: sovereignty and multilateralism. It can be seen in the rejection of Uzbekistan to join the Eurasian Economic Union despite Moscow’s calls (Silvan, 2020). In addition to promoting the common regional identity, Mirziyoyev, in speeches, pays attention to social challenges in the region by promoting youth and women empowerment in Central Asia through regional projects and forums, such as the Central Asian Youth Forum in Uzbekistan in 2023.

**Table 2**

*Qualitative analysis on Mirziyoyev’s speeches (2016-2025) using open-coding technique”*

Meaning Unit	Condensed Meaning Unit	Code	Sub-Category	Category	Theme
Afghanistan’s security is security of Uzbekistan, linchpin of stability and prosperity of entire greater region of Central and South Asia (Mirziyoyev, 2018).	Afghanistan’s security is key to Uzbekistan’s and regional stability.	Afghanistan and regional security	Afghanistan Integration and Security Management in CA	Strategic Security and Afghan Integration	Strategic Integration and Environmental Adaptation in Central Asia
We see Afghanistan as an integral part of Central Asia. The Tashkent High-Level Conference on Afghanistan in March 2018 marked a new stage in the mobilization of the international community’s efforts to resolve the Afghan problem. We fully support the peace talks among the Afghan political forces launched this year in the city of Doha in September. We express hope that these talks will serve for bringing in peace and stability in the long-suffering land of Afghanistan. In order to broadly involve Afghanistan in the process of economic integration in the region, we have started the implementation of major infrastructure projects such as "Surkhan – Puli Khumri" power line and construction of a railway from Mazar-i-Sharif to the sea ports of the Indian Ocean (Mirziyoyev, 2018).	Uzbekistan views Afghanistan as part of Central Asia and supports its peace process and regional economic integration through major infrastructure projects.	Afghanistan is integral part of Central Asia			
In order to broadly involve Afghanistan in the process of economic integration in the region, we have started the implementation of major infrastructure projects such as "Surkhan-Puli Khumri" power line and construction of a railway from Mazar-i-Sharif to the sea ports of the Indian Ocean (Mirziyoyev, 2020).	Uzbekistan advances Afghanistan’s economic integration via key infrastructure initiatives.	Economic Reconstruction of Afghanistan			
In recent years, we have made significant progress in consolidating regional cooperation in Central Asia. This allows us to consider practical implementation of the tasks of a new order - the establishment of closer ties with other regions of the world (Mirziyoyev, 2021).	Strengthened cooperation in CA enables broader engagement with other regions.	CA External Connectivity	Economic and Infrastructure Integration	Economy and Ecology	
First, the current realities require us to take bold steps to form a new model of economic cooperation in Central Asia. It is important to identify new growth points, new drivers of our development in the long term. It is necessary to increase intraregional trade. In order to transfer to a full-fledged free-trade regime, it is important to eliminate existing barriers (Mirziyoyev, 2021).	CA needs a new economic model promoting growth, trade, and barrier removal.	Regional Economic Integration			
We stand for the development of access corridors to Turkey and European countries, through the «Uzbekistan – Turkmenistan – Iran – Oman», «Uzbekistan – Kyrgyzstan – China», Azerbaijan routes. Moreover, the construction of the newly proposed «Mazar-e-Sharif – Kabul – Peshawar» railway is of a great importance in the integration of Afghanistan into our wider regions and ensuring sustainable development (Mirziyoyev, 2021)	Uzbekistan promotes regional transport links to enhance connectivity while integrating Afghanistan.	Regional Transport Connectivity			
We stand ready for reasonable compromises with the countries of Central Asia on all issues without exception (Mirziyoyev, 2017).	Willingness to make reasonable compromises with all CA states.	Reasonable Compromises	Environmental Sustainability		
It is necessary to expand the scale of cooperation, to take all possible measures to mitigate the consequences of the Aral Sea crisis. We also stand for the development of a regional program «Green Agenda» for Central Asia», which would contribute to the adaptation of our countries to climate changes, as well as the large-scale implementation of resource-saving technologies (Mirziyoyev, 2021).	Uzbekistan urges regional action on the Aral Sea crisis consequences and climate change.	Regional Environmentalism			

We share a common history, religion, culture and traditions. Located in the "heart" of Eurasia, the region is a bridge connecting Europe and the Middle East, South and East Asia, bordering such major states as Russia and China. The future of our region, with a total population of more than 70 million people, is shaped by every State in Central Asia. We firmly believe that the willingness and sincere desire for cooperation, as well as the responsibility of all Central Asian countries for the common future, are a solid foundation and guarantee of its sustainable development and prosperity (Mirziyoyev, 2017).	The nations of CA bound by longstanding cultural and historical ties, recognize a collective identity that shapes their mutual responsibility for the region's future.	Collective Identity and Shared Regional Future	CA Identity and Shared Heritage	Regional Unity Fundamentals	Collective Identity and Social Capital in Central Asian Integration
The peoples of our region are linked to each other by millennia-old bonds of brotherhood and good neighborliness (Mirziyoyev, 2017).	The peoples of CA have longstanding ties of brotherhood and neighborly relations.	Brotherhood and Good-Neighborliness			
As it is well-known, the ancient cultural and rich spiritual heritage of our region is of global importance. We are ready to hold the International Forum "Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations" in the ancient city of Khiva in 2021 in cooperation with UNESCO (Mirziyoyev, 2020).	CA cultural and spiritual heritage is globally significant. Hence, Uzbekistan seeks to highlight this through international cooperation.	Central Asia Cultural Heritage			
Today, we can confidently talk about the beginning of the formation of a region-wide identity (Mirziyoyev, 2024).	Regional identity is arising in CA.	Regional Identity			
We welcome the further development of the Women Caucus in Central Asia, extension of contacts to achieve global goals in gender equality (Mirziyoyev, 2021).	Uzbekistan supports strengthening the Women's Caucus to promote gender equality in CA.	Women Empowerment in CA	Social Challenges of CA		
To this end, we propose to hold a Central Asian Youth Forum in Uzbekistan next year, which will be a significant step towards the formation of a platform for consolidating trust and friendship between our countries (Mirziyoyev, 2021).	Uzbekistan proposes a Youth Forum to strengthen regional trust and friendship.	Youth Engagement in CA			
The role of the Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia in the formation of a new political atmosphere cannot be overemphasized (Mirziyoyev, 2021).	Central Asian consultative meetings foster a new regional political climate.	Consultative Meetings			
While maintaining the non-aligned status, Uzbekistan is open to dialogue. We are interested in expanding cooperation with all partners in the name of peace, progress and prosperity. (Mirziyoyev, 2017).	Uzbekistan stays non-aligned but open to broad cooperation.	Non-aligned Uzbekistan	Uzbek Regional Policy		
Today, Uzbekistan considers the region of Central Asia to be as the main priority of its foreign policy. And this is a conscious choice. Being in the heart of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is keenly interested in the region to become a zone of stability, sustainable development and good-neighborliness. A peaceful and economically prosperous Central Asia is our most important goal and key task. Uzbekistan is determined to engage in dialogue, constructive interaction and strengthening the good-neighborliness (Mirziyoyev, 2017).	Uzbekistan prioritizes CA in its foreign policy, aiming to foster stability, development, and good-neighborly relations.	CA Cooperation as Conscious Choice and Foreign Policy Priority			

*Note.* This table summarizes meaning units, codes, categories, and themes derived from President Shavkat Mirziyoyev’s speeches (2016–2025) using open coding within a qualitative content analysis framework. Codes and categories were developed inductively to reflect strategic and security-related themes from the speeches.

### Quantitative Analysis Findings

To complement the qualitative content analysis, a quantitative word frequency analysis was conducted on the 30 presidential speeches of Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Seven overarching categories were constructed based on recurring themes identified in the discourse. The first, Central Asia and Afghanistan, included terms such as "Afghanistan," "border," "security," "cooperation," "regional," "Central Asia," "peace," "connectivity," "neighbor," "instability," "drug trafficking," "Taliban," and "partnership," reflecting concerns related to transboundary security. The second category, Security Measures, captured the

securitization discourse through keywords such as "terrorism," "terrorist," "extremism," "extremist," "radical," "threat," "stability," "fight," "danger," "international terrorism," "law enforcement," and "preventive." The third, Central Asian Regionalism, focused on regional cooperation, comprising terms such as "unity," "integration," "neighbors," "regional security," "shared history," "joint efforts," "mutual interest," and "regional initiative." The fourth category, Uzbekistan Multilateralism, incorporated vocabulary associated with institutional diplomacy, including "multilateral," "dialogue," "international organization," "United Nations," "OSCE," "diplomacy," "equal partnership," "constructive," and "global." The fifth, Geopolitical and Economical Dynamics, captured economic discourse through terms such as "investment," "economy," "economic cooperation," "development," "infrastructure," "energy," "natural resources," "strategy," "foreign policy," "geopolitical," "trade," and "transport." The sixth category, Uzbek Identity, was defined by national identifiers such as "Uzbekistan," "Uzbek," "heritage," "nation," "identity," "language," "traditions," "culture," "history," "spirituality," "people," and "values." Lastly, the Uzbek Sovereignty category emphasized political autonomy using terms such as "sovereignty," "independence," "territorial integrity," "constitution," "self-determination," "national interest," "internal affairs," "statehood," "autonomy," "decision-making," and "law."

The quantitative analysis was completed using the Yoshikoder platform; each president systematically counted these terms across the whole corpus of speeches. After counting, the revealed results showed thematic frequency; as an example in the table below, Karimov emphasized Uzbek Identity (201 mentions) and Security Measures (167 mentions); in comparison, in Mirziyoyev's speeches, these categories were mentioned almost half as much. The most prominent categories of Mirziyoyev's rhetoric were Central Asia and Afghanistan

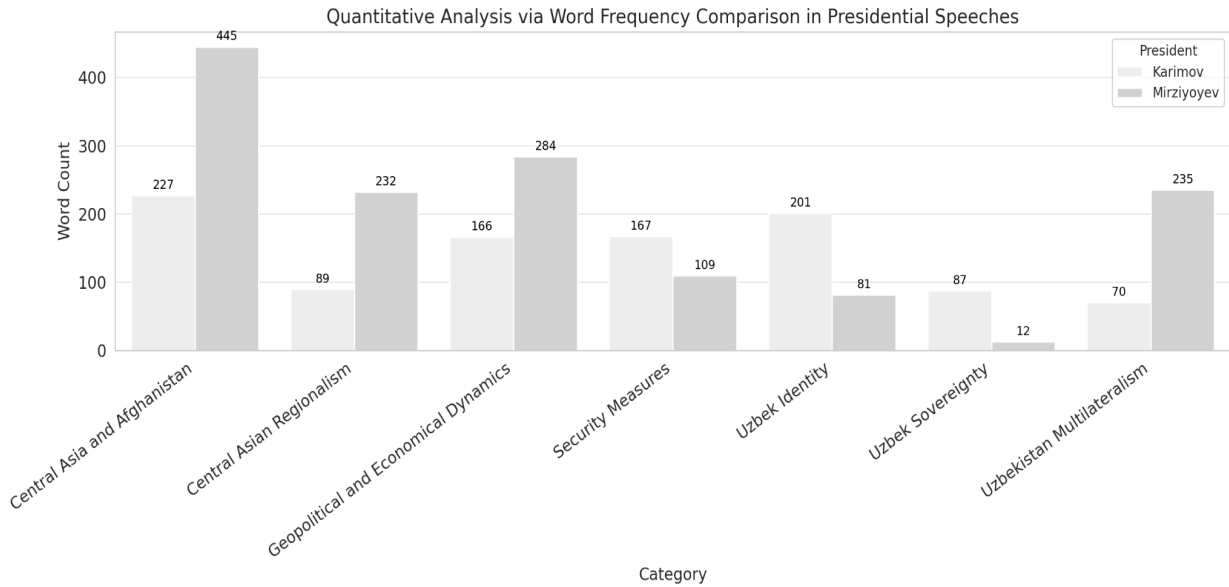
(445 mentions) and Uzbekistan Multilateralism (235 mentions), while Karimov mentioned them half as much.

The quantitative analysis reinforces the findings from the qualitative analysis, as Karimov's rhetoric often mentioned internal identity formation with national sovereignty. In contrast, Mirziyoyev's discourse reflected a shift toward active regional engagement and multilateral diplomacy. The research strengthens its interpretation of Uzbekistan's foreign policy dynamics by triangulating qualitative and quantitative data. The figure below demonstrates a detailed frequency comparison of each thematic category across the speeches of both presidents.

It is crucial to understand that Afghanistan's context is different, and both presidents endured different kinds of Afghanistan. Karimov faced a country with more chaos and civil war, while Mirziyoyev, at least after the Taliban gained power in 2021, enjoyed a neighbor with a more stable power structure. It is rather complementary data, displaying that Karimov needed to address this issue more often than his successor; whilst doing so, he simultaneously referred to security problems more. On the contrary, Mirziyoyev could openly claim the integration of Afghanistan and its economic restoration because, during his reign, Afghanistan changed course dramatically.

**Figure 2**

*"Quantitative analysis via word frequency comparison in presidential speeches (1991-2025)"*



*Note.* This figure shows the frequency of thematic word groups in the speeches of Presidents Karimov and Mirziyoyev, based on seven categories derived from quantitative coding.

**Table 3**

*"Most Similar System Designs Table on the Presidents"*

Variable	Uzbekistan under Karimov	Uzbekistan under Mirziyoyev
Regime Type	Authoritarian	Authoritarian
Geography	Central Asia	Central Asia
Language & Religion	Same	Same
Foreign Policy Style (FPS)	Optimistic to Isolationist	Isolationist to Encouraging
Regionalism Strategy Outcome	Bilateral and Superficial	Multilateral and Connecting

*Note.* The MSSD framework indicates how similar structural conditions produced divergent regionalism strategies, emphasizing the impact of leadership on foreign policy orientation.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This qualitative analysis research corroborates the constructivist perspective that identity and state interests are shaped by social practices and presidential discourse, where the language they use to legitimize decisions plays an important role. According to Hopf (1998), a country's identity determines its preferences and priorities, which affects its relationships with other countries based on the identity it attributes to them (Hopf, 1998).

The findings revealed that Karimov's political discourse constructed national identity focusing on sovereignty and self-reliance, frequently invoking the dangers of foreign interference. The discourse in speeches was around themes such as security, sovereignty, and anti-terrorism measures, which were identified as most frequent through quantitative analysis. In contrast, findings that were obtained through analysis of Mirziyoyev reflected that the rhetoric of the president constructed national identity prioritizing the principles of "good-neighborliness" and regional cooperation as a primary vehicle in achieving economic prosperity and stability in the region with emphasis on the readiness to open dialogue of Uzbekistan to solve existing regional challenges. The president consistently refers to the common heritage, history, and shared future of Central Asian countries to point out similar interests and promote cooperation. Despite the openness to regional cooperation, President Mirziyoyev's speeches also emphasize sovereignty and Uzbek identity as fundamental values in Uzbekistan's foreign policy. The discourse with an emphasis on regional cooperation resonates in the initiatives supported by Uzbekistan in foreign policy, namely the consultative meetings of the heads of state of Central Asia, C5+1 meetings, as well as the holding of joint forums aimed at economic development, inclusivity, youth, and women's empowerment.

Nevertheless, this study contributes significantly to understanding the role of presidential discourse in shaping Uzbekistan's foreign policy orientation through the constructivist framework; there remains a potential for further improvements. This research relied on open-source versions of computer software for both qualitative and quantitative discourse analysis while using professional-level software such as NVivo and MAXQDA, which provides the opportunity to enhance the quality and reliability of collected data. Moreover, the broader pool of respondents can improve the interview part to strengthen the robustness and representativeness of the qualitative data. Expanding expert interview numbers would offer a diverse range of perspectives that help achieve greater optimization of data triangulation, increasing the validity of findings by cross-verifying themes emerging from qualitative and quantitative analysis.

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## Appendices

### **Appendix A:** Interview Materials for Expert Validation.

#### **A1. Consent Form Template** (p. 42)

– English version of the consent form used.

*Note: Original signed forms are archived and available upon request.*

#### **A2. Semi-Structured Interview Questions** (p. 42)

#### **A3. Interview Transcripts** (pp. 43–57)

– **Transcript 1:** Anonymous Expert Respondent.

– **Transcript 2:** Eldaniz Gusseinov (Foreign Policy Analyst, Central Asia).

### **Consent Form**

Do you consent to participate in this interview?

Yes  No

Do you agree to be quoted or referenced by name in this research (e.g., in publications or presentations)?

Yes  No – I prefer to remain anonymous

Do you consent to this interview being audio recorded for research purposes?

Yes  No

**Note:** This interview will be conducted in English. If at any point clarification is needed, we are glad to rephrase or explain.

### **Interview Questions**

**Question 1.** How would you assess Karimov’s approach for Uzbekistan’s engagement with regional institutions?

**Question 2.** How do you interpret Uzbekistan’s preference for bilateralism under Karimov?

**Question 3.** To what extent do you think his leadership style or personal dynamics shaped this approach to regional diplomacy?

**Question 4.** How would you evaluate Uzbekistan’s foreign policy orientation under Mirziyoyev?

**Question 5.** Do you think his rhetoric has translated into effective regional partnerships?

**Question 6.** Do you think there might be a drive for regional leadership from Mirziyoyev?

**Question 7.** How do you view the approaches to Afghanistan under the two presidents?

**Question 8.** How do you see Central Asian Regionalism in future, do you think it will replicate the success of such structures as the EU or ASEAN?

## Transcripts of Interviews

### Transcript of interview with Respondent 1

*Expert 1. An anonymous expert on Central Asia and Uzbekistan (May, 2025).*

*Consent for participation was provided via email letter and physical presence.*

**Respondent:** Say expert on Uzbekistan or something like that. Yeah, an academic expert on Central Asia and Uzbekistan.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, okay. First of all, thank you for agreeing to speak with us. Do I need to read the consent form?

**Respondent:** I have read it. It's fine.

**Interviewer:** Okay, we can start with the questions. How would you assess Karimov's approach for Uzbekistan's engagement with regional institutions?

**Respondent:** Okay, so Karimov's approach to regional institutions in Central Asia. Karimov's approach to Central Asia has been sophisticated and nuanced. Even if today most people mostly remember, talk about, and engage with his approach towards Central Asia more from his later years. And because of that, everybody kind of thinks that he was reluctant to promote regionalism in Central Asia. But this position—yes, the reluctant position—was more his position from his later years. But if you go back to the 1990s, early 1990s, he had quite, we can say, an opposite approach, which was more open and more proactive. And promoting regional frameworks in and for Central Asia. For example, in the early 1990s, he had this conception: “Turkestan is our common home.” So that was a kind of framework that he was promoting. And then even later, because of many different reasons, this “Turkestan is our common home”

kind of idea was sidelined. And it was not only because of Uzbekistan, but for whatever reason, this idea kind of was outmoded. But still, Karimov was essential in setting up these early Central Asian regionalist institutions, including the Central Asian Economic Union and the Central Asian Cooperation Organization. But then in his later years, because of—not only his own ideas—but also the regional geopolitics, and domestic unrest, for example, after Andijan, and then the kind of return of Russia into Central Asian geopolitics as, again, an influential player—then he became maybe more reluctant. So that's why, I mean, whenever you judge and assess Karimov's approach towards Central Asia—yes, broadly speaking—you should always take into account that it was nuanced. So we've always had to have a nuanced approach. Because he had both: open, more during early years of the presidency, and then more reluctant towards the end.

**Interviewer:** Okay, I think you have answered a few questions further too. How do you interpret Uzbekistan's preference for bilateralism under Karimov?

**Respondent:** Yeah. Bilateralism—Uzbekistan has always cherished bilateralism. Of course, Uzbekistan today more, we can say, but even during Karimov's era, yes, was always open to multilateral and regional frameworks. Uzbekistan was invited and accepted to be a founding member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2000. And then, for some time, Uzbekistan was a member of CSTO, Eurasian Economic Community, for some time. So there was also kind of presence within multilateral organizations. But because of Uzbekistan's focus on political sovereignty, bilateralism was one of the most stable and maybe most appreciated tools for managing its international relations. And it was always kind of helpful. For example, even today, people say that Uzbekistan should join the Eurasian Economic Union because of many different reasons—because of the economy, etc. But even when Uzbekistan was not a

member of the Eurasian Economic Community, because of its bilateral relations with Russia, they could put in place different export and import operations. Including, for example, I think in the early 2000s, these Uzbek-made Daewoo cars were the most sold cars in Russia because of their price or whatever. And so Uzbekistan could attain this position even without being in a regional customs union with Russia, but because of its bilateral relations. Or, for example, I think it was during the 2000s, there was a political crisis between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan because of Tajikistan's Rogun Dam project. During those times, Tajikistan wanted to build this Rogun Dam, which would give it some advantage in managing water flows in Central Asia. Karimov was quite opposed—openly opposed—to it. There was this case when, I think, it was Tajikistan's president who somehow alluded or even openly said that Iran should side with Tajikistan. Because at that time, there was this new development: Iran, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan had created a union of Persian-speaking countries. So Tajikistan was relying on regional, but also linguistic, solidarity. During those times, Uzbekistan just sent one delegation—not on the highest level, but I think from the Ministry of Transport or something. They just went to Iran, had a bilateral meeting, discussions, etc. And after that, Iran openly said that they would not take sides. Which means, as you can see, these bilateral relations for Uzbekistan are always very important. And also it is an instrument which proved to be stably useful. So that's why Uzbekistan, I think, will continue to focus on bilateralism without rejecting regionalism or multilateralism.

**Interviewer:** You have mentioned some personal dynamics between Imomali Rahmon and Karimov.

**Respondent:** It was not that personal. Maybe these personal dynamics added into the situation, but it was more national interest-based. Because during those times, Kazakhstan also had a

similar position to Uzbekistan—downstream countries. But for some reason, it was Uzbekistan that was more vocal. Even if Kazakhstan shared some positions with Uzbekistan, they were not that vocal. And maybe it was because of personal dynamics as well. Who knows. Because there were also some personal aspects. I don't know if it's part of your thesis, but usually, how Imomali Rahmon came into power—he came into power following a civil war. There were two countries that were fundamental in enabling him, empowering him so that he was able to win and become president. There was the Russia factor, but also the Uzbekistan and Karimov factor. But then, once he came to power, Imomali Rahmon was more appreciative of Russian contribution and support, but was less appreciative of Uzbek and Karimov. And because of that, from the beginning, there were already some negative dynamics that became part of Uzbek-Tajik relations.

**Interviewer:** Okay, now next question: How would you evaluate Uzbekistan's foreign policy orientation under Mirziyoyev?

**Respondent:** Oh, I mean, in foreign policy, this is where many people will agree. For example, on economic policy—even if the dominant narrative was positive from the beginning—over time, some nuanced and sometimes diverging evaluations of Mirziyoyev's economic policy emerged, because it's more based on credits, etc. So there are more nuances and sometimes even diverging perspectives on economic policy. But on foreign policy, more or less—of course, you can always have different opinions—but among neighbors, Central Asian neighbors, among the Uzbek population, and also among world nations, many people assess and see Mirziyoyev's foreign policy as positive. They say that in Central Asia there were such and such problems, but now they are being resolved, or at least there are positive dynamics. And everybody links it causally to Mirziyoyev's foreign policy, because it is based on

openness, on repairing and restoring friendly relations, and engaging with multiple partners at the same time without privileging one. Also, engaging with multilateralism—Uzbekistan is now quite active in negotiations to access the World Trade Organization. For example, Uzbekistan is also the initiator of the Central Asia–South Asia connectivity project. Because of that, we have quite a positive assessment of foreign policy, which I also share.

**Interviewer:** Well, the next question was: do you think his rhetoric has translated into effective regional partnerships?

**Respondent:** There are many examples where you have concrete outputs in terms of regional partnership. For example, you have very good Kazakh-Uzbek bilateral relationships—trade is growing, economic partnership is growing. Right now you have the Central Asian Industrial Zone, which is bilateral—a Kazakh-Uzbek partnership that is being constructed and will soon be opened. That’s one concrete example. Then there is the Uzbek-Kyrgyz-Kazakh—or more Kyrgyz-Kazakh-Uzbek—partnership for the Kambarata-1 hydroelectric station, which I think is mostly done. You also have the relaunch of the Central Asian consultative meetings. So yes, there are many concrete results that stem from this rhetoric.

**Interviewer:** Do you think there might be a drive for regional leadership from Mirziyoyev?

**Respondent:** It depends. This idea of regional leadership—in both Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan—people are aware of that rhetoric from the past and how it ended up being harmful and brought benefit to no one. Because of that, Uzbekistan’s actual leadership has adopted a mild and mitigating discourse. Even if they always say, “We put Central Asia as our priority,” they don’t overtly or aggressively adopt this rhetoric of Uzbekistan being a leader. They know it can bring harm. So they adopt a softer approach. Even when necessary, for example, President Mirziyoyev can say to others, “You are the leader.” When they relaunched the

Central Asia consultative meetings, the idea came from Mirziyoyev. But he said, “Nursultan Nazarbayev is our Aksakal,” and they organized it in Astana. So the idea was his, but it became possible because of his election, and Kazakhstan could also claim authorship of the initiative. So when there is a need, he can be flexible. The more important thing for Uzbekistan now is domestic stability, economic growth, and friendly foreign relations. If leadership rhetoric is harmful, they let it go. They're pragmatic.

**Interviewer:** Next question: how do you view the approaches to Afghanistan under the two presidents? Do you see any difference between Karimov and Mirziyoyev?

**Respondent:** It depends. You can compare, but the context was completely different. During most of Karimov's reign, Afghanistan was part of the global war on terror, with no stable government. There was always a heavy foreign and global presence. Still, Uzbekistan was engaged in the processes in Afghanistan. After 9/11, when the global war on terror began, Uzbekistan allowed the opening of military bases—not just U.S. bases, but also NATO bases operated by the Germans. There was also the Northern Distribution Network, a logistical network supporting the Western war effort in Afghanistan, involving Russia and Uzbekistan. Even during Karimov's era, Uzbekistan was involved in infrastructure projects in Afghanistan, sometimes with the West, sometimes with the Afghan government—but built and financed by Uzbekistan (railways, airports, etc.). So Karimov was engaged, but it was always in the context of the global war on terror, with a lot of foreign forces. Under Mirziyoyev, especially after 2022, the situation changed. Now there's a single Taliban government, and the West has withdrawn. Uzbekistan is face-to-face with Afghanistan. Still, because of the experience gained during Karimov's era—diplomatic exchanges, trade, infrastructure, investment—Uzbekistan has a strong foundation. Now they are even more engaged, more than others, without fear or

complexes. This is Mirziyoyev's realpolitik: it's your neighbor, you can't ignore them. So they engage—through trade, investment, special economic zones, etc. The context is different, but the idea is the same: it's your neighbor, and you have to engage. And also, because there are many Uzbeks in Afghanistan.

**Interviewer:** So, how do you see Central Asian regionalism in the future? Do you think it will replicate the success of such structures as the European Union or ASEAN? I provided these examples as Karimov, in his books and in some speeches, mentioned those as examples for regional integration.

**Respondent:** Yeah, of course—like the EU and later ASEAN—they have become part of this narrative about successful regionalism and alternative models: EU as hard regionalism, ASEAN as soft regionalism. Because of that, whenever you engage in this rhetoric, you can't avoid using them. Even today, when we express goodwill, we say: maybe for Central Asia, it's better to look more to ASEAN, because it's a good model of soft regionalism, rather than the EU. But still, the EU also has its advantages. So you will always somehow compare any regional effort to the EU and ASEAN. But in terms of whether we will have something like the EU or ASEAN—maybe more like ASEAN. Because the EU has strong economic integration, but also a political aspect. It's always been about politics more than economics. They started with economics, but it's also about sovereignty-sharing. I don't think that will happen here. But maybe something like ASEAN—maybe it may happen.

**Interviewer:** Well, that was the end of our interview. Thank you for the insights.

**Respondent:** I hope this is useful.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, thank you.

## **Transcript of interview with Respondent 2**

*Expert 2. Non-Anonymous Expert, Eldaniz Gusseinov (Voice Message, May 2025).*

*Consent for participation and identification was provided via social media correspondence.*

Question 1. How would you assess Karimov's approach to Uzbekistan's engagement with regional institutions?

I think overall, the approach was as follows: there was an awareness of the country's strategic location, but the main focus remained on internal state processes. Foreign policy did not play a significant role during that period—except in the early 1990s, when some institutions were being established. However, I believe the perception of the outside world changed somewhat at that time, influenced by internal threats—particularly the threat of terrorism and the situation on the Afghan border. That already partially answers your first question. So, there was a rather cautious approach, especially after 2005. In the 1990s, there were certain initiatives, but regional competition between leaders began to intensify. Later, external actors such as Russia got involved with their own initiatives and their own vision of Central Asia. That also answers your second question. The overall perception leaned more toward recognizing risks and threats in the domestic arena.

**Question 2. How do you interpret Uzbekistan's preference for bilateralism under Karimov?**

Because of this, the focus was largely on internal issues. There was likely a lack of resources to be an active participant in the external sphere. In any multilateral cooperation format involving the five Central Asian states, Kazakhstan would have naturally taken the lead—mainly because it invested significantly more resources into foreign engagement. For example,

consider how many embassies Kazakhstan had abroad at the time. By then, Kazakhstan had established embassies in many countries around the world. In contrast, Uzbekistan had far fewer. In some cases, it even lagged behind Kyrgyzstan—for instance, Uzbekistan only opened an embassy in Bishkek in 2022, whereas Kyrgyzstan already had one there much earlier. So I think the distribution of resources was influenced by the perception of internal threats and the redirection of resources toward domestic concerns, rather than external self-positioning—which was different in Kazakhstan. Considering resources and experience, Kazakhstan would have led in many areas, even though Uzbekistan had significant potential at the time.

Question 3. To what extent do you think his leadership style or personal dynamics shaped this approach to regional diplomacy?

Exactly. It's mostly about how the leader perceives the internal and external situation. But you know, no matter what kind of leader someone is, a lot also depends on how decisions are made within the state—what we often call the “black box” of policymaking. We don't know what happens inside that black box, but we do know there's an external environment that influences it. In Uzbekistan's case, what do we see? We see Afghanistan, of course. We see conflicts and revolutions in Kyrgyzstan, a civil war in Tajikistan, and a rapidly developing Kazakhstan—already at that time positioning itself strongly on the international stage. Kazakhstan had large resources then, and still does, for projecting itself externally. Take, for example, the OSCE summit—perhaps the last major one—which was hosted by Kazakhstan. They brought in world leaders. Initiatives like CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia)—Kazakhstan launched many such proposals that demonstrated its regional leadership, something it later emphasized on global platforms.

Question 4. How would you evaluate Uzbekistan's foreign policy orientation under Mirziyoyev?

Well, as you can see, the country started to open up significantly. As I mentioned earlier, Uzbekistan has a unique strategic location—it is the only country that borders *all* Central Asian states, including Afghanistan. This is unlike any other country in the region. For instance, Turkmenistan only borders Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Its contact with the region is quite limited. Kazakhstan borders only three other Central Asian countries, while Tajikistan has just two. Uzbekistan, on the other hand, borders all four Central Asian republics. So geography itself has become a key driver of the country's foreign policy. The fact that it can project itself through Central Asia is a major factor. When people talk about Central Asia, what comes to mind first? Not the Kazakh steppes or the Caspian Sea, but cities like Samarkand, Khiva, Bukhara. These iconic cities of Uzbekistan are what people typically associate with Central Asia. Even Uzbekistan Airways uses the slogan “Your gate to Central Asia,” or something along those lines. So, the country's opening up and positioning itself as a kind of representative or voice of Central Asia has become part of this foreign policy shift. That's how I would interpret the reorientation. Considering that Uzbekistan initiated consultative meetings between Central Asian leaders, resolved border issues with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, and developed new relations with Kazakhstan, I believe this reorientation under Mirziyoyev has proven highly effective.

**[Respondent claims that other questions (5-6) were answered in advance during the above replies and for Question 7, respondent does not know the topic].**

Question 8. How do you see Central Asian regionalism in the future? Do you think it will replicate the success of structures like the EU or ASEAN?

I would say no. I don't know why everyone compares it only to the EU or ASEAN. There are many other examples. You could look at something like the Gulf Cooperation Council—Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman. In their case, cooperation mostly happens at the leadership level. Leaders decide how cooperation will move forward. I don't see prospects for an EU-style model. Even ASEAN—while less rigid—is still not a direct fit. I think regional cooperation in Central Asia will likely develop in a project-based format. We see a niche; not all five states need to be involved—maybe just three or four. I think that's how it will work. Uzbekistan is already pushing for that. For example, there's a regional meeting format involving Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan—I believe—that is being actively promoted. So I think we'll see more of this format. Take transport: the five Central Asian countries have already signed an agreement to simplify overland transit. That's an example of small, functional initiatives. There's no need to try to cover everything all at once in all five countries. It's enough to start with these niche initiatives. In my view, this will positively impact regionalism and cooperation in the region. These could include pre-summit consultations with external actors or collaboration in specific areas like energy. Take the Kambarata HPP project—three countries are involved. Then there's the “Green Corridor” initiative already signed by Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan. So I think we'll see more multilateral formats like that. I don't see Central Asia as confined to just the five republics. Because of its geography, cooperation will expand in formats like: 2–3 Central Asian countries + Afghanistan, or + Azerbaijan, or + Russia. There's even a developing format involving Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. That's the kind of model I see emerging.

Original (Russian):

Я думаю, что в целом подход был такой: было понимание стратегического местоположения страны, но всё равно акцент был больше на внутренних процессах государства. То есть внешняя политика не играла той заметной роли в этот период времени, кроме начала 90-х, когда всё-таки создавались определённые институты и прочее. Но мне кажется, что немного поменялось восприятие внешнего мира в то время в стране — через, конечно, какие-то угрозы, которые были внутренние. В том числе угроза терроризма, граница с Афганистаном — отличая наш первый вопрос. То есть подход был сдержанный в дальнейшем, особенно после 2005 года. А в 90-е были определённые инициативы, но началась конкуренция между различными лидерами региона. В дальнейшем ещё и подключились внешние акторы, типа той же самой России, со своими собственными инициативами и переосмыслением Центральной Азии. Это отвечает сразу и на ваш второй вопрос — всё-таки восприятие больше такое: осознание рисков, угроз во внутренней арене. Из-за этого во многом акценты были поставлены на внутренние вопросы. И, возможно, не хватало каких-то ресурсов для того, чтобы быть активным участником внешнего вектора. Тогда, в любом многостороннем формате сотрудничества Центральной Азии, Казахстан бы лидировал. Потому что Казахстан вкладывал намного больше ресурсов. Посмотрите, сколько, допустим, посольств находится у Казахстана за рубежом — к тому времени уже во многих странах мира. И посмотрите, сколько у Узбекистана. Где-то даже уступали Кыргызстану. Вот, как пример: в Бишкеке посольство Узбекистана открылось только в 2022, кажется. До этого уже там было посольство Кыргызстана. То есть было разное перераспределение ресурсов, мне кажется, именно из-за восприятия внутренних угроз и переориентирования ресурсов на внутренние проблемы, нежели на

самопозиционирование во внешнем контуре — что было немного по-другому в Казахстане. Соответственно, учитывая ресурсы и опыт, который Казахстан уже накопил в то время, я думаю, что во многих треках он бы лидировал, несмотря на большой потенциал Узбекистана.

Третий вопрос. Так и есть — в основном всё зависит от того, как лидер видит внешнюю и внутреннюю ситуацию. Но даже, знаете, каким бы лидером ни был, всё равно многое зависит от того, как формируется процесс принятия решений в государстве. Есть этот "black box", в котором решения принимаются. Мы не знаем, что в нём происходит, но знаем, что внешняя среда на него влияет. В случае с Узбекистаном мы видим Афганистан, конечно же. Видим конфликты, революции в Кыргызстане, гражданскую войну в Таджикистане и сильно формирующийся Казахстан, в котором были и есть большие ресурсы для внешнего позиционирования. Взять, к примеру, проведение саммита ОБСЕ — кажется, последний саммит был именно в Казахстане. Казахстан инициировал СВМДА, другие инициативы, которые показывали его региональное лидерство — о чём он сам и говорил на международных площадках. Четвёртый вопрос. Думаю, что именно восприятие рисков для существующего режима и подсократило активность Узбекистана на внешнем треке. Через менее активную внешнюю политику снижались риски и критика, связанная с политическим режимом.

Пятый вопрос. Во многом страна начала открываться. И как я говорил — стратегическое местоположение: это единственное государство, которое граничит со всеми странами Центральной Азии, включая Афганистан. В отличие от других: Туркменистан граничит только с Казахстаном и Узбекистаном, у

Казахстана — три страны, у Таджикистана — тоже две. А Узбекистан охватывает четыре страны Центральной Азии. География сама определяла приоритет внешней политики. Когда говорят о Центральной Азии, чаще всего в голову приходят Самарканд, Хива, Бухара — города Узбекистана, а не горы Казахстана или Каспийское море. Даже авиакомпания "Uzbekistan Airways" использует слоган "Your gate to Central Asia". Открытие страны и восприятие себя как транслятора интересов Центральной Азии — это и стало переориентацией внешней политики. Были запущены консультативные встречи лидеров стран ЦА, решены вопросы границ с Таджикистаном, Кыргызстаном, выстроены новые отношения с Казахстаном — и это всё показало эффективность внешней политики после прихода Мирзиёева.

Что касается эффективного партнёрства — я уже ответил. Седьмой — тоже. Восьмой — не знаю. Девятый вопрос. Я бы сказал, что нет. Не понимаю, почему все сравнивают с ЕС или АСЕАН. Есть другие примеры — например, страны Персидского залива (Кувейт, Катар, Бахрейн, Саудовская Аравия, Оман). У них сотрудничество в основном на уровне лидеров. То же и с АСЕАН — формат похожий. Я не вижу перспективы для формата ЕС в ЦА. Считаю, что Центральная Азия может сотрудничать только в проектном формате. Мы видим нишу — не все пять стран могут быть вовлечены, но хотя бы 3–4 страны участвуют. Такой подход и продвигает Узбекистан. Они проводят встречи, например, Узбекистан–Таджикистан–Туркменистан. То есть фокус на проектных форматах.

Пример: соглашение об упрощённом наземном транспорте между странами ЦА — подписали все пять.

Нет смысла пытаться охватить всё и сразу. Лучше небольшие инициативы — нишевые подходы. Это эффективнее для развития регионализма.

Можно проводить консультации перед саммитами с внешними акторами, продвигать энергетические проекты (Камбаратинская ГЭС — три страны участвуют).

Есть "зелёный коридор" — Казахстан, Узбекистан и Азербайджан.

Я считаю, такие многосторонние форматы наиболее реалистичны.

Центральная Азия — это не обязательно только пять стран. Форматы могут быть и:

– ЦА + Афганистан

– ЦА + Азербайджан

– Беларусь–Россия–Казахстан–Узбекистан–Пакистан–Афганистан. Я придерживаюсь такого подхода.

## Appendix B

### *Speeches of President Islam Karimov*

The following speeches are presented in the original Russian language as primary data for analysis. Translations are provided in the main chapters.

— **Speech 1:** *По пути безопасности и стабильного развития (1998).*

Завершается XX столетие в жизни человечества, стран и народов. Убежден, что многие из нас, живущих в сегодняшнем Узбекистане, наряду с проблемами реальной действительности задумываются над тем, кто мы и что мы в этом мире, куда мы идем, где и каким будет наше место, когда человечество вступит в новый XXI век.

Важно осознать и оценить, в чем особенность времени, в котором мы живем, каково историческое значение для настоящего и будущего тех перемен, которые произошли в мире за последнее время и коренным образом изменивших политическую структуру и карту мира.

На ней появились, как принято сейчас называть, новые независимые государства с социалистическим прошлым, мирным путем завоевавшие свою политическую независимость и вставшие на путь самостоятельного развития и обновления общественных отношений. Государства, стремящиеся упрочить свое положение среди других стран мира, быть равными среди равных, стать органической частью обширного мирового пространства.

Государства, перед которыми стоят сложные задачи - в короткий период исправить трагические последствия неудавшегося исторического эксперимента, построить под-ной экономикой, способное обеспечить достойные условия жизни людей, защитить их права и свободы. К числу

Каким будет XXI век для населения Узбекистана, насколько его жизнь станет лучше и богаче? Осознаем ли мы тот непростой путь реформ и обновления, который для себя избрали? Достаточно ли четко представляем себе, с какими проблемами, трудностями, испытаниями можем столкнуться на этом пути?

В какой мере мы сумеем реализовать те цели и задачи, которые направлены прежде всего на обеспечение достойной жизни людей на этой благодатной земле. И, пожалуй, один из самых трудных вопросов - осознаем ли мы угрозы нашей стабильности и безопасности?

Что мы можем противопоставить этим угрозам, что может служить гарантом стабильного и устойчивого развития нашего общества, сохранения геополитического равновесия в регионе, в котором мы живем?

Каким потенциалом, возможностями располагает наша страна для стабильного и устойчивого развития в новом тысячелетии, что мы можем предложить для широкого и всестороннего взаимовыгодного сотрудничества со всеми странами мира?

Именно стремление ответить на эти и множество других вопросов побудило меня написать эту книгу. Опыт становления и развития Узбекистана, других новых независимых государств, возникших на постсоциалистическом пространстве, к сожалению, свидетельствует о недостаточно серьезном отношении к оценке угроз их

безопасности и стабильности. Они слабо прогнозируются, зачастую являются неожиданными и приводят к огромным потерям, бедствиям и, что самое трагичное, — к человеческим жертвам, создают обстановку нестабильности, конфронтации, тормозят процессы общественного развития и прогресса, вызывают у населения чувство неуверенности в завтрашнем дне, опасности за собственную жизнь и жизнь своих родных и близких. И что особенно важно, подобное не-прогнозируемое развитие событий может поставить вопрос о самой возможности реализации политического и экономического выбора страны.

После крушения тоталитарной системы мир перестал быть биполярным. Но стал ли он от этого менее безопасным, устойчивым, стабильным? Критический анализ складывающихся за последние годы внешних отношений на глобальном и региональном уровнях и прежде всего: анализ процессов порой болезненного становления основ демократии на фоне острой политической борьбы в ряде стран;

активное возрождение национального самосознания и стремление наций и отдельных народностей к самоопределению;

сохраняющиеся конфликты на этнической и межнациональной почве;

девальвация идеологических догм и возрастание различных форм политического и религиозного экстремизма;

сохранение на значительной части земного шара стран со слабо развитой экономикой и бедственным положением людей;

усиление экономической и социальной дифференциации между странами, народами, а в пределах одной страны между отдельными социальными группами людей - все это свидетельствует о том, что мир остается таким же хрупким и требует к себе бережного отношения. Окружающий нас мир был, есть и в обозримой перспективе останется чрезвычайно сложным и неоднозначным.

В современных условиях, в интересах обеспечения глобальной безопасности и достижения равновесия, большое значение приобретают проблемы безопасности и устойчивости развития новых независимых государств. Динамично меняющаяся обстановка и баланс сил на мировом пространстве, выход на арену новых независимых государств настойчиво требуют сегодня поиска новых подходов для обеспечения стабильности государств и народов, выработки новых моделей безопасности в преддверии

XXI

Каждый руководитель, лидер суверенного государства должен осознать то огромное бремя долга и ответственности, которое возложено сегодня на него доверием простых людей, чьи помыслы всегда были обращены к очевидному - миру, спокойствию и благополучию. Мы не вправе ни на одно мгновение забывать о той ответственности, что мы несем перед теми, кто идет нам на смену, кому предстоит строить и благоустраивать тот новый дом, фундамент которого удалось заложить в эти сложные и насыщенные событиями годы.

Вся логика прошедших лет побуждает нас обратиться

сегодня к трем главным вопросам, от ответа на которые зависит будущее Узбекистана: как сохранить безопасность как обеспечить стабильность и за счет чего добиться устойчивого

развития по пути прогресса? В этих простых словах - безопасность, стабильность и устойчивость - заложен глубокий смысл, который и надлежит нам познать и осмыслить.

Как обезопасить себя и где искать импульсы для развития - это стратегические проблемы, которые были и будут предметом первостепенного внимания любого независимого государства. В поисках ответов на эти вопросы Республика Узбекистан уже накопила свой немалый опыт. Он позволяет сделать несколько общих выводов, более глубокому изложению которых и посвящена настоящая книга.

О чем идет речь?

Узбекистан сегодня — это не только колоссальные природно-сырьевые ресурсы, необъятный рынок и сфера для приложения капиталов. Наша страна располагает огромным интеллектуальным, духовным и культурным потенциалом. Все это в сочетании с уникальным географическим расположением не может не вызывать огромного геополитического и геостратегического интереса в условиях, когда активно формируется новый политический и экономический порядок в мире.

Все, кто сегодня принимает участие в процессе формирования качественно новой системы международных отношений, не могут не признать того факта, что от того, каким путем пойдут новые независимые государства Центральной Азии, во многом будет зависеть баланс сил на обширном пространстве планеты. Вне всякого сомнения этот выбор окажет свое воздействие и на исход развития непростых процессов, происходящих в исламском мире со всеми вытекающими последствиями для мирового сообщества в целом.

Понимание этого должно стать точкой опоры во всех рассуждениях о судьбе и перспективах развития Респуб-

лики Узбекистан и всей Центральной Азии на пороге XXI

века. Каждый из подобных прогнозов и аналитических материалов имеет, разумеется, право на уважительное отношение. Ясно одно: регион сможет динамично и устойчиво развиваться и быть достойным партнером для мирового сообщества только в условиях сохранения стабильности и геополитического равновесия. Только принцип сохранения и поддержания внутреннего и внешнего равновесия сегодня единственно приемлем для обеспечения устойчивого и стабильного развития всего региона и предотвращения конфликтных ситуаций, если учесть, что Центральноазиатский регион представляет собой сгусток различных политических, экономических, военных, транспортных и экологических проблем. Решить их возможно только при условии сохранения геополитического равновесия и стабильности в регионе, что, в свою очередь, является весомым вкладом в решение проблемы обеспечения глобальной безопасности.

Об этом говорит и опыт первых лет свободного развития Узбекистана, который со всей очевидностью убеждает, что общественно-политическая и экономическая стабильность — великое достижение и имеет непреходящую ценность.

Именно поэтому как колокольный набат должен постоянно звучать призыв - "Люди, будьте бдительны!" Берегите то, чем можно и нужно гордиться - своей независимостью, миром, межнациональным и гражданским согласием в обществе. От каждого из нас в решающей степени зависит, как распорядиться собственной свободой, отвести от нее угрозы, которых сегодня еще предостаточно в нашем сложном и порой суровом мире.

Мудрое управление государством, как учил еще в X веке великий мыслитель Востока Абу Наср Фараби, - уменьшать и отводить от народа опасность.

Сегодня мы испытываем не только удовлетворение от того, что за столь короткий период нам уже удалось сделать немало на пути к избранным целям. Но необходимо научиться и ясно представлять те проблемы, которые, очевидно, еще долго будут оставаться в числе приоритетных. Большинство из этих проблем вызвано глобальными тенденциями и проявлениями. Поэтому очень важно глубоко разобраться в том, что представляет из себя окружающий нас мир, в котором мы не предоставлены сами себе, в котором не все зависит от нас, в котором существуют серьезные угрозы нашему стремлению достичь высоких целей.

Сегодня, видимо, недостаточно лишь умения адекватно реагировать на возникающие угрозы безопасности и стабильности. Устойчивое развитие Республики Узбекистан в решающей степени зависит от того, насколько верно мы поймем природу существующих угроз, своевременно выявим их источники и взаимосвязь, определим и эффективно используем условия сохранения стабильности в обществе.

Что означает для Узбекистана его национальная безопасность в широком смысле, каково наше видение этой безопасности?

Во-первых. Узбекистан всецело поддерживает один из основополагающих принципов неделимости безопасности. Безопасность - это непрерывное состояние, она не имеет границ.

Во-вторых. После окончания "холодной войны" основную угрозу всеобщей безопасности несут этнические, региональные, локальные конфликты и воинствующий сепаратизм внутри государств. Особенно если такого рода противостояния становятся мощным инструментом политического воздействия в руках отдельных стран для сохранения и

защиты их собственных интересов и зон влияния или изменения в свою пользу стратегического В каждом регионе проблемы обеспечения безопасности носят далеко не абстрактный характер. И у каждого региона свои особенности, свои источники угроз и фак-

Нерешенность и запущенность проблем любого региона способны вызвать цепную реакцию во всем мире, а дестабилизация обстановки в любом регионе вызывает реальную угрозу нарушения нового геополитического равновесия, контуры которого становятся все очевидней с каждым днем.

В-третьих. В силу своего геополитического положения Узбекистан расположен в регионе, где не отлажена система коллективной безопасности, что также служит причиной вызова угроз.

Узбекистан находится, практически, в стратегическом центре полукольца, по которому расположены богатейшие нефтегазоносные месторождения Персидского залива, бассейна Каспийского моря и Таримского бассейна, то есть энергоресурсов, в условиях всемирного энергетического дефицита призванных играть в ближайшие годы определяющую роль в будущем Евразии и в целом всего мира.

Более того, мы являемся частью региона, где имеются несовпадающие интересы России, Китая и Индии, стран Востока и Запада. Фактически располагаясь на стыке этих формирующихся, но потенциально очень мощных евразийских центров сил, которые несомненно будут определять облик XXI века, наша территория, территория всего региона будет оставаться объектом интересов и таких мощных стран исламского мира, как Турция, Пакистан, Иран и Саудовская Аравия.

И еще один очаг угроз - Узбекистан находится в окружении стран, обремененных этническими, демографическими, экономическими и другими проблемами, к тому же граничит с таким очагом нестабильности в регионе, как Афганистан, раздираемый внутренними конфликтами, стимулирующими религиозным экстремизмом, этнической нетерпимостью, наркобизнесом и разного рода внешними силами. Вот уже пять лет сохраняется и угроза эскалации гражданской войны в соседнем Таджикистане. Нельзя не учитывать, что это государства, в которых Узбекистан имеет самые многочисленные из своих зару-

В-четвертых. Региональные конфликты все чаще превращаются в устойчивые источники таких опасных угроз и вызовов, как терроризм и насилие, наркобизнес и незаконная торговля оружием, массовые нарушения прав человека. Эти явления не имеют государственных границ.

В-пятых. По нашему глубокому убеждению, практикой международных отношений должно быть предусмотрено право каждой суверенной страны, исходя из собственных национальных интересов, определять степень своего участия в тех или иных международных структурах и коллективных договорах безопасности с целью обеспечения собственной независимости и стабильности.

Разумеется, мы при этом имеем в виду, что должны обеспечиваться защита безопасности и не допускаться ущемление интересов других стран, возвращение к печальному опыту недавнего прошлого по военно-политическому противостоянию.

В-шестых. Особого внимания требуют, на наш взгляд, проблемы экологической и ядерной безопасности. Наше стремление — объявление Центральноазиатского региона

безъядерной зоной. Нас особенно тревожит то, что отдельные соседние с нами государства не скрывают своего стремления приобщиться к ядерному оружию.

Проблемой мирового, глобального масштаба, затрагивающей интересы людей многих стран мира и имеющей пагубное последствие для поколений многих национальностей, является и проблема вымирания Аральского моря.

Сами по себе угрозы безопасности достаточно универсальны и включают в себя такие проявления, как политический экстремизм, в том числе с религиозной окраской, национализм и национальная самоизоляция, противоречия на этнической, межнациональной, местнической и клановой основе, коррупция и преступность, экологические проблемы. Другими словами, перечисленные угрозы должны вызывать общую озабоченность у человечества, хотя, безусловно, проявляются в различных регионах с разной степенью интенсивности.

Настоящая книга - это попытка проанализировать, в чем состоят вызовы безопасности нашей страны, нации, общества и каждого гражданина, вызовы, угрожающие курсу обновления и прогресса, интеграции в мировое сообщество. Мы должны помнить, что вся история построена на вызовах и ответах. У нас есть надежные гарантии, чтобы через сотрудничество в самом широком смысле — от межличностных взаимоотношений до международной интеграции — дать достойные ответы на вызовы времени.

Мы трезво смотрим на реальные угрозы, которые существуют. В то же время мы знаем наши возможности, если хотите, привлекательность и преимущества. Наши минерально-сырьевые, человеческие и производственные ресурсы служат надежной гарантией внутренней устойчивости и международной значимости.

Я верю, у нашей страны есть исторический шанс занять в XXI веке достойное место в мировой экономике, культуре и политике. Мы открываем возможность мирового сотрудничества для себя, а главное - для детей и внуков. Хотим помочь всем, кто того искренне желает, глубже познать Узбекистан, его потенциал, открыть для себя бесспорную выгоду от перспективного сотрудничества с нами.

Прокладывая дорогу в новое тысячелетие, мы протягиваем всем руку дружбы и взаимопонимания, символизируя это словами безопасность, стабильность и устойчиво-сть развития. Ибо именно эти понятия создают прочный фундамент мира, благополучия, процветания каждой стране, каждому народу, являются неотъемлемым условием геополитического равновесия на планете, дают право каждому человеку смело и уверенно глядеть в буду-

щее. УГРОЗЫ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

## РЕГИОНАЛЬНЫЕ КОНФЛИКТЫ

После окончания жесткой конфронтации, проходившей под знаком борьбы двух идеологических систем, с ее проекцией на все аспекты международной жизни, окружающий нас мир не стал спокойнее, не стал менее конфликтным, как ожидали многие. Процесс формирования нового миропорядка сопровождается обострением застарелых, подспудно тлеющих конфликтов на региональном и субрегиональном уровнях, имеющих под собой различные исторические, этнические, политические, религиозные и иные причины, которые ранее, в рамках глобального противостояния двух систем, зачастую "гасились" в интересах того или иного полюса силы. Более того, существуют потенциальные угрозы возникновения новых региональных конфликтов на

фоне вовлечения в них различных внешних сил в рамках их геостратегических устремлений.

За последние пять лет у всех на слуху и стало вполне обыденным зловещее по своему содержанию словосочетание - "региональный конфликт". Региональные конфликты характерны и для развитых, и для развивающихся регионов мира.

За сухими комментариями телерепортеров и броскими заголовками газет об очередных жертвах боевых столкновений затерялись миллионы человеческих судеб, их боль и страдания. Разве могут оставить равнодушными последние данные ООН, согласно которым в настоящее время во всем мире около 50 миллионов человек являются беженцами. В 1996 году зарегистрировано 13 миллионов человек, нашедших убежище в других странах. Около 30 миллионов беженцев вынуждены были покинуть свои родные места из-за гражданских войн. Что может быть страшнее адаптации общества к насилию и кровавым трагедиям целых народов, пусть даже вдали от собственных границ? Такая гражданская позиция конкретной личности, обусловленная либо непониманием, либо самоуспокоенностью, таит в себе не меньшую опасность, чем открытая угроза применения силы. Такая позиция абсолютно неприемлема для граждан и руководства нашей страны.

Независимо от нашей воли или наших устремлений,

Узбекистан после распада СССР фактически оказался прифронтовым государством, вблизи границ которого продолжают гореть два очага кризисов - в Афганистане и Таджикистане, унесших за последние годы сотни тысяч человеческих жизней.

Принимая во внимание глубину и остроту кризиса в

Афганистане, где вот уже 18 лет продолжается война, а также степень его воздействия на геополитические процессы на региональном и глобальном уровнях, эту трагедию можно отнести к числу наиболее масштабных в современном мире и опасных региональных конфликтов.

Не углубляясь в его причины и предпосылки, а также первопричины продолжающегося кризиса в соседнем Таджикистане, поскольку не об этом идет речь, необходимо отметить, что устойчивое и безопасное развитие Узбекистана, которое обеспечило бы благополучие и процветание граждан страны, вряд ли представляется возможным, когда в окружении нашей республики циклично обостряется напряженность, ведутся боевые действия, а здравые мирные инициативы зачастую наталкиваются на глухое непонимание противоборствующих сторон.

Весь трагизм происходящего состоит в том, что подобное развитие ситуации может в результате многолетнего внутреннего вооруженного и политического противостояния поставить эти страны на грань самоуничтожения и потери государственности.

Последующие поколения вряд ли простят современникам причины и мотивы, побудившие их разжечь огонь войны. История, верша свой суд, всегда отделяет зерна от плевел и не принимает в качестве оправданий амбиции личностей, прикрывающихся интересами народа ради собственных узкокорыстных целей. Чем больше противоборствующие стороны втягиваются в конфликт, обостряя антагонизм своих позиций, тем очевиднее становится то, что он приносит неизмеримо больше потерь, чем

предполагаемых его участниками приобретений. Никакая цель не может быть оправдана, если на карту ставится судьба миллионов людей.

Уничтожающее влияние войны на состояние общества и государства проявляется не только в естественном спутнике войны - экономической разрухе, но и в других немаловажных для будущего нации сферах. Мало кто отважится утверждать, что культивирование ненависти по каким бы то ни было мотивам между согражданами, потоки беженцев, вынужденных покидать свои дома, кри-минализация общества, превращение войны в единственный источник заработка, подрыв генофонда нации, лишение подрастающего поколения возможности получить даже начальное образование могут обеспечить будущее этого народа.

Уже сейчас, глядя на Афганистан и Таджикистан, можно констатировать, что происходящие там конфликты и их последствия отбросили эти государства в их развитии как минимум на десятки лет назад, в то время, как мировая цивилизация, выходящая на рубеж 2000 года, устремлена в XI век. При этом апологеты войны стремятся убедить своих соотечественников, что это - необходимая жертва, заплатив которую, они войдут в светлое бу-дущее.

Так в чем же кроется угроза региональных конфликтов для благополучия нашего общества и прогресса рес-публики? На первый взгляд, может показаться, что все происходящие у границ Узбекистана коллизии не имеют прямого отношения к сохранению политической, эконо-мической и социальной стабильности в пределах нашего государства. Не меньшей политической и гражданской близорукостью можно считать и такое мнение, что тре-вожные события и впредь будут развиваться по накатан-ной колее,

обходя нас стороной, стабильность сохранится сама собой, а будущее страны обеспечено автоматически.

Однако в этом контексте не могу не вставить одну ре-марку, что, по всей вероятности, мало кто из такого рода

"оптимистов" догадывается о том, каких колоссальных усилий стоит государству обеспечение мира и порядка, недопущение переноса конфликта и сопутствующих ему негативных процессов на нашу землю. Здесь уместно вспомнить хорошо известную истину о том, что если игнорировать острые проблемы, в том числе существующие вокруг нас, то они приводят к кризису, а неуправля-емый кризис по мере своего развития, в свою очередь, может перерасти во все разрушающий на своем пути ка-таклизм, не признающий государственных границ и других политических, экономических, этнических и иных реалий.

В условиях существующих региональных кризисов угроза безопасности Узбекистана не является гипотетичес-кой, а существует зримо. Это становится ясным, если рассмотреть региональный конфликт не только как воо-руженное противоборство сторон в очерченных рамках, в том числе сопровождающееся многочисленными чело-веческими жертвами среди мирного гражданского насе-ления, но и с точки зрения того влияния, которое оказы-вает это противостояние на все стороны жизни конкрет-ного общества и соседние государства.

История развития человеческой цивилизации, тем более в условиях современного, ставшего до предела взаи-мозависимого мира, однозначно свидетельствует, что любой конфликт в отдельно взятом государстве не может длительное время оставаться в

пределах национальных границ. По ряду причин такой конфликт неминуемо наруживает тенденцию к своему уже неконтролируемому расползанию, что рано или поздно поставит целый комплекс проблем перед соседними государствами со всеми вытекающими последствиями, дестабилизируя ситуацию в регионе. С этой точки зрения, как правило, усугубляет кризис скрытая и явная интернационализация конфликта, поскольку всегда находятся внешние силы, преследующие различные цели и стремящиеся обеспечить собственные интересы в районе кризиса.

Таким образом, представляется ошибочным рассматривать внутренний конфликт в отдельно взятом государстве, взаимосвязь между ним и соседними странами как независимые друг от друга явления. Военно-политический кризис в Афганистане и нестабильность в Таджикистане не могут не оказывать негативное воздействие как на состояние региональной стабильности в Центральной Азии в целом, так и национальной безопасности Узбекистана в частности.

Думаю, нет необходимости глубоко теоретизировать или ссылаться на историю других региональных конфликтов для подтверждения этого вывода в наших условиях. Глубоко убежден, что последнее резкое обострение ситуации в сентябре-октябре 1996 года в Афганистане продемонстрировало актуальность и остроту этой многоаспектной проблемы, отголоски которой, как говорится, опалили всех нас дыханием войны, заставили задуматься о цене мира в республике и благополучия народа. В этом контексте логичным было бы продолжить мысль о том, что до тех пор, пока не будут разрешены региональные конфликты, ни одно из государств Центральной Азии не может чувствовать себя в безопасности и, тем более, уверенно продвигаться в будущее.

Перечень угроз, уже проявивших себя и потенциальных, достаточно широк.

Во-первых, пристального внимания требует такая модель развития ситуации, как вольный или невольный перенос вооруженной и иной подрывной деятельности на территорию сопредельных государств, поскольку афганский и в известной мере таджикский конфликты достигли стадии, при которой они обретают практически неконт-ролируемые формы. В этих условиях следует учитывать специфику расселения основных этносов региона, которые в различных пропорциях проживают во всех государствах Центральной Азии и обнаруживают исторически сложившуюся многовековую взаимосвязь в различных сферах и на различных уровнях (в том числе многочисленные родственные связи).

При известной "этнической пестроте" каждого из государств региона любое обострение кризисов не может не подрывать гражданского согласия и стабильности в соседних странах. Не могут не вызывать тревоги попытки определенных подрывных сил еще более разжечь очаг конфликта и перенести его на соседние страны, играя на национальных чувствах этнических меньшинств, проживающих на сопредельных территориях.

Современная история наглядно свидетельствует, что силы, стремящиеся разыграть "национальную карту" в собственных политических и иных целях, прежде всего рассчитывают на высокие мобилизационные начала эмоций людей с последующим их направлением в русло во-инствующей агрессивности, исключая какие-либо элементы политической мудрости и здравомыслия.

Во-вторых, в последние годы события приобрели драматический оборот еще и по той причине, что в афганский конфликт, помимо известного этнического, был привнесен и религиозный аспект. Происходит резкий процесс политизации ислама, принявший крайне радикальные формы - открытые притязания на власть и готовность добиваться этого вооруженным путем, призывая на помощь всех единоверцев. Этот процесс, не имеющий никакого отношения к гуманистическим идеалам и началам нашей религии, прямо либо опосредованно оказывает негативное воздействие на общественно-политическую ситуацию на обширной территории от Горного Бадахшана до Каспия. При этом следует иметь в виду, что в государствах региона нашлись и, к сожалению, все еще имеются экстремистски настроенные элементы, готовые навязать афганский сценарий своим народам, несмотря на то, что события в Афганистане привели к последствиям, весь трагизм которых нам и нашим потомкам еще пред-

В-третьих, центробежные силы афганского конфликта, в основе которого лежат этноконфессиональные притязания различных афганских группировок на власть, продолжают негативно влиять на весь регион и принимать осязаемые формы. Со всей очевидностью это проявляется в вооруженных провокациях на таджикско-афганской границе, которые в совокупности с другими проявлениями подрывной деятельности с территории Исламского государства Афганистан серьезно дестабилизируют обстановку в Таджикистане и соответственно регионе. В этих условиях разномастные "борцы за веру" для оправдания своих действий и намерений используют религиозные лозунги, стремятся навязать несвойственные нашим народам и их духовному миру идеалы и ценности, посеять смуту и средневековое мракобесие, лишить нас достойного места в архитектонике человеческой цивилизации.

Наконец, еще одна потенциальная угроза, заслуживающая особого внимания.

Продолжение конфликтов дает кое-кому возможность мушкетировать проблемами "разделенных народов". При этом зачастую искусственно осуществляется подбор аргументов в пользу, к примеру, объединения таджиков или узбеков по обе стороны границы с Афганистаном или же пуштунских племен. Даже страшно представить, к чему может привести любая попытка передела существующих границ на этнической основе.

Передел границ в нашем регионе может дать для всего мирового сообщества такой ужасающий эффект, на фоне которого тот же конфликт в Боснии и Герцеговине покажется лишь прелюдией к кошмару.

В целом, затяжные региональные конфликты являются носителями широкого спектра проблем для окружающих государств (естественно, что Узбекистан не является исключением) не только в конкретный текущий момент.

В последующем они могут оказать эффект "мин замедленного действия" в области политики, идеологии, меж-национальных отношений и других сферах.

Последствия региональных конфликтов имеют и более осязаемую форму, воздействуя на национальную экономику и хозяйственные связи государств. А это - уже не абстрактные категории, а интересы каждого гражданина и члена общества, поддающиеся конкретным подсчетам.

1. К примеру, война в Афганистане, разрушившая почти полностью и так не очень развитую экономику страны, в настоящее время является основным препятствием для прокладки новых транспортных коммуникаций, которые позволили бы государствам

Центральной Азии выйти к портам "теплых морей" и влиться в существующую систему мировых хозяйственных связей. Это, в свою очередь, тормозит развитие национальных экономик, поскольку, как известно, для эффективного товарообмена необходимы кратчайшие и стабильные транспортные коммуникации.

2. Проблема беженцев, которые в случае обострения вооруженного конфликта, не признавая границ, готовы

"хлынуть" на территорию сопредельных государств. Как правило, в этом потоке через границу проникают и те, кто ищет отнюдь не хлеба и крова, а привнесения новой смуты в души людей. Для принимающей стороны этот вопрос, наряду с его естественным гуманитарным аспектом, имеет и экономический, так как объективно возникает необходимость изыскивать дополнительные средства из собственного бюджета для размещения беженцев и решения их многочисленных и безотлагательных проблем.

3. Касаясь негативных факторов, которые сопутствуют затяжным региональным конфликтам в Афганистане и Таджикистане и таят не меньшую опасность для сопредельных государств, нельзя не остановиться и на таких проблемах, как незаконный оборот наркотиков, международный терроризм и контрабанда оружия. Известно, что в условиях разрухи и политического хаоса, когда ведение боевых действий превращается для простого населения не только в единственный вид промысла, а служит фактически способом выживания, конфликтующие группировки, особенно в Афганистане, рассматривают производство и сбыт наркотического зелья в качестве наиболее оптимального средства добычи денег для закупок вооружения и собственного обогащения. По различным международным оценкам, в том числе ООН, Афганистан

превратился не только в одного из ведущих в мире производителей опиума-сырца, но и крупнейшую перевалочную базу, через которую наркотики во всевозрастающих масштабах следуют в государства Центральной Азии и далее на Запад. Естественно, что часть из них "оседает" в нашем регионе, способствуя росту криминальных проявлений, растлению молодежи, если хотите, подрыву генофонда нации и т.д.

4. Нерешенность региональных конфликтов в Афганистане и Таджикистане также поставили перед государствами региона, включая Узбекистан, и такие новые, не менее опасные проблемы, сопряженные с распространением на сопредельные территории таких явлений, как терроризм и контрабанда оружия, от решения которых в не меньшей степени зависит уровень обеспечения национальной безопасности и внутренней стабильности. Аналогии с ближневосточным и другими кризисами в различных точках планеты, а также известными событиями на территории СНГ (Чечня, Нагорный Карабах, Абхазия и др.) позволяют моделировать потенциальную возможность переноса террористической деятельности за пределы национальных границ Афганистана и Таджикистана.

Тем более при наличии прозрачных границ между центральноазиатскими государствами, в то время как Афганистан, его территория и границы превратились в неконтролируемые арсеналы оружия. Трудно отрицать возможность и того, что вооруженные боевики, прошедшие подготовку либо приобретшие опыт партизанской войны на территории Афганистана, принимали активное участие в вооруженных конфликтах во многих государствах мира, в Закавказье, Чечне и Таджикистане.

Региональные конфликты в Афганистане и Таджикистане, создающие реальные внешние угрозы нашей национальной безопасности, не способствуют укреплению стабильности в Центральной Азии и на глобальном уровне.

В них заложен значительный негативный потенциал, способный привести к катастрофическим последствиям мирового масштаба. Верхушка правящей в бывшем СССР коммунистической партии рассматривала религиозные общины как своих конкурентов в борьбе за умы народов, на протяжении всей своей истории принимала самые жестокие меры для ущемления религии, уничтожения и подчинения оставшегося духовенства. Были репрессированы десятки тысяч священнослужителей ислама. Ликвидированы тысячи мечетей и сотни медресе, здания многих из которых представляли архитектурную и историческую ценность для нашего народа и цивилизованного человечества. В своей массе верующие до середины 90-х годов не имели доступа к Корану. Религия искусственно превратилась в один из напряженных фронтов идеологической борьбы.

По этим же причинам в бывших советских республиках Центральной Азии, где существовал запрет на исламское просвещение, не могло быть значительного числа высокообразованных исламских наставников. Зато процветали всевозможные суеверия, иногда реакционные, носители которых сегодня иногда выступают с претензией на высшую истину, навязывая ее всему населению, и право распоряжаться судьбами людей.

Сегодня и в будущем мы в Узбекистане не хотим допустить ни печального опыта советского периода, ни тех новых крайностей, свидетелями которых мы явились в первые годы нашей независимости.

Во-вторых, рост национального самосознания, поиск этнической самоидентификации, важнейшим элементом которой традиционно считалась определенная религиозная ориентация.

Интересно мнение, сформировавшееся у западноевропейских экспертов, о роли религии, в частности ислама, в новых независимых государствах Центральной Азии.

Согласно их оценкам, а оценки со стороны зачастую лучше и полезнее собственного зеркального отражения, период национальной идентификации народов Центральной Азии ислам способен выполнять весьма противоречивые функции:

С одной стороны, исламские культурные ценности и традиции, то огромное духовное наследие, оставленное мировым исламом, во многом определяют не только вклад в историческое развитие нашего региона, но и ныне формирующийся его качественно новый облик.

С другой стороны, ислам востребовывается в качестве орудия для политической борьбы за обладание рычагами влияния на массовое политическое сознание, способен выполнить роль знамени, под которым объединяются силы, преследующие не конкретные программные цели, а руководствующиеся только одной установкой - борьбой за власть.

В-третьих, и это, возможно, самое главное, резкие перемены в социально-политической и экономической сферах.

Неизбежные издержки реформирования в переходный период, объективный процесс расслоения населения и естественные различия по имущественному признаку побуждают часть населения искать не сферу приложения собственных усилий, знаний и умений для

обеспечения собственного благополучия, а выступать с позиций советского менталитета за возврат к утопическому и иллюзорному равенству, борьбе с роскошью и излишествами, а по сути к уравниловке, нивелирующей людей и делающей безликим общество. В этих условиях дает о себе знать обманчивая привлекательность идей типа ваххабизма.

В периоды застоя, кризиса и раскола общества популизм зарубежного ваххабизма проявляется в проповеди справедливости, требовании строгого соблюдения морально-этических норм ислама и декларировании отказа от роскоши и стяжательства. Подобные лозунги, к сожалению, получили распространение и нашли поддержку и в отдельных регионах Центральной Азии в недалеком прошлом и в наши дни.

В-четвертых, Узбекистан и другие государства Центральной Азии являются неотъемлемой частью очень сложного и многогранного исламского мира. Не секрет, что в этом мире существует достаточно формальных и неформальных движений, которые используют ислам в политических целях, оставаясь на позициях либо признания исламской исключительности, либо нетерпимости ко всем другим религиям, либо использования ислама в качестве платформы для отстаивания узконациональных интересов.

Стремление вовлечь новые независимые государства

Центральной Азии в число своих политических сторонников и союзников, распространить на них свое влияние характерно не только для идеологических установок таких сил, но уже обретает форму вполне конкретных действий.

Перечисленные основные причины усиления исламского фактора в полной мере характерны и для понимания процессов активизации религиозной жизни в Узбекистане.

Сегодня в республике действуют объединения 15 религиозных конфессий, причем часть из них являются не-традиционными для Узбекистана. В своих взаимоотношениях с ними государство, являясь светским, придерживается следующих принципов:

- уважительное отношение к религиозным чувствам верующих,
- признание религиозных убеждений частным делом граждан или их объединений;
- гарантирование равных прав и недопустимость преследования граждан как исповедующих религиозные взгляды, так и не исповедующих их;
- необходимость поиска диалога с различными религиозными объединениями для использования их возможностей в деле духовного возрождения, утверждения общечеловеческих моральных ценностей;
- признание недопустимости использования религии в деструктивных целях.

Последнее соответствует статье 18 Международного пакта о гражданских и политических правах, в которой не только закрепляется право каждого человека на свободу мысли и совести, но и говорится: "Свобода исповедовать религию или убеждения подлежит лишь ограничениям, установленным законом и необходимым для охраны общественной безопасности, порядка, здоровья и морали, равно как и основных прав и свобод других лиц".

Сказанное достаточно четко отделяет религию как часть духовности и культуры от попыток "разыграть религиозную карту" в определенных политических целях.

Мы за то, чтобы религия продолжала выполнять роль приобщения населения к высшим духовным, моральным и нравственным ценностям, историческому и культурному наследию. Но мы никогда не допустим, чтобы религиозные лозунги стали знаменем борьбы за власть, поводом для вмешательства в политику, экономику и юрис-пруденцию, поскольку видим в этом серьезную потенциальную угрозу безопасности и стабильности для нашего государства.

В чем же проявляется угроза исламского фундаментализма в отношении Узбекистана?

Первое. В попытках через его распространение подорвать доверие верующих мусульман к государству-реформатору, разрушить стабильность, национальное, гражданское и межнациональное согласие как приоритетные условия преобразований к лучшему.

Исламисты нацелены на дискредитацию демократий, светского государства, многонационального и многоконфессионального общества.

Второе. Необходимо ясно себе представлять, и особенно нашей молодежи, что те, кто следует за популистскими, заманчивыми, но в целом крикливыми и беспочвенными лозунгами фундаменталистов о справедливости, становятся заложниками чужой воли, которая в конечном итоге распоряжается не только их умами, но и судьбами. Выход из подчинения таких авторитетов может обернуться личной трагедией. Самым тяжелым последствием становится раболепие, скованность и закрепощенность личности, полное

ограничение свободы мысли, действий и инициативы, всего того, без чего немислимо наше движение к прогрессу.

Третье. В провоцировании противостояния населения регионов страны и социальных слоев по признаку "истинной" и "ложной" религиозности, что привело к расколу нации в Алжире, Афганистане.

Четвертое. В сохранении на южных границах с Узбекистаном в сопредельных странах состояния неугасающей гражданской войны, воспроизводящей новые поколения террористов, боевиков, считающих себя истинными мусульманами, борцами за веру и жаждущих навязать свои чудовищные представления нашему народу.

Пятое. В создании отталкивающего имиджа Узбекистана как среди мусульманских, так и немусульманских стран, их общественности, которым нас хотят представить то безбожниками, атеистами, то скрытыми приверженцами государственной исламизации.

Шестое. В формировании глобального противостояния между исламской и неисламскими цивилизациями, что самым отрицательным образом сказывается на процессах интеграции в мировом сообществе, консервирует отставание новых независимых государств. И что самое страшное - поддерживает в людях ожидание "столкновения цивилизаций" по религиозному признаку.

Седьмое. В утверждении на уровне массового сознания восприятия религии как универсального средства разрешения всех экономических, политических и международных проблем и противоречий.

В последнее время в зарубежной прессе появились высказывания о том, что, мол, узбекское руководство само не верит в угрозу фундаментализма, а пугает ею Запад, преследуя вполне конкретные цели.

Известно также то, что среди аналитиков и исламоведов Запада популярностью стали пользоваться воззрения на фундаментализм как на нечто не представляющее опасности для мирового сообщества, направленное преимущественно против "своих" государств. Якобы сломав и перестроив их по своим образцам, исламисты будут лучше готовы к диалогу с мировым сообществом. Особый восторг вызывает у таких специалистов то, что немалая часть фундаменталистов получила высшее техническое, медицинское образование в европейских и американских университетах. Глубоко ли эти люди понимают истинное состояние мусульманского Востока, неоднократно подвергавшегося распаду, разладу и унижениям?

Не разделяя таких позиций, полагаю необходимым обратить внимание и на еще одну сторону проблемы.

Размышляя об угрозе исламского фундаментализма, мы постоянно вынуждены обращаться не только к его внут-риисламским причинам, но и к тому, что его провоцирует, стимулирует. Эти причины хорошо известны - колониализм и неоколониализм, великодержавный шовинизм и антимусульманский диктат в международных отношениях, политика "разделяй и властвуй". Сюда следует добавить экономическую дискриминацию, высокомерие и нежелание глубоко понять несомненные достоинства другой культуры, цивилизации, в данном случае имеющей многовековые корни исламской цивилизации, являющейся частью философии Востока.

Однако попытки использования для консолидации исламского мира идеи его исключительности, блокирования в противовес США, Западной Европе с иными центрами силы современного мира также являются бесперспективными. Такой вариант был уже апробирован в 50-

80-е годы уходящего века. Нужно ли перетаскивать его в XXI век?

Вместе с тем представители развитых стран должны понять мучительность ломки привычных общественных отношений, образа жизни, мировоззрения, так ценных для мусульман. Станет трагической ошибкой для всей будущей истории XXI века, если кто-то будет представлять ислам и государства исламской культуры как новую

"империю зла" и всеобщую зону опасности.

Впечатляет, когда читаешь о том, что передовые люди

Запада высоко оценивают значение ислама для расцвета своей и в целом мировой цивилизации и считают, что настало время отдавать долги, помочь прогрессу в духовном сообществе, где проживает почти 1 миллиард людей.

Влиятельные и авторитетные силы в мире, которые выступают против религиозного фундаментализма в любых формах, понимают роль и значение Узбекистана в этой борьбе за нормальные, мирные и взаимопользные условия сосуществования различных культур и цивилизаций. Понимают и поддерживают нашу страну на ее собственном пути реформ.

Это должны помнить и ценить наши граждане, не олодежь. Помнить и понимать свою ответственность как перед нашим государством, так и перед мировым сооб-

## ВЕЛИКОДЕРЖАВНЫЙ ШОВИНИЗМ И АГРЕССИВНЫЙ НАЦИОНАЛИЗМ

На рубеже XXI века новые независимые государства, сталкиваясь с огромными внутренними и внешними трудностями, наряду с опорой на внутренние ресурсы и возможности ищут решения этих проблем при заинтересованном участии мирового сообщества. Естественно при этом желание и стремление сотрудничества с теми соседними государствами, с которыми их связывает многовековая общность, пронизанная гуманитарными, информационными, экономическими и другими аспектами и направлениями. Мы не вправе здесь упрощать ни один из аспектов этой непростой проблемы, возникшей после распада СССР.

Не останавливаясь на объективных трудностях и непростых вопросах становления и формирования равноправного и взаимовыгодного сотрудничества новых независимых государств, важно обратить внимание, на мой взгляд, на ряд проблем, порой искусственно создаваемых.

Я отнес бы их к проблемам субъективного характера, диктуемым нежеланием или просто неспособностью определенных политических сил понять объективный ход развития исторических процессов, прочно укоренившимся в их сознании чувством их особой исторической миссии и превосходство над другими.

Мы далеки от мысли обобщать и проводить исторические параллели и наводить тень на отдельные нации и народности. Но в современных условиях становления новых цивилизованных межгосударственных отношений не учитывать это явление как фактор, препятствующий данному процессу, нельзя.

К проблемам, требующим внимания, не только со стороны молодых государств, но прежде всего международного участия, необходимо отнести те, которые порождаются рецидивами имперского мышления и поведения.

Республика Узбекистан не является исключением от воздействия этих проявлений, и прошедшие годы неза-висимого развития дают основание утверждать о сохраняющейся потенциальной угрозе суверенитету и стабиль-ности нашего государства, которая проявляется в лозун-гах, высказываниях, комментариях и конкретных действиях, подпадающих в разряд великодержавного шо-винизма и агрессивного национализма.

Это далеко не новое явление в истории человечества, которая изобилует массой примеров стремления некото-рых крупных государств и многочисленных народов строить свои отношения с окружающими странами с позиций собственного превосходства и исключительности.

Такой подход много раз приводил к крупномасштабным столкновениям, кровопролитным войнам и конфликтам, породил недоверие и подозрительность во взаимоотно-шениях между целыми народами, которые, к сожалению, передавались из поколения в поколение.

Казалось бы, на пороге XXI века человечество обрело достаточную мудрость, чтобы на основе собственного исторического опыта отказаться от складывавшихся веками стереотипов и признать не только очевидный факт многообразия и многогранности современного мирового сообщества, но и полное равноправие между всеми его субъектами как естественное и необходимое условие для успешного развития мировой цивилизации в целом.

Однако слишком еще сильна сила шовинистической и агрессивной националистической инерции, чтобы не видеть, какую угрозу она несет не только для тех, на кого она направлена, но и для тех, кто является ее носителем.

Тот же исторический опыт учит, что никакие самые высокие побудительные мотивы не способны оправдать действия тех политиков и лиц, рвущихся в большую политику, кто пытается организовать и поддерживать благополучие своего народа, ущемляя и ограничивая права других. Тем не менее пока эти рецидивы живы и весьма чувствительны, о них необходимо помнить и сохранять бдительность.

Как же мы понимаем великодержавный шовинизм и агрессивный национализм и в чем видим его современные проявления?

Исходя из исторической практики, это явление можно охарактеризовать как политическую, идеологическую и экономическую гегемонию со стороны конкретных сил, государства или стремление к ней в межнациональных и межгосударственных, региональных отношениях.

Шовинизм проявляется в борьбе некоторых крупных наций за установление своего исключительного господства не только в рамках многонациональной империи, но и на окружающем ее геополитическом пространстве.

Объектами притязаний становятся, как правило, государства с меньшими территориями и главное — с ослабленным экономическим потенциалом и внутренней неустойчивостью.

Глубинные корни великодержавного шовинизма произрастают от неготовности к взаимодействию с другими нациями и странами цивилизованным путем. Его носителями

были военные империи, экономика которых эксплуатировала, а то и паразитировала на жизненных ресурсах захваченных территорий. Одновременно покоренным внушалась разрушительная идея их культурной и в целом национальной неполноценности.

Наш край также не избежал этой участи и длительное время испытывал на себе всю пагубность шовинистических и агрессивных националистических идей. Узбекистан пережил сложный период насильственного удержания в составе Российской, а затем Советской империи, период, который сегодня получает различные, порой взаимоисключающие интерпретации.

Видимо, есть основания говорить о том, что многочисленные комментарии к происходящим в Центральной Азии событиям делаются под влиянием определенных политических и идеологических установок.

Среди распространяемых по этому поводу мнений можно выделить два, которые не отражают весь спектр

"рецептов" для Центральной Азии, но хорошо характеризуют их авторов. Первые полагают и, возможно, вполне искренне, что развитие региона в качестве Туркестанской автономии в составе Российской империи получало необходимые импульсы от своей метрополии, поскольку царская Россия стимулировала буржуазную эволюцию края, не ломая и не нарушая местных традиций и устоев.

Большевистский эксперимент в регионе, включая государственно-национальное размежевание, подавление или ограничение традиционных форм общественного ус-

тройства, гипертрофированную специализацию экономики, подвергается авторами этой группы резкой критике.

Они видят в этом одну из главных причин нынешних противоречий в Центральноазиатском регионе. Согласно этой логике, новая, посткоммунистическая Россия наилучшим образом подходит для осуществления стабилизирующей роли в регионе.

По другим оценкам, сложные проблемы в регионе порождены длительным колониальным прошлым этого края, привнесшим совершенно чуждые элементы в менталитет его мусульманского населения. В качестве выхода из создавшегося положения предлагается вернуться к собственным историческим и национальным корням, что станет возможным лишь в условиях приоритетной ориентации государств региона на соседние мусульманские страны с перспективой дальнейшей тесной интеграции.

Однако в этих точках зрения присутствует гораздо больше политики и эмоций, чем целостного объективного и научного подхода. Несмотря на все признаки формальной логики в указанных рассуждениях, все же их авторы представляют крайние позиции, которые как раз и порождены рецидивами великодержавного шовинизма и агрессивного национализма.

Безусловно, нельзя отрицать того, что крупные империи, завоевывая и подчиняя себе чужие страны и народы, в определенной степени осуществляли просветительскую миссию там, где происходило отставание от общемирового развития. Сторонники такой оценки обычно подчеркивают тот вклад, который внесли империи в развитие инфраструктуры, отдельных отраслей производства, подготовку национальных кадров,

приобщение населения покоренных стран к новым видам деятельности и мировой культуры.

С этим трудно не согласиться. Но в процессе взаимоотношений между великими империями и малыми народами была и другая сторона медали, негативное значение которой зачастую многократно превышало результаты культивирования цивилизации извне.

Прежде всего, усилия, направленные на развитие колоний и полуколоний, были подчинены текущим и дол-госрочным интересам самих великих держав. С этой позиции интересы подчиненных народов всегда имели вто-ростепенное значение. Развитие зависимых стран всегда было строго дозированным и шло по вполне определенному направлению, не выходя за рамки собственных интересов империи. В частности, изменения в инфраструктуре Центральной Азии, строительство дорог и развитие коммуникаций, подготовка для этих целей национальных кадров, ориентированных на империю, — все это дела-лось постольку, поскольку было призвано обеспечивать интересы империи, в данном случае гарантированный доступ к дешевым источникам сырья и энергии.

Во-вторых, так называемая цивилизаторская миссия великих держав не только порождала и укрепляла губительную психологию собственной исключительности и пренебрежения к окружающим, но и вызывала соответ-ственную реакцию, тем более, если эта цивилизация на-саждалась силой, сопровождалась ущемлением национального достоинства и гордости, умалением национальных культурных и духовных ценностей, физическим уничтожением их носителей.

Наконец, укоренившаяся привычка управлять и по-учать, вера в собственную непогрешимость способны привести к принятию стратегически ошибочных решений, последствия которых служат взрывным материалом для самой империи. Яркой иллюстрацией этому служит судьба как Царской, так и Советской держав.

Рассуждая о том негативном потенциале, который заложен в психологии и политике шовинистически настроенных лиц, необходимо обратить внимание на целый ряд других угроз, которые они несут на глобальном уровне.

Шовинизм, и это многократно подтверждено исторической практикой, стимулирует установление и укрепление авторитарных режимов, ведет к жесткой диктатуре, поскольку в иных условиях невозможно удержать в покорности не только подчиненные и зависимые народы, но и собственное население, часть которого неизбежно выступает против такой политической линии.

Историческая пагубность шовинизма обусловлена тем, что гипертрофированная великодержавность, тем более основанная на убеждении в собственном национальном превосходстве, построена на насилии, а это, в свою очередь, приводит к многочисленным жертвам и издержкам в самих государствах - носителях великодержавного шовинизма и агрессивного национализма.

В связи с этим можно утверждать, что шовинизм, в конечном итоге, наносит удар по самой державе, ослабляет ее собственные устои, усиливает внутренние противоречия, способен расколоть общество со всеми тяжкими для него последствиями. Несмотря на различные исторические периоды и условия, примеры этому можно найти в судьбах Римской, Османской, Германской и тех же Российской и Советской империях.

В современных условиях малые страны и народы, испытывающие давление шовинистических угроз, в целях обеспечения собственной безопасности и суверенитета неизбежно вынуждены искать противовес великодержавным устремлениям. Все это, в конечном итоге, не делает более здоровой всю систему международных отношений и может привести к усилению противоречий между мировыми центрами силы на глобальном уровне.

В свете сказанного для граждан Республики Узбекистан актуален вопрос о том, насколько сильны сегодня элементы великодержавного шовинизма и агрессивного национализма в отношении нашей страны, какие реальные угрозы нашей безопасности таит в себе сегодня это явление, в какие бы формы оно ни облекалось.

1991 год стал исторической точкой отсчета нового периода, в котором бывшие жертвы тоталитарной системы получили освобождение своего потенциала и возможности для национально-государственного возрождения. Закономерно и символично, что начала демонтаж одряхлевшей и распадающейся империи сама Россия. Вот почему демократическая, экономически и политически здоровая и процветающая Россия так необходима для укрепления независимости всех новых суверенных государств, включая Республику Узбекистан.

Казалось, что с отходом от власти партии имперской великодержавности в прошлом останется и великодержавный шовинизм. Однако жизнь внесла серьезные поправки в эти ожидания.

В чем же сегодня проявляется великодержавность, замешанная на шовинизме и агрессивном национализме?

Прежде всего в том, что в высказываниях и действиях определенной группы политиков и экспертов прослеживается откровенное разочарование по поводу растущего в современном мире понимания того, что бывший Советский Союз это не только Москва и Россия. Отсюда раздражительное и порой болезненное восприятие того, что в бывших союзных республиках не просто ясно выражают свои национально-государственные интересы, но и осуществляют вполне самостоятельную политику, направленную на их обеспечение.

В последнее время на эту тему в открытой печати России неоднократно появляются пространные аналитические материалы и другого рода публикации, в которых по тону и содержанию просматривается не перо журналиста, а опытная рука спецслужб и отдельных политиков.

Эти публикации как нельзя лучше демонстрируют и обосновывают вывод о том, что опасность шовинизма и его проявления по отношению к так называемому ближнему зарубежью - новым независимым государствам на пост-советском пространстве - это не надуманная проблема, а угроза, одинаково опасная как для самой России, так и ее соседей.

В отдельных публикациях откровенность и амбиции махровых шовинистов и националистов переходят все границы. Достаточно привести передовицу, редакторскую статью в «Новой независимой газете» от 26 марта 1997 года под громким названием «СНГ: начало или конец истории?».

В этой статье, причем опубликованной в канун встречи глав государств Содружества 28 марта 1997 года, изложены, по мнению редакции, «принципиально новые подходы к объединению на постсоветском пространстве». К сожалению, даже при первом

знакомстве с этой публикацией или докладом, как называют ее безымянные авторы, видно, что речь идет не о новых подходах к интеграции, что было бы вполне понятным и естественным. Напротив, в нем прямо звучит абсолютно недопустимый с точки зрения международного права и нормальных этических норм уважения к независимости и суверенитету государств - членов ООН призыв к дестабилизации обстановки в этих странах, пересмотру статус-кво и реалий, сложившихся на постсоветском пространстве. И все это, по мнению авторов, во имя обеспечения безопасности России и сохранения ее державного и доминирующего положения в границах бывшего СССР.

Так, они считают, что «самой большой ошибкой было то, что Россия фактически согласилась с такой логикой интеграции, при которой бывшие советские республики из стадии протогосударственных образований (подобия государства) становятся реальными государствами, со всеми необходимыми для этого атрибутами, затем осуществляют интеграцию в экономической сфере, а только вслед за этим идет процесс военной и политической интеграции и создания действительного обновленного союза суверенных и свободных государств».

В качестве рецепта исправления этой ошибки предлагается «...решительное вовлечение России в процесс государственностроения в бывших республиках СССР с теми, гическими последствиями, угрожающими безопасности народов и государств.

Третье. Необходимо учитывать сложившуюся социально-политическую ситуацию, неизбежность и необходимость сосуществования совместно проживающих наций, их общие стремления и желания, что должно выражаться через соответствующую целенаправленную этнополитику государства и формирование общественного мнения.

эта политика полностью отвечает стратегическим государственным и национальным

Существуют ли угрозы межнациональным отношени-

ям в Узбекистане и Центральноазиатском регионе?

Если объективно оценивать ситуацию - почва для проявления конфликтных ситуаций существует. Она основана на последствиях той политики, которую вела Российская империя и продолжала вести Советская власть по созданию территориально-административных границ республик в Центральной Азии.

Исторически в Туркестане существовало смешанное расселение племен и народов, обусловленное оазисным характером поселений и кочевым образом жизни людей, тесно связанное общностью культуры и языков. Такой мозаичности этнической карты региона способствовала и этнокультурная, и религиозная близость населяющих его народов.

Целенаправленная миграционная политика царской

России, затем Советского государства способствовала формированию еще большего полиэтничного состава населения Центральноазиатского региона.

Сегодня на территории постсоветских государств Центральной Азии проживают более 100 наций и народностей. Представители почти двух десятков наций оказались в регионе в результате сталинских репрессий, как ссыльные поселенцы.

Фактором угрозы является и этнодемографическая ситуация в регионе. Изменения этой ситуации в Центральной Азии происходили постоянно. В разное время влияние на них оказывали такие факторы, как колонизация, индустриализация 20—30-х годов,

депортации и насильственные переселения народов, активизация процессов урбанизации и другие. Все это получили в наследство новые независимые государства. Поэтому проблемы межнациональных и суб-этнических взаимодействий имеют стратегическое значение и требуют особого внимания при построении межгосударственных отношений в регионе.

В настоящее время возрастающее значение этнического и межнационального факторов в процессе сохранения стабильности в Центральноазиатском регионе требует учета ряда принципиальных моментов, важнейшими из которых, на наш взгляд, являются:

Первое. Признание сложившихся государственных границ, их неприкосновенности должно стать конституционным принципом внешней политики каждого государства, основным условием обеспечения суверенитета и укрепления политической и экономической независимости.

Второе. Развитие национального самосознания народов региона после 1991 года приняло характер необратимого прогрессивного процесса. Многие из них окончательно сформировались как нации, что является наиболее существенным в процессе межнациональных отношений.

Третье. Географическая, этнокультурная и социально-религиозная близость народов, населяющих регион, выступает как позитивный момент межнационального диалога и межгосударственного внешнеполитического и торгово-экономического взаимодействия.

Четвертое. Этнополитика, проводимая, в частности, в

Узбекистане в рамках движения "Туркестан - наш общий дом", является по своей направленности и содержанию гуманистическим, конструктивным процессом, так как преследует цель достижения межнационального согласия в регионе. Без сомнения, интересам всех центральноазиатских государств.

А также "Туркестан" издревле подразумевает не только народы тюркского происхождения, но и все население края. Пятое. Интеграционные процессы в регионе также должны развиваться, основываясь на оптимальном сочетании государственных и национальных интересов всех народов и всего многонационального населения.

Вместе с тем следует решительно пресекать любые попытки противопоставить один народ Центральной Азии другому, распространения мифов о якобы имеющемся национальном превосходстве. А такие действия предпринимаются отдельными безответственными, близорукими и амбициозными политическими деятелями как в регионе, так и за рубежом. Какими бы мотивами ни прикрывались такие попытки, они способны лишь серьезно подорвать гражданский мир и межнациональное согласие в регионе. К чему может это привести - свидетельствуют трагические события в бывшей Югославии, Нагорном Карабахе и других многонациональных странах. К сожалению, и у нас имеется собственный горький опыт, когда отдельные экстремистски настроенные группы чуть не привели к столкновению и противостоянию людей на межнациональной почве. К счастью, здравый смысл, мудрость, гуманизм и доброта, свойственная узбекскому народу, оказались превыше узко групповых интересов, послужили мощным заслоном проявлению экстремизма.

Очевидно, что некоторые различия в содержании и темпах проводимых социально-политических и экономических реформ в государствах Центральной Азии также могут оказать отрицательное влияние на взаимоотношения между нациями и народностями. Это требует проведения достаточно взвешенной этнополитики. Отрадно, что все государства региона приняли взаимные обязательства по обеспечению прав граждан независимо от их национальности, а также по созданию благоприятных условий для развития национальной культуры народов, проживающих в этих странах.

Многонациональный состав Узбекистана определяет его культурологическое своеобразие и богатейший прогрессивный потенциал. Этот потенциал, с нашей точки зрения, объясняется: во-первых, влиянием природно-климатических условий региона, историко-культурного опыта на образ жизни населяющих его людей;

во-вторых, близостью региона к приграничным районам соседних государств, что способствует взаимопроникновению культур и выработке полилингвизма, когда население свободно владеет несколькими языками;

в-третьих, исторически сложившимися формами организации общественных и социальных отношений - семейных, территориальных и других;

в-четвертых, присущим характеру коренных народов

Центральной Азии толерантным отношением к представителям других национальностей.

Это чисто человеческое чувство у узбеков, например, развито настолько, что национально-духовная толерантность стала неотъемлемой чертой их общей культуры и менталитета.

Ярким свидетельством проявления богатства души, человеческой доброты и сострадания к чужому горю, радушия и гостеприимства, присущих узбекскому народу, явилось то отношение, та теплота и забота, которой были окружены отдельные люди, семьи, да и целые народы, оказавшиеся в годы тяжелых испытаний - войн и сталинских репрессий, на территории Узбекистана.

Немного в истории найдется таких примеров проявления высоких благородных чувств и нравственных качеств у целого народа, когда в годы невзгод, отнимая от себя, своих детей самое необходимое, делились с совершенно незнакомыми, но еще более нуждающимися людьми, когда и, в без того многодетных, узбекских семьях обретали новых родителей, отцовскую и материнскую ласку не один, а десятки детей различных национальностей, оказавшиеся в суровые года сиротами.

Узбекистан гордится тем, что это было и есть в его истории. Гордится тем, что в исторической памяти нашего народа и государства нет позорных страниц проявления антисемитизма, расизма и других форм высокомерного и неуважительного отношения к другой нации, к другому народу. Оценивая в целом ход демократических и политических реформ на начальных этапах переходного периода, можно сказать, что Узбекистан реализует особый подход.

Наша модель государственного строительства основывается на идее сохранения и укрепления исторически сложившейся на нашей территории многонациональной структуры общества и использования данного фактора для осуществления конечных целевых задач создания демократического правового государства, гражданского общества.

В настоящее время национальные и другие общественные движения, в том числе молодежные, культурные, религиозные, переживают свое второе рождение. Переход от эйфории первых лет независимости к реальной действительности, к трезвой оценке экономической и политической ситуации вынуждает их коренным образом пересмотреть и отказаться от требований и условий ультимативного и радикального характера, перестраиваться идейно и организационно, преодолевая популистские, узко политические и амбициозные интересы.

Сохранению межнационального согласия в нашем обществе, характеризующегося по своему составу и содержанию как "единство многообразия" народов республики, способствует цивилизованная законодательная база, решающая все проблемы равноправия граждан Узбекистана.

В Конституции республики подчеркивается:

"Народ

Узбекистана составляют граждане Республики Узбекистан, независимо от их национальности"

. Закон Респуб-

лики Узбекистан "О гарантиях избирательных прав" дает всем гражданам Республики Узбекистан, "независимо от происхождения, социального и имущественного положения, расовой и национальной принадлежности, пола, образования, языка, отношения к религии, рода и характера занятий" равное избирательное право.

Государственная концепция защиты прав этнических меньшинств, проживающих на территории Узбекистана, ярко прослеживается в Конституции республики, где говорится, что "Республика Узбекистан обеспечивает уважительное отношение к языкам, обычаям и традициям наций и народностей, проживающих на ее территории, создание условий для их развития"

В связи с этим хотелось бы отметить, что процессы национального возрождения идут не только среди узбеков. Активно идут консолидационные процессы, основанные на этнокультурных началах, и среди представителей других национальностей, проживающих в Узбекистане.

Еще в 1989 году начали создаваться общественные организации - национально-культурные центры. Сегодня их уже в республике действует более 80. Они играют позитивную роль в процессе политического, экономического, культурно-духовного переустройства многонационального общества Узбекистана. Когда мы говорим о единстве народа, о его сплоченности и спокойствии, то подчеркиваем, что это наше достояние, которому нет цены.

Наше общество стремится к таким внутриэтническим и межнациональным взаимоотношениям, которые позволили бы любому человеку, проживающему на данной территории, чувствовать себя свободным и равноправным.

Единство любой нации, в том числе и узбекской, подразумевает ее тесные взаимоотношения со своими этническими братьями, проживающими в других суверенных государствах, в том числе и в странах Центральной Азии.

Статистика подтверждает, что на сегодня достаточно много узбеков проживают за пределами Узбекистана. Так, 24,4 процента всего населения Таджикистана составляют узбеки, в Кыргызстане - 13,8 процента, Туркменистане — 9,0, Казахстане - 2,5 процента. Вот почему Узбекистан приверженец глубоких, всесторонних взаимоотношений между суверенными государствами Центральной Азии и прочной безопасности в регионе. Позитивные результаты интеграции будут способствовать межнациональному диалогу и региональной безопасности.

Выдвигая концепцию взаимоотношений, под идеей

"Туркестан - наш общий дом", мы хотим нормализации человеческих взаимодействий как в регионе, так и во входящих в него отдельных государствах. Наконец, зададимся вопросом - какими основными принципами следует руководствоваться при проведении национальной политики Узбекистана, чтобы не допустить конфликтных ситуаций, угрожающих национальной и региональной безопасности в процессе межнациональных отношений?

Во-первых, этнополитика государства должна строиться на приоритетности защиты прав личности, также не должны ущемляться права национальных меньшинств.

Во-вторых, стратегическая линия в этнополитике государства должна строиться на методах, разрешающих межнациональные противоречия конструктивным образом.

В-третьих, экономический прогресс нашего общества, базирующийся на рыночных отношениях при обеспечении сильного механизма социальной защищенности людей, отвечает интересам населения всех национальностей, проживающих на территории

республики, создает прочную основу для реализации способностей и таланта каждого человека, для развития и повышения благополучия каждой семьи.

Таким образом, полиэтничность любого государства подразумевает наличие поэтапного процесса развития межэтнических отношений, опирающегося на естественное содержание взаимодействия между этносами. Это требует необходимости постоянного общественного анализа данных процессов в целях предупреждения этнических и межнациональных конфликтов, которые, в случае их появления, могут создавать угрозу государственной и региональной безопасности.

## УГРОЗЫ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

### РЕГИОНАЛЬНЫЕ КОНФЛИКТЫ

После окончания жесткой конфронтации, проходившей под знаком борьбы двух идеологических систем, с ее проекцией на все аспекты международной жизни, окружающий нас мир не стал спокойнее, не стал менее конфликтным, как ожидали многие. Процесс формирования нового миропорядка сопровождается обострением застарелых, подспудно тлевших конфликтов на региональном и субрегиональном уровнях, имеющих под собой различные исторические, этнические, политические, религиозные и иные причины, которые ранее, в рамках глобального противостояния двух систем, зачастую "гасились" в интересах того или иного полюса силы. Более того, существуют потенциальные угрозы возникновения новых региональных конфликтов на фоне вовлечения в них различных внешних сил в рамках их геостратегических устремлений. За последние пять лет у всех на слуху и стало вполне обыденным злоеющее по своему содержанию словосочетание - "региональный конфликт". Региональные конфликты характерны и для развитых, и для развивающихся регионов мира.

За сухими комментариями телерепортеров и броскими заголовками газет об очередных жертвах боевых столкновений затерялись миллионы человеческих судеб, их боль и страдания. Разве могут оставить равнодушными последние данные ООН, согласно которым в настоящее время во всем мире около 50 миллионов человек являются беженцами. В 1996 году зарегистрировано 13 миллионов человек, нашедших убежище в других странах. Около 30 миллионов беженцев вынуждены были покинуть свои родные места из-за гражданских войн. Что может быть страшнее адаптации общества к насилию и кровавым трагедиям целых народов, пусть даже вдали от собственных границ? Такая гражданская позиция конкретной личности, обусловленная либо непониманием, либо самоуспокоенностью, таит в себе не меньшую опасность, чем открытая угроза применения силы. Такая позиция абсолютно неприемлема для граждан и руководства нашей страны.

Независимо от нашей воли или наших устремлений,

Узбекистан после распада СССР фактически оказался прифронтовым государством, вблизи границ которого продолжают гореть два очага кризисов - в Афганистане и Таджикистане, унесших за последние годы сотни тысяч человеческих жизней.

Принимая во внимание глубину и остроту кризиса в

Афганистане, где вот уже 18 лет продолжается война, а также степень его воздействия на геополитические процессы на региональном и глобальном уровнях, эту трагедию можно отнести к числу наиболее масштабных в современном мире и опасных региональных конфликтов.

Не углубляясь в его причины и предпосылки, а также первопричины продолжающегося кризиса в соседнем Таджикистане, поскольку не об этом идет речь, необходимо отметить,

что устойчивое и безопасное развитие Узбекистана, которое обеспечило бы благополучие и процветание граждан страны, вряд ли представляется возможным, когда в окружении нашей республики циклично обостряется напряженность, ведутся боевые действия, а здравые мирные инициативы зачастую наталкиваются на глухое непонимание противоборствующих сторон.

Весь трагизм происходящего состоит в том, что подобное развитие ситуации может в результате многолетнего внутреннего вооруженного и политического противостояния поставить эти страны на грань самоуничтожения и потери государственности.

Последующие поколения вряд ли простят современникам причины и мотивы, побудившие их разжечь огонь войны. История, верша свой суд, всегда отделяет зерна от плевел и не принимает в качестве оправданий амбиции личностей, прикрывающихся интересами народа ради собственных узкокорыстных целей. Чем больше противоборствующие стороны втягиваются в конфликт, обостряя антагонизм своих позиций, тем очевиднее становится то, что он приносит неизмеримо больше потерь, чем предполагаемых его участниками приобретений. Никакая цель не может быть оправдана, если на карту ставится судьба миллионов людей.

Уничтожающее влияние войны на состояние общества и государства проявляется не только в естественном спутнике войны - экономической разрухе, но и в других немаловажных для будущего нации сферах. Мало кто отважится утверждать, что культивирование ненависти по каким бы то ни было мотивам между согражданами, потоки беженцев, вынужденных покидать свои дома, криминализация общества, превращение войны в единственный источник заработка, подрыв генофонда нации, лишение подрастающего поколения возможности получить даже начальное образование

могут обеспечить будущее этого народа.

Уже сейчас, глядя на Афганистан и Таджикистан, можно констатировать, что происходящие там конфликты и их последствия отбросили эти государства в их развитии как минимум на десятки лет назад, в то время, как мировая цивилизация, выходящая на рубеж 2000 года, устремлена в XI век. При этом апологеты войны стремятся убедить своих соотечественников, что это - необходимая жертва, заплатив которую, они войдут в светлое будущее.

Так в чем же кроется угроза региональных конфликтов для благополучия нашего общества и прогресса республики? На первый взгляд, может показаться, что все происходящее у границ Узбекистана коллизии не имеют прямого отношения к сохранению политической, экономической и социальной стабильности в пределах нашего государства. Не меньшей политической и гражданской близорукостью можно считать и такое мнение, что тревожные события и впредь будут развиваться по накатанной колее, обходя нас стороной, стабильность сохранится сама собой, а будущее страны обеспечено автоматически.

Однако в этом контексте не могу не вставить одну ремарку, что, по всей вероятности, мало кто из такого рода

"оптимистов" догадывается о том, каких колоссальных усилий стоит государству обеспечение мира и порядка, недопущение переноса конфликта и сопутствующих ему негативных процессов на нашу землю. Здесь уместно вспомнить хорошо известную истину о том, что если игнорировать острые проблемы, в том числе существующие вокруг нас, то они приводят к кризису, а неуправляемый кризис по мере своего развития, в свою очередь, может перерасти во все разрушающий на своем пути катаклизм, не

признающий государственных границ и других политических, экономических, этнических и иных реалий.

В условиях существующих региональных кризисов угроза безопасности Узбекистана не является гипотетической, а существует зримо. Это становится ясным, если рассмотреть региональный конфликт не только как вооруженное противоборство сторон в очерченных рамках, в том числе сопровождающееся многочисленными человеческими жертвами среди мирного гражданского населения, но и с точки зрения того влияния, которое оказывает это противостояние на все стороны жизни конкретного общества и соседние государства.

История развития человеческой цивилизации, тем более в условиях современного, ставшего до предела взаимозависимого мира, однозначно свидетельствует, что любой конфликт в отдельно взятом государстве не может длительное время оставаться в пределах национальных границ. По ряду причин такой конфликт неминуемо наруживает тенденцию к своему уже неконтролируемому расползанию, что рано или поздно поставит целый комплекс проблем перед соседними государствами со всеми вытекающими последствиями, дестабилизируя ситуацию в регионе. С этой точки зрения, как правило, усугубляет кризис скрытая и явная интернационализация конфликта, поскольку всегда находятся внешние силы, преследующие различные цели и стремящиеся обеспечить собственные интересы в районе кризиса.

Таким образом, представляется ошибочным рассматривать внутренний конфликт в отдельно взятом государстве, взаимосвязь между ним и соседними странами как независимые друг от друга явления. Военно-политический кризис в Афганистане и нестабильность в Таджикистане не могут не оказывать негативное воздействие как на

состояние региональной стабильности в Центральной Азии в целом, так и национальной безопасности Узбекистана в частности.

Думаю, нет необходимости глубоко теоретизировать или ссылаться на историю других региональных конфликтов для подтверждения этого вывода в наших условиях. Глубоко убежден, что последнее резкое обострение ситуации в сентябре-октябре 1996 года в Афганистане продемонстрировало актуальность и остроту этой многоаспектной проблемы, отголоски которой, как говорится, опалили всех нас дыханием войны, заставили задуматься о цене мира в республике и благополучия народа. В этом контексте логичным было бы продолжить мысль о том, что до тех пор, пока не будут разрешены региональные конфликты, ни одно из государств Центральной Азии не может чувствовать себя в безопасности и, тем более, уверенно продвигаться в будущее.

Перечень угроз, уже проявивших себя и потенциальных, достаточно широк.

Во-первых, пристального внимания требует такая модель развития ситуации, как вольный или невольный перенос вооруженной и иной подрывной деятельности на территорию сопредельных государств, поскольку афганский и в известной мере таджикский конфликты достигли стадии, при которой они обретают практически неконтролируемые формы. В этих условиях следует учитывать специфику расселения основных этносов региона, которые в различных пропорциях проживают во всех государствах Центральной Азии и обнаруживают исторически сложившуюся многовековую взаимосвязь в различных сферах и на различных уровнях (в том числе многочисленные родственные связи).

При известной "этнической пестроте" каждого из государств региона любое обострение кризисов не может не подрывать гражданского согласия и стабильности в соседних

странах. Не могут не вызывать тревоги попытки определенных подрывных сил еще более разжечь очаг конфликта и перенести его на соседние страны, играя на национальных чувствах этнических меньшинств, проживающих на сопредельных территориях. Современная история наглядно свидетельствует, что силы, стремящиеся разыграть "национальную карту" в собственных политических и иных целях, прежде всего рассчитывают на высокие мобилизационные начала эмоций людей с последующим их направлением в русло во-инствующей агрессивности, исключаяющей какие-либо элементы политической мудрости и здравомыслия.

Во-вторых, в последние годы события приобрели дра-матический оборот еще и по той причине, что в афганский конфликт, помимо известного этнического, был привнесен и религиозный аспект. Происходит резкий процесс политизации ислама, принявший крайне радикальные формы - открытые притязания на власть и готовность добиваться этого вооруженным путем, призывая на помощь всех единоверцев. Этот процесс, не имеющий никакого отношения к гуманистическим идеалам и началам нашей религии, прямо либо опосредованно оказывает негативное воздействие на общественно-политическую ситуацию на обширной территории от Горного Бадахша-на до Каспия. При этом следует иметь в виду, что в государствах региона нашлись и, к сожалению, все еще имеются экстремистски настроенные элементы, готовые навязать афганский сценарий своим народам, несмотря на то, что события в Афганистане привели к последствиям, весь трагизм которых нам и нашим потомкам еще пред-

В-третьих, центробежные силы афганского конфлик-та, в основе которого лежат этноконфессиональные при-тязания различных афганских группировок на власть, продолжают негативно влиять на весь регион и принимать осязаемые формы. Со всей

очевидностью это проявляется в вооруженных провокациях на таджикско-афганской границе, которые в совокупности с другими проявлениями подрывной деятельности с территории Исламского государства Афганистан серьезно дестабилизируют обстановку в Таджикистане и соответственно регионе. В этих условиях разномастные "борцы за веру" для оправдания своих действий и намерений используют религиозные лозунги, стремятся навязать несвойственные нашим народам и их духовному миру идеалы и ценности, посеять смуту и средневековое мракобесие, лишить нас достойного места в архитектонике человеческой цивилизации.

Наконец, еще одна потенциальная угроза, заслуживающая особого внимания.

Продолжение конфликтов дает кое-кому возможность муссировать проблемы "разделенных народов". При этом зачастую искусственно осуществляется подбор аргументов в пользу, к примеру, объединения таджиков или узбеков по обе стороны границы с Афганистаном или же пуштунских племен. Даже страшно представить, к чему может привести любая попытка передела существующих границ на этнической основе.

— **Speech 2:** *Центральноазиатское сообщество (1998).*

Для нас Центральноазиатское сообщество — это не дань интеграционной моде и не попытка доминировать или расширить сферу влияния. Это наш путь к независимости и прогрессу в XXI веке. Я убежден, что создание такого сообщества безусловно отвечает интересам наших народов и способствует укреплению стабильности и мира в нашем регионе.

Государства Центральной Азии — при всем их социально-политическом, этническом и культурном разнообразии — вместе создают благоприятную среду для противостояния

внешним угрозам безопасности и обеспечения устойчивого развития региона, превращая его в зону безопасности и стабильности. Тем самым они вносят достойный вклад в укрепление мира и стабильности во всем мире.

Я убеждён, что историей движут не конфликты и вражда, а сотрудничество и доверие между народами.

Безопасность и стабильность в современном мире охватывают не только военно-политические аспекты, но и в равной степени — экономические, экологические и культурные компоненты, из которых складывается мирный и процветающий общий дом — будь то региональный или глобальный.

Однако, являясь членом Движения неприсоединения, Узбекистан отвергает участие в каких-либо военно-политических блоках. Мы рассматриваем такую позицию как гарантию национальной безопасности и сохранения мира и стабильности в регионе. Мы выступаем против создания военно-политического блока в рамках СНГ, считая, что его формирование вернёт мир к старой, уже ушедшей в прошлое «холодной войне».

Мы намерены выстраивать отношения, укрепляющие национальную безопасность Узбекистана и способные противостоять внешним угрозам на основе принципа общей безопасности и сохранения региональной стабильности — только на договорной основе и исключительно с теми государствами, чьи жизненные интересы напрямую затронуты.

Я ещё раз хочу подчеркнуть, что заключение любых военно-политических соглашений должно в полной мере обеспечивать суверенитет нашей страны, её территориальную целостность и нерушимость существующих границ.

## ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ В ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ

Что касается интеграции между странами Центральной Азии, то она имеет свои особенности.

Эта интеграция всегда была — и остаётся — движением, исходящим от самих народов.

На протяжении истории народы этого региона плечом к плечу сражались против иноземных захватчиков. Их объединяли идеалы независимости и создания суверенных государств. Веками эти народы жили на обширной территории, известной как Туран.

Прежде всего, необходимо отметить, что интеграция народов Центральной Азии — это не мечта и не проект на будущее; это факт и реальность, требующая лишь организационного, правового и политического оформления.

Мы рассматриваем интеграцию в Центральной Азии как объективную необходимость, обусловленную общей территорией, единой инфраструктурой, основными и ведущими отраслями экономики, потребностью в совместном развитии водохозяйственных и энергетических объектов и распределении энергетических ресурсов. Не говоря уже о культурной, языковой и духовной близости наших народов, основанной на глубоко переплетённых корнях.

Этот регион всегда был интегрирован в той или иной форме. После обретения независимости народы Центральной Азии остро ощутили необходимость строить будущее сообща. Практическим шагом в этом направлении стало подписание в Ташкенте

Президентами Казахстана, Кыргызстана и Узбекистана Договора о создании Единого экономического пространства между суверенными государствами Центральной Азии.

На странице 240 отмечается, что у республик Центральной Азии действительно имеются исходные условия и предпосылки для интеграции: равный старт экономического развития, одинаковые социально-экономические вызовы, общая транспортная и энергетическая инфраструктура и водные ресурсы. Кроме того, мы сталкиваемся с общими угрозами безопасности — такими, как высыхание Аральского моря, приток наркотиков, оружия, терроризм, религиозный фундаментализм, риск обострения напряженности и нестабильности, исходящей из Афганистана, и другие факторы.

Хотя эти угрозы могут показаться разными, они объединяют нас, поскольку ни одну из них невозможно преодолеть в одиночку или рассчитывая только на собственные силы.

Это должно стать руководством к действию для всех политиков, заинтересованных в процветании Центральной Азии.

Будучи наиболее социально и экономически развитой страной региона, обладающей огромным духовным и культурным потенциалом, Узбекистан сегодня выступает связующим звеном между своими соседями — Казахстаном, Кыргызстаном, Таджикистаном, Туркменистаном и Афганистаном. Активное сотрудничество с Узбекистаном открывает путь к установлению взаимовыгодных отношений во всём Центральноазиатском регионе.

Находясь в самом сердце Центральной Азии, Ташкент является, образно говоря, воротами в Восток. Это признаётся тем, что многие международные организации открыли здесь

свои представительства и офисы — среди них Организация Объединённых Наций, Международный валютный фонд, Всемирный банк, Европейский банк реконструкции и развития, Организация по безопасности и сотрудничеству в Европе, Немецкое общество технического сотрудничества и многие другие. Более 350 иностранных компаний, фирм и банков аккредитовали свои местные офисы в Узбекистане.

Всё это создаёт широкие возможности для интеграции республики в мировую экономику, привлечения иностранных инвестиций и превращения Узбекистана в уникальный региональный центр взаимовыгодного межгосударственного сотрудничества, транзита товаров и капитала, развития транспорта, туризма и финансовых услуг.

## РОЛЬ ГОСУДАРСТВА

Признание того, что государство несёт главную ответственность за обеспечение национальной безопасности, требует сосредоточения внимания на реформировании государственных институтов, чтобы децентрализация не привела к региональному сепаратизму, а демократизация — к вспышкам политического экстремизма под различными лозунгами. Поэтому на данном этапе речь идёт не о снижении роли государства в общественном развитии, а о более чётком определении стратегических направлений, в которых ведущая роль государства должна быть сохранена в ближайшей перспективе.

Сегодня национальной безопасности, суверенитету и территориальной целостности в первую очередь угрожают внешние силы. Горячие точки вооружённых конфликтов на

южных рубежах нашего Отечества представляют потенциальную военную опасность. Эта реальность возводит обороноспособность нашего государства — степень готовности отразить возможную агрессию — в ранг жизненно важного условия обеспечения национальной безопасности и стабильности не только нашей страны, но и всего региона.

Исторически принадлежал к семье тюркских народов, наш народ решительно отверг соблазны пантюркизма и шовинистическую идею «Великого Турана». Для нас Туран — это культурное, а не над политическое сообщество тюркоязычных народов региона.

Более того, наши общие культурные, исторические и антропологические корни также связывают нас с таджикским народом, давая нам полное право рассматривать нашу культуру как уникальный центральноазиатский синтез тюркских и персидских традиций.

С таким наследием Узбекистан может и должен стать инициатором культурной интеграции стран Центральной Азии.

Сочетая по региональным меркам высокий уровень урбанизации, индустриализации и наличие научно-технических кадров с глубоко традиционным образом жизни, Узбекистан может также выступать посредником в диалоге между Востоком и Западом — символом духовной связи между многими цивилизациями.

— **Speech 3: Экономика и духовность неразделимы (1998).**

Экономика и духовность неразделимы.

Говоря о последних событиях в Таджикистане, Президент заявил:

«Наши взгляды на проблемы Таджикистана известны всему миру. Мы выступаем за невмешательство во внутренние дела этой страны и за установление прочного мира. Буквально на днях я провёл телефонный разговор с Президентом Таджикистана Э. Рахмоном и вновь подтвердил эту позицию.

Исходя из этой позиции, я подчеркиваю: мы осуждаем любые действия, направленные против установления мира в этой стране. Вызывает беспокойство то, что ситуация в Таджикистане может привести к повторению афганской трагедии.

Такого допустить нельзя ни при каких обстоятельствах.

Что касается афганской проблемы, как мы заявляли ранее, Совет Безопасности ООН должен ввести строгий запрет на ввоз оружия в эту страну. Ситуация требует, чтобы к предложению Узбекистана присоединились США, Россия и Пакистан.

Время от времени в Бишкеке или Исламабаде выдвигаются предложения о проведении мирной конференции по афганскому вопросу. По этому поводу у меня следующая позиция: для установления мира в Афганистане необходимо прежде всего создать контактную и координационную группу. Обязательными участниками этой группы должны быть США, Россия, Пакистан и Иран. Кроме того, необходимо включить и другие государства, граничащие с Афганистаном. Только в этом случае можно рассчитывать на результат.

Повторю еще раз: в Афганистане должно быть сформировано коалиционное правительство, в которое войдут представители всех групп и слоев населения. Без этого примирение невозможно. И те, кто стремится к господству над всем Афганистаном —

будь то этническая или национальная группа, либо религиозное движение, — глубоко заблуждаются.

Поэтому все стороны и группы, и в первую очередь движение Талибан, должны отказаться от подобных притязаний».

— **Speech 4:** *Первый Президент Узбекистана Ислам Каримов в своем выступлении на 50-й сессии Генеральной Ассамблеи ООН (1995).*

Господин Президент, Ваше Превосходительство, Генеральный секретарь, дамы и господа!

Я благодарен за возможность выступить по вопросам, которые, на наш взгляд, имеют принципиальное значение в контексте юбилейной сессии Организации Объединённых Наций. Одной из самых актуальных проблем современного мира является вопрос региональной безопасности и стабильности.

Семинар по вопросам безопасности и сотрудничества в Центральной Азии, прошедший в сентябре в Ташкенте при прямой поддержке Генерального секретаря ООН Бутроса Бутроса-Гали и при участии тридцати одной страны и шести международных организаций, подтвердил очевидную истину: путь к глобальной безопасности лежит через обеспечение безопасности на региональном уровне — иными словами, мы убеждены, что путь к глобализации проходит через регионализм. Только посредством взаимопонимания и сотрудничества между государствами в конкретных регионах, особенно тех, что сегодня считаются «горячими точками», можно выработать курс к миру и стабильности во всём мире.

Это особенно важно для Центральной Азии, которая, обладая стратегическими запасами природных, минеральных и сырьевых ресурсов, всё более превращается в арену столкновения геополитических и экономических интересов — и, я бы сказал, амбиций множества государств. Длительная война в Афганистане стала реальной угрозой не только миру и безопасности Центральной Азии, но и всего мира. Семнадцать лет конфликта принесли неисчислимые страдания афганскому народу; война стала источником международного терроризма, наркотрафика и распространения оружия, усугубляя и без того напряжённую ситуацию в соседнем Таджикистане. Мы считаем, что ключ к разрешению афганского конфликта заключается, прежде всего, в устранении внешнего вмешательства. Именно такое вмешательство является главной причиной продолжающейся войны в Афганистане. Мы вновь обращаемся к Совету Безопасности ООН с призывом ввести эмбарго на поставки оружия в Афганистан — независимо от источника. Афганистан должен рассматриваться не как объект противостояния, а как объект мира и стабильности.

Узбекистан — как, впрочем, и вся Центральная Азия — заинтересован в реализации перспективных проектов, поддерживаемых многими международными институтами и компаниями, по строительству железнодорожных и автомобильных путей, а также коммуникационных коридоров через Афганистан, что обеспечит Центральной Азии прямой выход к портам Индийского океана. Такая инфраструктура даст миллионам афганцев мирный источник заработка, создаст новые, более короткие торгово-экономические маршруты и изменит геополитическую карту региона.

С этой высокой трибуны я также обязан сказать об экологической трагедии высыхания Аральского моря — одном из многих планетарных по масштабам бедствий, разрушающих

биосферу, здоровье населения и, я бы сказал, наследственность десятков миллионов людей. Сегодня ясно, что без поддержки и помощи со стороны международных финансовых институтов, развитых стран, а также без координирующей роли ООН эта проблема не может быть решена.

Что касается реформирования ООН и повышения её эффективности, то, прежде всего, состав Совета Безопасности должен быть расширен за счёт постоянных членов из числа стран, играющих значительную роль в мировых делах — таких как Германия и Япония. Во-вторых, необходимо усилить полномочия Генерального секретаря для повышения оперативности реализации решений ООН. В-третьих, необходимо активизировать сотрудничество ООН с региональными организациями, а также развивать собственные региональные структуры ООН, чтобы предупреждать и разрешать кризисы.

Нас тревожит расширение масштабов и объёмов торговли оружием, особенно в нашем регионе. Многие государства открыто рассматривают экспорт вооружений как основной источник валютных поступлений, не задумываясь, в чьи руки попадёт оружие завтра и с какой целью оно будет использовано. Ещё более тревожит торговля ядерными технологиями под прикрытием «мирного сотрудничества». Узбекистан выступает за принятие международных гарантий, предотвращающих распространение оружия массового уничтожения, и за скорейшее заключение договора о бессрочном прекращении ядерных испытаний. Мы не можем принять риторику, звучащую в некоторых кругах, о возвращении к конфронтации военных блоков. Единственно верный путь — это не

деструктивная изоляция, а интеграция в мировое сообщество, несмотря на трудности и несовершенства этого процесса.

Сегодня, когда новые независимые государства постсоветского пространства укрепляют свой суверенитет и проводят демократические реформы, им необходима помощь и поддержка мирового сообщества в реализации преобразований и ускорении интеграции в международные политические, экономические и финансовые структуры. Я имею в виду, уважаемые дамы и господа, не только материальную и финансовую помощь, но, прежде всего, морально-политическую поддержку нашего суверенитета и самостоятельного пути развития. Для нас крайне важно обеспечить преемственность и необратимость реформ; твёрдую приверженность демократизации и рыночной экономике; стабильность и устойчивое развитие; а также взаимовыгодные и равноправные отношения со всеми миролюбивыми странами, — тем самым мы сможем занять своё достойное место в мировом сообществе.

— **Speech 5:** *Address by H.E. Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (2002).*

Honourable Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Heads of States and Governments,

Allow me to express my gratitude for this opportunity to address this top-level Nato forum and also briefly convey my considerations and remarks on the issues under discussion.

First. The tragic events of 11 September 2001 and the monstrous terrorist acts, recurring in deferent parts of the world and claiming innocent civilian lives, bring an understanding of

security's indivisibility; it is only with concerted efforts that we can confront and neutralise this insidious deadly menace.

We endorse the decision to invite new members to Nato and foster qualitatively new relations with non-Nato countries, primarily, with Russia, as well as implementation of other measures regarding Nato institutions' transformation and adaptation to new security threats and challenges.

Assessing the security situation in our region one can see that it is measurably different from what it was a year ago.

Our countries freed themselves from the repetitive incursions of the bandit and terrorist groups from the territory of Afghanistan, and, most importantly, continuous fears posed by the threat of an assault on our territory of Taliban who masterminded the earlier incursions and went on the rampage.

Uzbekistan, the country that had to take a difficult decision to back up the antiterrorist coalition, at the most critical time, extends the words of appreciation for eliminating this threat to all countries involved, and first and foremost, to the USA for taking the lead and shouldering the main burden of disrupting the strongholds of international terrorism and returning Afghanistan to the life in peace.

Having said that we are fully aware that the situation in Afghanistan and its neighbourhood is far from being stable and secure.

There are multiple unresolved problems connected primarily with the need to demilitarise, build the national army and an institutional state vertical, deliver on Tokyo Conference decisions

aimed at securing required resources and implementing reconstruction programmes in Afghanistan.

At this stage we can arrive at a very important, in my opinion, conclusion.

With the international community watching indifferently for decades Afghanistan turning into the training ground of fanatics, extremists and terrorists of all stripes, the Afghan lesson highlights one truth: it is always much harder and more difficult to face the consequences, than nip in the bud the sources spawning terrorism, the most dangerous challenge to the contemporary civilisation.

In this context one appreciates the firm and consistent US position to safeguard from the similar negative scenarios in other parts of the world, including Iraq, and it deserves support.

Second. Today international terrorism is blending with drug trafficking that feeds the former and takes the shape of a fully-fledged narco-aggression.

The ever growing drug production and the largest transit rout in Afghanistan are particularly alarming.

International drugs trafficking, in command of huge financial and other resources, is, above all, a mighty, well-organised and globally connected system that menaces lives of millions of people.

Regretfully, the programmes implemented in large numbers under the auspices of various international organisations and the measures we take to confront this threat in Central Asia are badly co-ordinated and lack sufficient financial and material resources.

I think it is obvious that these desultory programmes should be superseded by a clear-cut, firm, well-designed system of preventive and pre-emptive measures, that is co-ordinated from one centre and targeted at the elimination of the very roots of this deadly threat and creation in the region of the so-called 'security belt'.

Third. Uzbekistan accords great significance to stepping up interaction in security issues between Nato member-states and the countries of Central Asia.

We are highly appreciative of the developing co-operation and in favour of expanding partnership relations with Nato, with a view to reform armed forces, set up training and information centres for the military personnel, equip the borders with the modern devices, heighten the readiness to combat terrorism.

We also see good prospects for our co-operation with Nato/EAPC over strengthening and developing democratic and civil institutions, protecting human rights and freedoms, advancing economic reforms, assisting ecological security.

Among the main areas of co-operation between Nato and Central Asian states is observance by all countries of the UN decisions about non-proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the UN General Assembly Resolution with regards to Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Central Asia.

In view of the terrorists' attempts to lay hands on chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and high-tech know-know, it is very important and urgent to step up the interaction in this issues between the regional countries and Nato.

In conclusion I would like to emphasise yet again: it is only by concerted efforts that we can defeat international terrorism - the plague of the XXI century.

All attempts to wall off from this inhumane threat, following the principle: "Do not bother me - and I will leave you alone", are absolutely futile and, worse still, counter-productive.

Today the fate of this combat hinges on the active participation of every single state.

Uzbekistan remains committed to the consistent course towards strengthening co-operation with Nato/Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council institutions and will continue to contribute to consolidation of a secure and stable world.

Thank you.

— **Speech 6:** *President Islam Karimov's Speech at the SCO Summit (2014).*

Distinguished Heads of State!

Esteemed participants of this session!

First and foremost, allow me to extend my sincere respect to the leaders of SCO member nations, heads of delegations of observer states and the guests invited to this summit meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratefulness to President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon for the warm hospitality and the good organization of our current meeting.

I join the evaluations of SCO activities for the past period, offered here by the heads of state. We have every reason today to assert that Shanghai Cooperation Organization has within a relatively short span of time turned into an influential international institution that plays a noticeable role in world politics. Owing to the joint efforts of member states as well as observer nations, we have

continued to work together to maintain peace and security in the region, combat terrorism, separatism, extremism, drug trafficking and other challenges and threats emerging today in the light of the mounting confrontation and tension in various corners of the world.

I would like to make special mention of the tremendous work undertaken at the level of the Council of National Coordinators, the Session of Security Council Secretaries and experts of the SCO.

Dear Heads of State!

Making use of this opportunity, I would like to dwell very briefly on following issues.

The situation unfolding today in Afghanistan is characterized with permanent instability and has a tendency toward deterioration. One can say with confidence that all the sides interested in addressing the Afghan crisis share one conviction, that is, it is impossible to achieve peace in Afghanistan by military means.

For the war years in the country, a whole generation of Afghans has grown up, who lack any idea as to what a peaceful life is. As the June presidential elections in Afghanistan have demonstrated, the Afghan people have got exhausted of the endless bloodshed and violence, the long-standing misery and destruction, and today they long for peace and stability, strive to have a right to determine their future by their own.

At the same time, procrastination of the process of vote recount and of promulgation of presidential election results in Afghanistan and hence the delay in the inauguration of the new head of state causes great alarm with regard to Afghanistan's stable future.

Developments as such can shake the internal situation in the country once and for all; trigger a real threat to national security and the prospects of peaceful resolution of the confrontation in Afghanistan; impede the achievement of consensus in negotiations and the formation of a coalition government, which would be represented by all the conflicting parties and the ethnic-religious groups of Afghanistan.

We should be aware of the fact that the withdrawal of international security assistance forces from Afghanistan can lead to mounting threats and growing instability, expanding terrorist and extremist activities as well as increasing scales of drug trafficking not merely in the wider Central Asian region, but also far beyond its rims.

Amid the developments we are witnessing, any vacuum emergent in Afghanistan can within a short period of time be filled by various destructive and terrorist groups.

In this unpredictable environment one cannot rule out attempts by certain political forces and states supporting them to sow chaos and depreciate the situation in Afghanistan to an even greater extent. In a nutshell, the developments taking place in Iraq can repeat themselves [in Afghanistan].

Uzbekistan builds and will continue to build steady and friendly relations with Afghanistan deriving from the national interests of both countries and exclusively on the bilateral basis, by providing support to a government that the Afghans will elect on their own.

Examining the state of affairs unfolding in world economy, we have every reason to believe that the grave consequences of the international financial-economic crisis have been far from being overcome to a full extent.

Without any doubt, trends as such are reflected directly or indirectly on the situation and development dynamics in all the SCO participating nations.

Amid these circumstances, the challenge of further enhancement of cooperation in the implementation of wide-scale projects in the economy, investments and transport communications that would cater to the interests of the region's countries has been acquiring a special urgency in order to secure sustainable socio-economic development in the organization's member nations and to make tangible, practical achievements.

We assign a decisive role in addressing these tasks to the initiative put forward by the People's Republic of China and its President Xi Jinping to create "an economic belt of the Silk Road", designed to assist the promotion of long-term economic interests of all the nations of the region, especially in the part concerning the development of a trans-regional transport infrastructure, the substantial upsurge in the geopolitical and economic potential of not only its participants, but also of the entire Central Asia.

Very briefly I would like to convey our views and reflections on the resolution of crisis in Ukraine.

First. We welcome the agreements reached in Minsk on a peaceful resolution of the Ukrainian quagmire, and we support proposals and initiatives of Ukraine and Russia on this issue.

Second. I am convinced that the proposals of Uzbekistan expressed initially as early as 4 March 2014 that the ultimate and most effective resolution of the emergent problem is the organization of a direct negotiations process between Ukraine and Russia directed at ceasing the confrontation

in Ukraine and achieving peace in the country, remain imperative and find their confirmation event today.

Third. In any negotiations processes on the Ukrainian crisis, the ages-old interests of Russia that have evolved historically throughout many centuries should also be taken into account.

Ignoring these interests would be a serious oversight.

Taking this opportunity, allow me to congratulate the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin on the presidency in the SCO for the next period and wish every success in the realization of this responsible mission.

Thank you for your attention.

— **Speech 7:** *President Islam Karimov Addresses the International Conference in Samarkand (2014).*

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the international conference “The Historical Legacy of Scientists and Thinkers of the Medieval East, Its Role and Significance for the Modern Civilization”.

Following is the text of the address.

Distinguished participants of the conference, ladies and gentlemen!

It is an enormous pleasure to me to greet you, participants of the conference, and first and foremost our esteemed guests – heads and representatives of prominent international organizations and institutions, scientific and research centers, universities and other higher

education institutions, renowned scholars and specialists – and express my profound respect and gratitude for your acceptance of our invitation to take part in this forum.

Our conference is added with a special meaning and unique significance by the fact that it is taking place in Samarkand, which for its nearly three-thousand-year history has been a crossroad of civilizations and cultures of peoples.

The ancient and eternally young Samarkand is widely known in various corners of our planet as a majestic city with an inimitable Eastern flavor, the richest history and the surviving extraordinary and amazing monuments of the past. It is hardly accidental that Samarkand, along with Rome, is famed across the world as the “eternal city”, whose resplendent blue cupolas have been appealing to millions of tourists.

As a man who was born and raised in this city, I am doubly pleased to convey on behalf of all the locals our sincere hospitality and say to every one of you, “Welcome to Samarkand”.

Dear friends!

The goal sought by our conference is to discuss and thoroughly perceive of the scientific legacy of the outstanding scholars and thinkers of the medieval East, evaluate their role and place in the history of the modern civilization.

I believe it is also important to afford a new potent impetus to the further intensive research works and the popularization of their genuinely invaluable scientific heritage, to reveal the urgency and demand in the discoveries made by them for the contemporary science and progress.

The history of the medieval East suggests that the boom in culture and education, medicine, literature, arts and architecture, the emergence of schools of thought, the inflow and generation of talents used to be contingent by and large on such factors as the speedy economic and agricultural and urban development, the high level of craftsmanship and commerce, construction of roads and laying out new caravan routes and, what is crucial, the preservation of relative stability.

From this perspective I would like to stress in particular that scientific progress is impossible if there is no stability. Academies, higher education institutions and the like thrive, as do education in general and the interest in this all among the people who desire to advance and move ahead. It is all possible only when calmness and stability reigns, and only then people go to bed not scared of the problems and cataclysms that could await them the following day. This is a truth whose correctness has been proved in the course of many centuries and ages. I am convinced that you understand me well in this context.

The advanced culture, that of Central Asian peoples in particular, is indicated by the ancient monuments and records of the Bactrian, Soghdian, Orkhonian, Khorezmian script, wall painting and sculpture, architecture and many other arts. Established from the 11th through to the 13th century, the Khorezmian state used to encompass a considerable part of Asia by uniting the lands of neighboring peoples from India to the Persian Gulf.

It is hard to overestimate the tremendous and irreplaceable role of the Great Silk Road (the 2nd century BC – the 15th century AD) as an international transport artery of antiquity that used to link such countries and regions as China, India and Central Asia, the Middle and Near East and the Mediterranean. That route helped secure not only trade relations among the abovementioned

lands, but also the information dialogue among continents and countries. It used to serve as a champion of swift spread of new technologies and innovations (production of silk, china, powder, paper and many other things), agricultural crops and agricultural technologies, along with cultural values, by creating thus conditions for an inter-civilization and technological exchange.

Special role was played by the mutual enrichment of peoples of various countries with scientific knowledge and achievements. Information on the activities of scholars and thinkers of the East and West used to travel along the routes of the Great Silk Road, while practical access to the works, ideas and discoveries of such great academics of the antiquity as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Ptolemy and others.

In accordance with traditions of those times, enlightened thinkers and philosophers, scientists and poets are known to have found refuge and patronage, as a norm, at palaces of rulers and sultans.

They included the widely famed galaxy of scholars who successfully worked in the 9-11th centuries in the Mamun Academy in Khiva and the House of Wisdom (Bait al-Hikma) in Baghdad, and also at the school of Ulugbek in Samarkand in the 15th century.

According to researchers, the East, Central Asia in particular, was the source of two powerful scientific-cultural booms in the 9-12th centuries and in the 14-15th centuries, which have by right been acknowledged by the world academic community as the era of the Eastern Renaissance that made a beneficial impact on the processes of renaissance in other regions of the world.

At the same time, as many scholars note, the Renaissance in Europe resulted in the creation of great works of literature, arts and masterpieces of architecture, discoveries in medicine and human cognition, whereas the Eastern Renaissance was distinct, first and foremost, with the advancement of natural and exact sciences, namely, mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, geodesy, pharmacology, medicine, as well as history, philosophy and literature.

When we speak of the great scientific discoveries of the early period in the medieval East, we cite among the first the name of Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khorezmi who made an invaluable input into the contemporary mathematics, trigonometry and geography. He was first to make a case for and introduce the tenfold positioning system of calculation, the zero sign and polar coordinates, which proved to be turning points in the evolution of mathematics and astronomy.

Al-Khorezmi instituted algebra as a science, elaborated clear-cut rules in the narration of scientific information and treatises, authored many works on astronomy, geography and the theory of climate. The services made by al-Khorezmi in the progress of world science are universally acknowledged; his name and his works – exclusively among the academics of the medieval East – are perpetuated in contemporary scientific terms like “algorithm” and “algebra”.

Written as far back as in the 9th century, the fundamental work by Ahmad al-Ferghani “Book on Elements of Astronomy” contained initial knowledge on the constitution of the world, sizes of the Earth, proofs of its sphericity, and up to the 17th century was used at European universities as the principal text in astronomy, served as a scientific foundation for Columbus, Magellan and other travelers of the era of Great Geographical Discoveries. One of al-Ferghani’s considerable practical achievements was the elaboration of the theory of astrolabe – the principal astronomical

instrument in the Middle Ages, as well as the creation of a facility on the Nile River known as the Nile Measurer that functioned as the major instrument in defining the level of water in the river during many centuries.

As the President of Uzbekistan, I was honored, while in Cairo, to have a look at that Nile Measurer and admire the genius of the man who we regard as our ancestor.

Another marvelous scholar, Abu Nasr ibn Irak, who is considered the founding father of the spherical trigonometry, is renowned with his innovations in mathematics and astronomy. He is dubbed by right as the second Ptolemy.

It is hard to estimate to the full extent the genius of the works created by the remarkable scientist of encyclopedic knowledge – Abu Raihon Beruni. From more than 150 scholarly works by Beruni, only 31 masterpieces have survived to us, but even those excerpted data and knowledge we dispose of today demonstrate the multifaceted heritage he left.

Beruni was first to offer an original theory of seas and the structure of the globe, calculated the Earth's radius, explained the presence of vacuum, predicted (500 years prior to Columbus) the existence of a continent beyond the Pacific and the Atlantic, was first to work out a classification of minerals and the theory of their origins, laid the foundations of the science of geodesy. It is not accidental that the natural science historians of the entire world refer to the 11th century as the "Age of Beruni".

A peculiar admiration of the posterity is drawn to the life and activities of Abu Ali ibn Sino, called Avicenna in the West, who earned the well-deserved title of the "Islamic world's most

celebrated philosopher and scholar of encyclopedic knowledge and one of the greatest thinkers of the humankind.” Having started scientific research at the age of 16, he wrote more than 450 works, primarily in the sphere of medicine and philosophy, along with logics, chemistry, physics, astronomy, mathematics, music, literature and linguistics. His works were admired by Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Francis Bacon and many other generations of academics.

We recognize with pride that with his priceless fundamental work – the Canon of Medicine, the most celebrated text in the history of medical science – Ibn Sino defined major directions for the development of medical disciplines for many centuries to come and factually laid down the foundation for the principal methods of practical medicine and pharmacology, still actual and suitable to these days. It was no mere chance that the text was one of the first books published in Europe in the 15th century, and it continued to be a textbook in medicine at leading European universities for 500 years.

A classical example of the highest level of scientific dialogue, the profound rethinking and development of philosophical views of antiquity by our great thinkers is the correspondence between ibn Sino and Beruni with regard to Aristotle’s “Book about the Sky”.

The services of Beruni, ibn Sino, other outstanding scientists and thinkers who worked in Khorezm in the 10-11th centuries, are not confined just to the scholarly texts and discoveries, but also include such an important issue as the formation of an intellectual school of thought – the Khorezm Academy of Mamun that left a deep track in the intellectual history of the human race.

The scholar with encyclopedic knowledge of the 10th century Abu Nasr Farabi used to be referred to as the Aristotle of the East by his contemporaries. He enriched many sciences, evolved philosophical views of scholars of various countries, and wrote more than 160 works.

Among the most renowned among them are “Word on Substance”, “Book on the Origins of Sciences”, “On the Meaning of Reason” and other texts. A considerable part of the academic works by Farabi has been translated into many European and Eastern languages and is still a subject matter for thoroughgoing research.

A galaxy of magnificent scientists and intellectuals of the medieval East would be incomplete if we fail to mention the so-called epoch of Temur and his descendants Temurids, whereby a bright star is still associated with the name of Mirzo Ulugbek, along with his numerous companions and disciples like Kazizoda Rumi, Ali Kushchi and others.

It is well known that a grandson of Amir Temur’s and ruler of Samarkand for more than 40 years, Mirzo Ulugbek earned fame as a great astronomy scientist, whose name is cited along the names of such geniuses as Copernicus, Giordano Bruno, Galileo and others.

Created by Ulugbek in the 15th century, a set of astronomical tables contained the definition and location of 1,018 stars by becoming a new catalogue of astronomical measures for 16 centuries.

His companion al-Kashi was first to introduce decimal fractions, to elaborate the methods of consistent approximations and discovery of roots of arbitrary degrees.

One may enquire more closely into the Ulugbek observatory during a trip to the museum of Ulugbek located on one of the high hills surrounding Samarkand.

The huge, boundless fount of wisdom and humanistic cognition of the surrounding world constitutes a creative heritage of such greatest philosophers, poets and enlighteners as Abu Abdullah Rudaki, Firdousi, Nizami Ganjavi, Saadi, Hafiz Shirazi, Jami, Alisher Navoi, Babur, and of many others that is truly a treasury of world significance.

The author of the history's first Dictionary of Turkic Languages was Mahmud Kashgari, who accompanied his work with a splendid collection of Turkic proverbs and poems that constitute the goldfield of vocabulary in the full sense of the word. Kashgari is considered as the first researcher of language, culture, ethnography, folklore of Turkic peoples.

Quite celebrated during his lifetime was Mahmud Zamakhshari, the linguist, literary critic, geographer and philosopher, who is recognized as the founding father of Arab grammar. He also was the author of the history's first multilingual Arab-Persian-Turkic dictionary.

And, surely, all of us should pay tribute and respect to the galaxy of great historians of the medieval East, whose works constitute invaluable evidence to the events of those times – first and foremost Ahmad ibn Arabshah, Nizamiddin Shami, Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi, Hafiz-i Abru, Khondamir, Abdurazzak Samarkandi and others.

Esteemed participants of the conference!

Today, after nearly a thousand years, we continue to admire the genius, the multiplicity of interests and encyclopedic knowledge of scientists and thinkers of the medieval East.

Unfortunately, due to various cataclysms experienced by mankind, wars, natural disasters, we can say that only a thousandth of their great heritage has survived to us. Now it is difficult to imagine that in certain periods of history, when ignorance and obscurantism prevailed, scientists were persecuted and prosecuted, the lives of many of them ended tragically.

In this case, as the facts indicate, the first victims of confrontations, clashes and conflicts among people, were sources of knowledge, that is, priceless manuscripts and texts. You all know very

well that the antiquity's largest library of Alexandria and a unique library of Ulugbek were lost so irrevocably. Unfortunately, this sad list may be continued.

But, despite all the difficulties and ordeals, scientists and thinkers remained devoted to their research duties, the ideals of humanism and enlightenment.

And today, we have every reason to assert that their lives that were sacrificed to serve science, as well as their achievements that currently delight all the enlightened humanity, were indisputably a real spiritual heroic deed, to which we all bow our heads.

Today I would like to emphasize that a huge reservoir of scientific heritage, of the great discoveries by geniuses of the medieval East is not fully studied and is waiting to be explored.

After all, in Uzbekistan alone, today the stacks include over 100,000 handwritten papers, most of which are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Manuscripts of scholars and thinkers of the medieval East constitute the "golden stock" of libraries in many countries in Europe and Asia: the UK, Germany, Spain, Russia, France, Egypt, India, Iran and others.

What do these facts tell us? This, above all, is another confirmation that the brilliant works and scientific heritage of outstanding scientists and intellectuals of the medieval East are an asset of not only one nation or people, but of all mankind. It is a priceless endowment, a source of wisdom and knowledge for new generations of people and, if you like, an excellent material for new discoveries.

It is reasonable and effective to use this extant richest material for the benefit of the entire human race; this is our task, it is our duty.

Special attention and recognition deserves the invaluable role of dedicated scientists in this case, thanks to who we are endowed with priceless scientific legacy of the past.

I would like to take this opportunity to address you today, and in your face to your colleagues – scientists, historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, specialists in many other sciences, to all who are engaged in hard work over yellowed manuscripts, ancient manuscripts, – with words of sincere gratitude for the fact that thanks to you the treasures of human thought of the past become available to descendants and contemporaries, this beautiful and mysterious world of previous eras and civilizations opens up to us.

I sometimes think that there is a lot of sciences in the world, and outstanding scientific achievements are made in all areas, but I always marvel at the painstaking work that best characterizes the Uzbek proverb that to be into science is like digging a well with a needle. Above all it is those who work on manuscripts for ten and twenty years, and for lifetime. I want to thank them individually for such insistent aspiration to open to the world the heritage of the great geniuses, without which humanity can scarcely evolve.

One of the most respected members of our conference is a leading researcher in our region, the Japanese professor Kato, whose scientific activity has helped open a lot of unknown pages in the history, ethnography, archeology and arts of Central Asia. His research on the Great Silk Road, the state of Bactria, as well as the archaeological research ongoing since 1989 in Surkhandarya region at the settlements of Dalverzintepa and Koratepa, translations into Japanese of the works of Amir Temur, Babur, Ulugbek and other great thinkers of Central Asia led to the knowledge of the history and culture of our vast region to be the world heritage.

And I personally, time and again, want to thank him for what he is doing for the development of the culture of our peoples. He was awarded the Dustlik Order, which means friendship. This is so in tune with his purpose in life, in which he creates friendships, something without which humanity can not exist, after all, the human being is alive with friendship, not wars.

Another participant in the conference – Professor Frederick Starr, the famous American historian, archaeologist, anthropologist, chairman of Central Asia and the Caucasus Institute at Johns Hopkins University, who has published 22 books and over 200 academic articles. In 2009, his essay “The Rediscovery of Central Asia was recognized in the United States one of the best media publications of the year.

The Eastern Renaissance period is deeply studied also in academic and cultural circles of India. In our hall today is present Professor Mansura Haidar, the academic director of the Indira Gandhi National Center of Culture, for many years has been engaged in fruitful comparative study of Central Asian written sources of the 9-15th centuries.

Her scientific monograph “The Historical Significance of Zafarnoma by Nizomiddin Shami” has received international recognition, in which she examined in detail a book devoted to the activity as statesman of Amir Temur, the only text written during the latter’s lifetime.

Our guest from the Republic of Korea Park Choonbae, President of Inha University, one of the leading universities in South Korea and the Asian continent, is the recognized organizer of higher education, specialist in aerospace engineering, led research for many years in the field of aeronautics and space in South Korea. With his direct, personal involvement, a branch of the famed Inha University opens this year in Tashkent for training undergraduate and graduate students in information technologies.

Professor of Cairo University, a well-known scholar of Turkic philology and literature Magida Makhluaf last year completed her lasting work on the translation of Baburnama into Arabic, setting out her deep academic commentary and offering critical analysis of studies conducted hitherto. It is very important that the outstanding work of our great ancestor Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, along with English, Persian and many other languages, today has become available also in Arabic.

We greatly appreciate the scientific activities of Professor Jules Janssens of the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium, who is the author of over 60 publications in various fields of history and philosophy of the East. His book “Ibn Sino and His Influence on Arabic and Latin World” and the collection “Avicenna and His Legacy” received acknowledgement and great recognition not only among professionals, but also a wide range of readers around the world.

I would really like to meet this person and ask: What attracts you to the work of a genius like Avicenna? I would like to see you appear on our television speaking on this subject matter and tell our public, our youth about your love for the history of the East, especially the legacy of Avicenna.

I would like to state in particular Professor Shi Yongli, head of the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Science and Technology of China, the world-renowned expert on the history of astronomy. Most famous are his comparative studies of the development of astronomy in the Middle Ages in Central Asia, China, Korea and Europe. He is a world famous activist of the history and development of astronomy, member of the editorial boards of several leading academic and popular publications in China and Southeast Asia.

Also deserving a special respect is the selfless activity of Dr. Mark Bonnell, widely known physician in Europe and the recognized expert in the field of arranging modern health care systems. Headed by him, the Association Avicenna-France has been making an invaluable contribution to the promotion of scientific works of Ibn Sino in the field of culture, philosophy and medicine in France and Europe.

The celebrated Dutch scientist Robert van Gent of the Institute of the History of Science at Utrecht is also present at our conference. He has published more than 10 books and 60 scientific papers covering not only the issues in modern astronomy, geodesy and cartography, but also the history of their evolution, including that in the medieval East.

The same recognition and respect deserve almost the absolute majority of scholars and professionals who are making a worthy contribution to the study and promotion of the abiding importance of heritage of scholars and thinkers of the medieval East. Thank you all for your hard work, your contribution to the advancement of science and education.

Dear friends!

I am convinced you will agree with me that a deep respect for their history, the garnered experience, intellectual potential being created and considered the greatest treasure in the world, constitutes the basis for both the material and spiritual progress of any nation.

In this regard, I think it would be appropriate to repeat the words uttered by the great Spanish writer Cervantes that history is a treasure of our deeds, witness of the past, example and lesson for the present, and warning for the future. Here I would especially highlight the phrase “warning

for the future”. After all, who does not know history makes mistakes at every turn, and people who are not proud of their history, can not see their future.

We are well aware that without a thorough knowledge and development achieved by remarkable discoveries of the past, including those the medieval East, it is impossible to reach new, higher boundaries neither in science nor in other areas. We will continue to follow this principle in our activities.

The human race today faces new global challenges, I would include as pressing ones as climate change, protection and preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, depletion of natural resources and others, the reasonable optimal solution to which becomes the strongest challenge of our time.

Solving these problems may require intellectual breakthroughs, rethinking and formulation of new laws developed in the course of many centuries, the organization of large-scale scientific research and experiments in a wide range of areas of study of the world around us.

To be sure, this will in turn require huge funds and investments, rational use of brilliant scientific achievements made in the past. If you think about it, in what difficult conditions the scientists and thinkers of the medieval East, whose names sounded in this hall today, created their fundamental scientific works and made their brilliant discoveries. After all, they did not have the opportunities we have today, nor modern laboratories or complex scientific instruments or advanced technologies. We all know that modern science can not develop without huge investments, which in turn serve as the basis for the emergence of great ideas and discoveries.

It becomes apparent that not without reason the 21st century is called the century of knowledge and intelligence of the human mind.

What is the essence of this?

We have always been aware that those states and societies who do not pay enough attention to careful preservation, enrichment and enhancement of the historical, cultural and intellectual heritage, as well as to the education of the younger generation on the basis of universal and national values, who do not set as their goal as formation of a harmoniously developed and independently thinking individuals having their views, their choices, their civic stance, – such states and societies are doomed to be on the sidelines of history.

Right from the first days of independence and sovereignty, we came to a firm conviction that it is impossible to build a new society without fundamental reform of the current educational system that was formed in the past, complete rejection of stereotypes and dogmas of the past communist ideology, without strengthening the democratic values in the minds of our young people.

If we consider that the population of Uzbekistan today is 31 million people, more than 60 percent of which accounts for young people aged under 30, the need for and role of these reforms become readily apparent themselves.

In accordance with the national program, a twelve-year universal compulsory free education under the scheme 9 +3 was introduced in the country. What does this mean? If a person wants to fulfill their constitutional duty, his/her duty to the people and the country, they should teach their children for 12 years. The principal feature of the viability of our model lies primarily in the fact that after 9 years of study at secondary school, in the next 3 years pupils study in specialized

professional colleges and academic lyceums, where each of them receives training in 2-3 professional occupations in demand on the market, along with general subjects and disciplines.

I would really like you to visit at least one college, whether in Samarkand or Tashkent. Have a look, in the remotest town or district the best buildings that we have erected are colleges. We have built 1,500 new colleges and lyceums on the state-of-the-art architectural designs.

Previously, we used to show foreign guests exotic things, and today we are talking – and you can see our children, learn the conditions under which we give them knowledge, what citizens are growing in our country that we want them to get and what to expect. That is what we believe is the most important, and in this respect I want to say that besides the fact that today young people in our colleges receive 2-3 professions, they also necessarily speak one foreign language, mostly English.

Following a 12-year education, the youths can continue with studies in higher education institutions in undergraduate and graduate courses and fields they opt for.

As a result of successful implementation of the reforms in education meeting modern requirements, we have established an integrated system of continuous education, including all stages of the educational process – starting from pre-school and school education up to secondary specialized vocational and higher education, as well as single-stage post-graduate education, providing, in accordance with international standards, direct defense of the dissertation for the award of doctoral degree.

During the years of reforms, the number of higher education institutions in the country increased twofold, and today more than 230,000 students are enrolled at 60 universities and institutes. In Uzbekistan successfully operate several branches of leading universities in Europe and Asia,

such as the University of Westminster, Management Development Institute of Singapore, Turin Polytechnic University, Russia Oil and Gas University, Moscow State University, Russia University of Economics.

Currently, a training and experimental center of high technologies is being created by the National University of Uzbekistan and the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan jointly with Britain's leading institution – Cambridge University.

Starting from September 2014, as I have just said, branch of the South Korean Inha University will start its activities in Uzbekistan, to train in information and communication technologies and computer engineering.

Thousands of representatives of our talented young people are educated in the leading universities in Japan, Germany, South Korea, China, UK, USA, France and other countries, opening a large space to their knowledge and skills.

Today, according to the UN, the funds allocated for education in the state budget of our country account for more than 35 percent.

It is no accident that a survey conducted in 2012 by the World Intellectual Property Organization and one of the leading international business schools, INSEAD, research on the level of human capital in Uzbekistan took the 53rd place among 141 countries in the world, and in the level of development of the education system, including the share of funds for educational purposes, research organizers ranked our country 5th in the world.

We are grateful that detached people have drawn impartial conclusions. We did not even know that there is such a center, which is engaged in similar research and generalizations. I think that such studies are useful in themselves, and we will strive for even greater accomplishments.

Esteemed participants of the conference!

Dear friends!

We believe in the exceptional importance and feasibility of this conference on the study and practical promotion of the scholarly heritage left by the great scientists of the medieval East, their invaluable contribution to the development of world civilization.

There is no doubt that, given the composition of the forum participants, this conference is indeed one of the rarest in the world. It is dedicated to a huge legacy of the medieval East not only to inform the general public, but also that it gives impetus to our youth for intellectual development. When I appeal to our youths, I always say that yes, we have a right to be proud of our great ancestors. But at the same time we need to develop and enrich this heritage to make a worthy contribution to this invaluable treasury. In this regard proposals put forward in plenary and breakout panel sessions will help address pressing issues for discussion topics.

I would like to emphasize that we are interested in boosting comprehensive cooperation among our respective and leading foreign universities, scientific and research centers, in which we see one of the main objectives of this conference.

What is particularly important is that cooperation among scientists and experts generates interaction among the younger generation of students and young people, regardless of which corner of the world they live in, study and work.

We would very much like to see such forums organized regularly. A very hospitable people lives in Uzbekistan, and we would like you, our distinguished guests, to feel it, every one of you in their own example. Therefore, we are glad to see you not only in Samarkand and Tashkent, but also in such cities – gems of antiquity as Bukhara, Khiva, Karshi, and others who cherish our history and achievements of ancient civilization.

From this rostrum I would like to express once again my sincere gratitude to the audience in this hall, wish you a fruitful work and a pleasant stay in Uzbekistan, a sound health, every success and the best of luck in your noble endeavors.

Thank you for your attention.

— **Speech 8:** *Text of President Islam Karimov's Speech at the Joint Session of the Legislative Chamber and Senate of Uzbekistan's Oliy Majlis (2015).*

Distinguished deputies!

Distinguished senators!

Dear friends!

It gives me a tremendous pleasure to congratulate you on the victory in the last elections to the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on the high confidence that our people has expressed for you, and wish you all a sound health, happiness and every success in your activities.

In the opinion of the absolute majority from among the more than 70 thousand local and over 340 foreign observers, officials of prominent international organizations who took part in the observation of the vote, the elections passed in conditions of openness, publicity, in full compliance with the norms and standards of international law.

First and foremost, the elections demonstrated a considerably amplified socio-political activity of our public and people, the authority and maturity of political parties as well as civic institutions.

At the same time, the vote became a bright reflection of practical outcomes of democratic transformation and reforms undertaken in our country to safeguard the human rights, freedoms and interests, of building a democratic nation and a robust civil society.

A convincing confirmation of all this is the process of preparations and conduct of elections as well as their results. They were attended by nearly 18 million 500 thousand citizens, or 88.9 percent of people eligible to cast ballot.

It is notable in this regard that in the 22 out of 135 electoral districts, where the pre-elections rivalry of candidates for deputyship of the Legislative Chamber proved especially acute, there were no candidates elected in the first round, and those districts had to vote for the second time, suggestive of the democratic nature of the elections.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank the Central Election Commission of Uzbekistan, local electoral commissions, the thousands of activists, who have done their best to ensure that the elections be carried out in accordance with the law, the norms of our Constitution, universal democratic principles and requirements.

I take a great delight to extend profound gratitude on behalf of our people and me personally to the representatives of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, national elections commissions of many countries, along with experts and observers from abroad who performed a responsible mission.

Distinguished friends!

Today, summarizing the outcomes of the activities of the Oliy Majlis of previous composition, we should evaluate objectively the work of our parliament, which has proved a worthwhile contribution to our achievement of practical results on the way of further enhancing the democratic reforms and building a civil society.

For the past period, more than 140 laws and normative acts were passed in total.

The Concept of Intensification of Democratic Reforms and Formation of Civil Society in the Country, adopted by the Oliy Majlis in November 2010, has indisputably become a strategic program of political and economic reforms that determine our tomorrow's day.

The 27 laws passed in the framework of the Concept, the procedure of their extensive discussion and adoption, proved to be an important factor and an effective input into the further democratization and liberalization of government and management, into securing the independence of the judiciary, freedom of speech and information, freedom of choice and the development of the electoral system and civic institutions.

The amendments introduced to the Constitution in 2011 and 2014 in line with the Concept and to a range of legislative acts approved in the sphere of state building have helped ensure the further

optimization of powers of principal bodies of government – President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Oliy Majlis, the government of the country, the evolution of the mechanisms of checks and balances among the legislative, executive and judicial branches of power.

The essence of reforms in this realm has been the considerable elevation of the role of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, local representative bodies in the system of government, enhancement of independence, powers and at the same time the responsibility of the government and executive bodies for unconditional fulfillment and further reinforcement of practicality of passed laws.

The parliament's special role needs to be stressed in the systemic efforts undertaken in the country to further the democratic reforms and liberalization of the judicial sphere.

About 30 acts of legislation adopted by the parliament have come to be an important factor in securing the rule of law, in consolidating the independence of the judiciary, uplifting the effectiveness of law enforcement system in reliable protection of human rights and freedoms.

The legislature has made a substantial input into the advancement of civil society institutions and the consolidation of independence of mass media. Around 10 acts of legislation adopted in this sphere, including the Law on Citizens' Self-Government Bodies in a new edition, the Law on Social Partnership and other normative acts have considerably bolstered the role and significance of civic institutions in addressing the most critical challenges in the socio-economic development of the country, in boosting the social activity of people and securing the balance of interests in the society.

I would like to note particularly the activities of the Environmental Movement of Uzbekistan.

The life itself has proved the aptness of what was approved in 2008 the decision on granting the representatives of the Movement fifteen deputy seats in the Legislative Chamber.

The parliamentary group of the Movement in the lower house of the parliament has for recent years initiated 9 laws, including the one on Ecological Oversight, instrumental in ensuring the healthcare of the population, protection of the environment, rational use of natural resources, active engagement of civic institutions into this sphere of activity.

The parliament has passed more than 30 acts of legislation who have turned into an important foundation for the further enhancement of democratic and market reforms, liberalization, restructuring of the economy, extensive development of small business, entrepreneurship, farmer movement.

Currently, the Oliy Majlis, on the recommendation of the government, considers annually and endorses the Program of Job Creation and Population Employment, and carries out parliamentary oversight of its implementation. As the outcomes of the realization of the Program demonstrates that more than 980 thousand jobs were created in 2014, including those for youths, graduates of professional colleges.

In general, the created normative base has become, especially amid the ongoing financial and economic crisis in the world, an important factor in the sustainable socio-economic development of the country. The gross domestic product growth rates in Uzbekistan – among the few nations throughout the globe – have been no less than 8 percent within the last ten years. The volumes of industrial production, investments and real incomes of the population have been dynamically increasing.

And we have every right to take pride in results like these.

Also especially noteworthy is the endeavors of the houses of the Oliy Majlis on the introduction of new, modern forms of legislative activity.

The Legislative Chamber for the first time conducted a legal experiment to test the provisions of the Law on the Openness of Activities of Government and Management Bodies. According to foreign experts, the experiment had a unique nature and allowed for the elaboration of modern methods of preparation and adoption of quality acts of legislation meeting contemporary requirements.

I would like to underscore the great contribution of the Institute of Monitoring the Acting Legislation timely set up by us to raising the effectiveness of parliamentary activities. As an independent institution, it exerts a serious influence on the qualitative improvement of the legislative and lawmaking activity. Of particular importance are the efforts undertaken by the Institute to bolster comparative analysis of the acting legislation and study the international experience in lawmaking. Without any doubt, these works allow for finding the best solution of challenges in lawmaking, which requires their further development and creation of essential organizational-technical conditions for that.

Today, one can state with confidence that the goal that we have set for ourselves exactly ten years ago by establishing a bicameral parliament, where the Legislative Chamber works on a constant and professional basis, and the legislative body of territorial representation – Senate – functions, has been achieved to a full extent. The quality of laws has increased, while the balance of regional, sector and national interests is being secured to a growingly effective extent.

Deriving from the fact that we intend to improve the work of the parliament, to cardinally raise the quality of the lawmaking activity with an eye to contemporary requirements, I deem it would be reasonable – while assessing objectively the operation of the Oliy Majlis for the past period – to expound on a few shortcomings that have taken place.

After all, all of us understand well, without any doubt, that if we do not acknowledge and realize the very essence of mistakes and drawbacks, we cannot remove them.

First. It stands to be recognized that the Oliy Majlis attaches insufficient significance to law application, law enforcement practice.

We rarely ask ourselves as to what has changed with the adoption of these laws in our life, how they influence the development, evolution of socio-political, socio-economic and judicial reforms. We speak of, say, liberalization of legislation, but at the same time the results of these efforts can best be evaluated by how these processes of liberalization have been felt by people in their everyday lives, how they are assessed by journalists and observers. It should be acknowledged at the same time that the mechanism of feedback that allows the parliament to build its work with national eye to the fact how the laws passed by it impact the lives of people, the economic and political development practically does not work.

For this reason I believe the pressing issue of today should become the fixation in the laws regulating lawmaking activity of the houses of the Oliy Majlis of such normative and legal mechanisms that would envisage a compulsory examination of processes of delivering the laws to the executors as well as the effectiveness of law enforcement, and thus securing a swift introduction of corrections into the programs of lawmaking, control-analytical works of the houses of the legislature.

Second. As the results of conducted analysis show, often the adopted laws and amendments and addenda to them barely function because of the fact that, first, they do not contain tangible mechanisms of the realization of norms they comprise, and, second, corresponding by-laws without which the provisions of these laws can simply not work are not made or they are made untimely.

In this respect, one can wonder why framework laws that our parliament “loves” to pass do not “land”, are not carried through to enforcement.

I think one of the major reasons here is that when passing laws we rarely ask ourselves a question that should be raised in the very process of its elaboration. That is, how effectively this law will work in the real life. And that is becoming a reason of duplication and contradictions taking place in our legislation and thus it leads to the downgrading of its effectiveness.

Let me cite an example. In accordance with the Concept, we adopted the Law on Stock Companies and Protection of the Rights of Shareholders in its new edition in May 2014. It should be admitted candidly that this law – an important act of legislation in the sphere of corporate management – has not started working to its full. Shareholders, first of all the minority share holders, as the practice shows, have not been using their rights to a full extent; they do not exert influence on the activities of companies.

One of the major reasons here is that administrative-normative, judicial mechanisms that secure its execution were not envisaged in other spheres of law, in particular the administrative, criminal, economic legislation, simultaneously with the adoption of this law. Specifically, the law lacks stipulation of administrative liability of officials for violation of the rights of shareholders.

At the same time, as the experience of countries with advanced system of corporate management, in their legislation the liability and judicial protection cover practically all the field of corporate relations and the procedures associated with it.

We ought to understand very well that the measures taken in the enhancement of market reforms, particularly those stimuli and preferences we envision in laws in order to promote small business, private entrepreneurship, will work only in the case if they are supported by normative institutions of other fields of law mentioned above and, first and foremost, judicial mechanisms of effect.

In modern circumstances it is important to secure the adoption of laws of direct action, codified acts of legislation, a timely passage of by-laws that would ensure full realization of provisions of newly approved laws.

All these issues should become subject to fixed, everyday attention of both houses of the Oliy Majlis. I would like to reiterate: it is primarily the supreme legislative body who passes laws that ought to be interested in not only their unconditional execution, but also in ensuring their consistency, in the systemic nature of legislation, in the full-fledged nature of the system of legal regulation in general.

Third. It is vital to provide for an extensive and effective discussion of bills at the most diverse levels of government and civil society institutions. It is noteworthy that we practically do not bother ourselves with this or do it ceremonially.

Reasons behind this are plenty: we apparently are afraid that the bill during such deliberations will get “overgrown” with new provisions, thus having to change or revise the draft law.

Simultaneously, it is also the ambitions and insufficient professional training of architects of bills that should be taken into account.

It is no secret that practitioners with great experience in the field of their activities sometimes better know the subject of the laws than lawmakers. For the sake of the cause, for the sake of raising the quality and effectiveness of legislation, I believe, it is imperative to hold detailed discussion of draft laws with the engagement of the most extensive circle of scientists, highly qualified specialists and experts.

The wider public and representatives of civic institutions ought to be engaged extensively to the deliberation of bills, especially those acts of legislation and decisions that deal directly with the vital interests and social rights of the population.

What we mean is the comprehensive elevation of the role of citizenry in government of the country. And because the bedrock of government is law, civil society institutions should take the most active part in the lawmaking activity. In this regard, it is essential to secure the openness of the activities of both houses of the parliament, all-round informing of the wider public on the legislature's lawmaking and scrutinizing-analytical works.

Fourth. It is crucial to raise the efforts directed at the discussion and elaboration of draft laws to a qualitatively new level on the basis of their comprehensive, profoundly comparative analysis with foreign legal practice. It is necessary to admit that we fail to attach enough significance to this issue either.

At the same time, this dimension, that is, conduct of various conferences, seminars, round table discussions aimed at studying the expertise of lawmaking activity of democratic nations as well

as comparative analysis of draft laws in the making with models of similar laws passed in advanced foreign countries, would afford us a new material to enrich a concrete bill and our legislation in general. It is for this very reason that such efforts should become in our hands an effective tool in perfecting the lawmaking activities.

All the above mentioned, in its turn, requires considerable elevation of the effectiveness of analytical works carried out in the legislature, the level of training, information awareness, competence – in a word, the proficiency of the deputies. In this respect, securing a constant uplifting of the level of professionalism of lawmakers should become the most critical element for the entire five-year period this Oliy Majlis is to function.

Fifth. Comprehensive bolstering of the role and significance of groups of political parties in the parliament and the further consistent evolution of the multiparty system in general is coming to be a critical challenge in the activity of the Legislative Chamber. We have every reason today to stress the importance of the 2007 Constitutional Law on Boosting the Role of Political Parties in the Renewal and Further Democratization of Government and Modernization of the Country.

That law offered a clear-cut definition of the legal status of the parliamentary group of a political party, including – for the first time – the status of parliamentary majority and parliamentary opposition, its exclusive rights and guarantees of effective activity. The role of the deputy groups in representative bodies of government has been notably bolstered for overseeing the activities of local government bodies. These and a range of other fundamental provisions of the law have exerted an immense influence on the development and consolidation of actual multiparty system in the country.

It is important that it is in the Oliy Majlis – the parliament and the local representative bodies that emerging contradictions among parliamentary groups and individual deputies ought not to be glossed over, and that it should be the very platform for keen debates, rigorous rivalry built on the promotion of interests and policy goals of political parties, and the views of deputies in the end.

To be sure, we all understand that discussions and competition of ideas and programs, alternative bills should focus on fundamental, critical socio-economic and political issues on serious and professional basis.

Sixth. I would like to make a special stress on the issue of initiative-driven nature and activeness of parliamentary groups and individual deputies.

We cannot deem it normal that for the last five years only 19 out of 140 laws passed by the parliament were initiated by the deputies of the Legislative Chamber. Moreover, as few as 3 of them were new, holistic acts of legislation, while the remaining 16 dealt with the introduction of individual amendments and addenda, by and large of juridical-technical character, into the acting laws.

I think you will agree with me that in contemporary circumstances the activities of parliamentary groups and their deputies concerning the initiation and promotion of bills that the nation is in need ought to be cardinally revised. The activities should be more proactive and substantive, and they should be built with an eye to the interests and directives of political parties of those groups and their electorate.

At the same time, postures of political parties and their parliamentary groups on laws, the essence of inter-group discussions on vitally important issues of socio-political and socio-economic development should in full be brought to the notice of the wider public and the electorate. It is in this very element that the essence of democratic organization of power, power of the people, parliamentarianism lies.

I think it would hardly be redundant to point out that the activeness of mass media on this front also leaves much to be desired.

There are also such facts when individual lawmakers just avoid meeting with representatives of media, including the television.

Seventh. In the context of constitutional reforms, the work of both houses of the Oliy Majlis, first and foremost that of parliamentary groups, should be built on a qualitatively new basis on the conduct of parliamentary oversight of the activities of government bodies, of unconditional execution of laws passed, of the most important national programs of socio-economic and socio-political development.

As the results of research demonstrate, for the past five years only 7 requests on certain social issues were addressed to various government bodies by both houses of the legislature. There is little need today to say that in new constitutional circumstances, parliamentary hearings, systematic reports of government members, of heads of government bodies and management agencies on the state of affairs in the execution of requirements of legislation, detailed responses to the requests of deputies ought to become everyday parliamentary practice.

A critical challenge is the cardinal improvement of the work of lawmakers with the electorate, introduction of modern methods of parliamentary scrutiny into the activities of both houses, including the oversight of the formation and execution of the National Budget, the most central economic document of the country.

These and a whole range of other contemporary methods and forms of carrying out controlling functions of the houses of the Oliy Majlis should be systemically and clearly fixed in the draft law on Parliamentary Oversight widely discussed currently by the expert community of the country.

Eighth. Boosting the effectiveness of interaction between the Legislative Chamber and the Senate of Oliy Majlis remains as the most crucial task.

Expounding on this subject, I deem it essential to underscore that the two houses of the parliament is a holistic system, a single integrated legislative body of the nation. It should be admitted frankly that in the past, in the beginning of the practical activity of the bicameral parliament there were instances whereby instead of leading a joint work dedicated to achieve common ends, defining the meaning of the legislative activity, the two houses were often in confrontation over what house is more competent and better understands the essence and significance of laws adopted.

As a result of setting up a coordinating council for the organization of interaction of house of the Oliy Majlis comprising their representatives, as well as a range of other organizational-normative measures approved in recent years, that problem is currently out of agenda. I think it would be reasonable to continue working on this front in order to prevent such misunderstandings among the deputies and senators of our legislature from now on.

Dear people's deputies and senators, participants of the session!

Objectively assessing the developments unfolding in the world one must note that we cannot stay aloof of the mounting tension and risks, of the growing geopolitical confrontation, the intensifying struggle for spheres of influence, radicalism, terrorism and extremism.

In an increasingly aggravating situation as such, we in Uzbekistan, like in many other nations, in order to impede real threats to peace and security, preserve the peace and stability in the country, of the environment of mutual understanding and harmony, to be ready for any possible challenges of contemporary times, have defined our principled stance and policy clearly and plainly.

Along with this, the world community is well aware of the security principles and posture stipulated in the Constitutional Law on the Approval of the Concept of Foreign Policy Activity of the Republic of Uzbekistan, adopted in 2012.

In this regard, it is imperative to stress again that we consider it our primary task to further cement the kind relations and mutually advantageous cooperation with all the countries, first and foremost with our neighbors. Crucially, Uzbekistan has always been and remains to be an advocate of peace-loving policy that envisages, first of all, non-alignment to any kind of military blocs, barring the deployment of foreign military bases in our territory and the deployment of our military service men and women beyond the borders of the country.

Amid the international situation unfolding today, it is this very approach is the most correct and optimal for us.

Dear deputies and senators!

I congratulate you again. Be worth of the high confidence of our people. I wish you a robust health, every success and the best of luck in the lawmaking activity, happiness and wellbeing to your families.

Distinguished deputies!

Distinguished senators!

Now we have to exchange views on another critical issue.

Article 98 of our Constitution and the corresponding laws adopted on its basis clearly define the order of nominating the candidacy for the position of the Prime Minister by a political party who has garnered the greatest number of deputy seats in the elections for the Legislative Chamber of the parliament, of consideration of that candidate by the President, its discussion and approval by both houses of the Oliy Majlis.

The functions, legitimate powers and responsibility of the Prime Minister are fixed in the Basic Law.

All of us know well that in accordance with the latest amendments and addenda introduced to the Constitution, the tasks, powers – in a word, the responsibility of the Prime Minister and the executive branch – have been expanded to a great extent.

It is by no means a secret to anyone that when we deal with nominating and endorsing the candidate to the post of the Prime Minister, we all understand that it is a rather intricate and responsible issue.

To nominate to this position of a person wielding profound knowledge, extensive thinking, great life experience and organizational skills, hardened in diverse trials – in a word, an exigent person competent in issues relating to the development of the country, a person willing to assume responsibility for the realization of wide-ranging projects, crucially, the one capable of managing dialogue with people in any circumstances, able to win authority, the one distinct with his/her human qualities – all this is indisputably a thorny and difficult challenge.

In this regard I believe the candidacy proposed for your consideration should be a person who has made a worthwhile contribution to the achievement of high goals by our nation today with real outcomes of his/her activities.

And, however hard be it to find such an individual who would meet all these requirements, taking into account all the views voiced and the conclusions made, I propose Shavkat Miromonovich Mirziyoev, who has been active in the position of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, for this post.

I think you, dear deputies and senators, know this person very well.

During his leadership activity, Shavkat Mirziyoev occupied various responsible posts, has won authority with his great organizational abilities and practical experience. He is well known by hokims of all regions and districts, heads of all levels, and our entire people.

I am convinced that you, people's representatives, distinguished deputies and senators, will support this candidate.

— **Speech 9:** *On President Islam Karimov's speech at the UN General Assembly in New York (1993).*

“The specifics of our region and its geopolitical location are such that it can become one of the major detonators of instability in the world,” Karimov said, addressing those present at the 48th session of the UN General Assembly.

“Clashes in this region can trigger catastrophes of unpredictable proportions ... It is a matter of great concern to us that a huge volume of modern weapons are accumulating in an uncontrolled fashion in conflict areas. Where do they come from and how do they get into the hands of extremists and terrorists? What should be done by the global community to stop this flow of weapons into internal conflict zones? These issues, affecting the interests of the people, the fate of nations and the lives of millions are waiting for an answer,” Karimov said.

“...The scale and potential of this conflict, the deadly consequences that it could have for the whole world, have not yet been fully realized.” Karimov said in his 1993 UN address.

— **Speech 10:** *President Islam Karimov's Speech at the International Conference in Tashkent (2013).*

President Islam Karimov's Speech at the International Conference in Tashkent

Tashkent, Uzbekistan (UzDaily.com) -- President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam

Karimov attended the opening ceremony of the international conference “Modern housing construction as a driving force of comprehensive development and transformation of rural areas, enhancing the living standards of population” at Tashkent’s Palace of Symposiums on April 17.

Following is the text of his keynote speech.

Dear conference participants, ladies and gentlemen!

It gives me a great pleasure to welcome you, our dear guests, representatives of prominent international organizations and financial institutions – the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, ASEAN, UNESCO and other agencies, the heads of major companies and leading specialists in the field of housing construction – all the participants of this conference, and express my deepest respect to all of you and our sincere appreciation for your participation in the this forum.

Today, there is obviously no need to expound on the relevance of this conference designed to address the role of housing construction in rural areas, given the enormous significance this area has been acquiring not only in terms of tackling pressing social issues, but also as the most important factor contributing to balanced and sustainable

growth of many construction-related industries and the economy in general.

It is no accident that in the advanced nations, the share of investments into housing account for between 20 and 40 percent in the overall structure of investments, according to expert centers.

Housing construction and development of related sectors of economy are one of the important links in the formation and sustainability of the financial system, the source of a sound resource base and assets of banks.

In the current context of the ongoing global financial and economic crisis, this circumstance acquires a particular importance.

It is no secret that one of the major obstacles to recovery from the global financial and economic crisis, with sufficient provision of loan funds is that these funds do not reach the end user – the real sector of the economy, despite the fact that the level of interest rates in the countries-issuers of major reserve currencies are extremely low. It is hard to believe, but in some cases these rates reach zero values.

In short, the availability of sufficient loans is not becoming, unfortunately, an impetus and stimulus for economic recovery due to many circumstances, and in the first place – the pendency of grave problems that led to the global financial and economic crisis of

2008.

Under these conditions, housing and concomitant infrastructure - public and social sector, transport and communications networks, production of modern building materials and structures - is the direction that can and should serve as one of the most sensitive and effective areas of application of capital and investments, and a solution to one of the most intricate and painful social issues, namely, population employment. The historical experience of many countries confirms the fact that the choice of the sphere of housing and infrastructure as a priority development was a key instrument for national economic recovery.

Thus, during the Great Depression of the 1930s in the United States, President Roosevelt spearheaded a system of individual housing loans, which played a decisive role in the resumption of economic growth.

Similar programs in due time in order to stimulate economic recovery have been adopted in Germany, the UK, the Scandinavian and other countries.

Dear conference contributors!

Before proceeding to the nature and content of the model implemented in Uzbekistan – a comprehensive program of housing construction in rural areas, allow me to very

briefly speak about issues of concern, the real state of affairs that prevailed until recently in this critical area of economic and social development and modernization of the country.

The feature that had characterized this sphere is its almost unmanageable nature, in other words, unauthorized construction flourished bitterly.

What did it mean in practice?

In rural areas, houses used to be built without master plans for building settlements, there were no clearly defined standard housing projects, taking into account the specific natural and climatic features, the national traditions of the Uzbek family.

Villager is the customer and the developer at the same time, deriving from his limited capacities, as well as the constant lack of construction materials, given the virtual absence of rural-developed construction industry, was left to himself, in other words, houses were built out of scrap materials – usually bricks of raw clay, without the wooden floors, and asbestos slate was used mainly as the roof.

In homes built without a master plan, there were serious problems in terms of maintenance of municipal facilities, water connection, electricity and gas.

All this is not to mention the problems to owners of newly built housing with providing for

healthcare facilities, schools, kindergartens, shops, markets, access to roads – all the infrastructure that is needed to create normal conditions and comfort for families.

If we take into account that the rural areas of Uzbekistan are currently home to about 50 percent of the population, that is, about 15 million people, it is easy to imagine the scale and scope of the difficult problems we face today in this area.

Here one must take into account that in the countryside alone, more than 150 thousand families are created in Uzbekistan every year, and throughout the years of our independent development more than 2 million 600 thousand new young families have been created in rural areas who are in need of proper housing. In this regard, the challenge put forth by life itself has become obvious today, that is, to fundamentally review the approaches that have existed over the years, as well as methods and practices of individual housing construction in rural areas.

What are the principal features, urgency and relevance of the individual housing construction of model projects in rural areas currently realized in Uzbekistan?

One of the important issues that need to be addressed in the first place is the fundamental review and transformation of the legislative, legal and regulatory framework for housing development.

Basing on the principle of the inviolability of private property guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in the adoption of the Housing and Urban Development Code and the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Mortgage” and other laws and regulations, we fixed the owner’s right to own and inherit perpetual dwelling house along with the land on which it is built.

I would especially like to point out that the villagers’ land for individual housing construction are allocated for free on the rights of lifelong inheritance, on the rate of 0.06 hectares per household, that the conditions of our limited land resources is crucial.

In accordance with the approved regulations, the construction of housing estates in the countryside is based on model projects developed and approved by the owners simultaneously in conjunction with the construction of facilities engineering and communication, social and market infrastructure. Prerequisite is the laying of roads, internal communication networks – water, gas and electricity from the national and local budgets.

Given the number of people expected to be living in new residential areas, schools, nurseries, rural medical centers, shopping facilities and sports facilities are built on standard designs.

The organization and implementation of rural services and new types of e-services deserves special attention in the development of residential complexes, along with engineering and communications infrastructure.

What would I like to suggest by this?

The talk is that, together with the construction of new modern homes, the farmhouse, the rural family welcomes the fresh air of the latest computers, information and communication technologies, advanced telecommunications, the Internet.

What is important is that these types of services that are almost new for rural population not only meet the needs of people, but at the same time provide jobs for tens of thousands of young men and women who have received the latest knowledge and profession in rural vocational colleges.

Can you imagine what that means for our children, for the younger generation? It is almost impossible to convey it in words.

I want to draw your attention to the mechanism of individual housing loans. The villager, by having chosen a model project of the home, transfers his funds to the bank as a down payment of 25 percent of the value of the house with the provision of preferential mortgage loan on favorable terms – a 15-year grace period with an annual repayment of

debt at a reduced interest rate of 7 percent, well below the rate of the Central Bank, established at 12 percent per annum.

For the implementation of the works on the construction of private housing in the countryside, a holistic institutional system is created.

Design of model homes, development of a plan of integrated development of residential areas, the construction of social and engineering infrastructure is entrusted on the specialized design and survey institute Qishloq Qurilish Loyiha. It also performs supervision over the construction process.

Loans funding the construction of individual housing on standard designs are provided by the Joint-Stock Commercial Bank Qishloq Qurilish Bank specially created for these purposes, the authorized capital of which to date has reached the equivalent of about 130 million US dollars.

For the period the bank has existed, which is 4 years, they have issued 23.6 thousand rural mortgage loans worth over 677 million dollars in equivalent.

Bank loans are not only for the population, but also for construction companies who are erecting housing and industrial and social infrastructure in rural areas, as well as manufacturing companies that produce new advanced materials and structures used in

rural construction.

In the implementation of the programs of individual housing construction in rural areas, actively involved in the country are other banks, too: the National Bank for Foreign Economic Activity and the Ipotekabank JSMB.

All works on the “turnkey” construction of housing on model projects is provided by the specialized engineering company Qishloq Qurilish Invest with branches in every region of the country, which acts as a single customer, and ensures the implementation of a common policy on building high-quality residential areas in the countryside.

At the same time in the regions of the country we have created more than 900 new specialized construction contracting organizations which today employ about 20,000 construction workers, and more than 60 enterprises for the production of modern building materials and constructions, wood floors, window frames, roofing materials, etc.

An extensive system of privileges and preferences has been created for them.

Villagers – developers of residential homes through the loans of the Qishloq Qurilish Bank are exempt from income taxes to repay the mortgage loan and interest accrued thereon. In addition, they are exempt from paying property tax to the acquired property until their mortgage is repaid in full.

The engineering company Qishloq Qurilish Invest, contractors and specialized enterprises producing construction materials involved in the construction of housing in rural areas are exempt from the payment of all taxes and mandatory contributions to state funds, as well as customs duties for imported construction equipment and minor mechanization tools.

As a result, it has been possible to significantly reduce the cost of new housing to the villagers, one square meter of which today costs an average of 2 times lower than the cost of housing in the cities.

I want to draw your attention that just as a result of the implementation of special programs for housing of model projects in rural areas in 2009-2012, 650 new rural residential areas have been created in 159 rural districts of the country, more than 23.6 thousand individual residential buildings with a total area of 3,2 million square meters have been commissioned. For these purposes the equivalent of over 1.2 billion dollars of investment has been assigned. 732 kilometers of paved roads, more than a thousand social and market infrastructure facilities have been built.

The extent of rural population access to clean drinking water from centralized networks is currently 75.8 percent and to natural gas is 76.2 percent.

Large-scale construction of housing in the countryside in the growing volumes is envisaged to be implemented in the current year. Already started and is actively under construction are the 353 rural quarters, which provides for 10,000 comfortable homes on standard design on the area of 1.4 million square meters, 17.5 percent up from over last year, more than 300 kilometers of water networks and more than 280 kilometers of power networks are to be introduced, about 240 kilometers of access roads to be laid, a broad network of social and market infrastructure is to be built. For these purposes, a total of about one billion dollars of investment is to be channeled in 2013.

With the increase in rural construction, the modern construction industry and new jobs are being created in rural areas, the employment of population is being ensured with steadily increasing incomes and wealth.

Particularly valuable for us is the fact that on the basis of a new class of property owners created, the appearance of the village is dramatically transforming before our eyes, the public culture is growing, lifestyle is changing, so is the mindset and mentality of the citizens of the country.

The subject of our pride and joy is the new generation growing in the new modern context, a new generation of harmoniously developed, educated, independent-minded

children free of all the prejudices of the past, confident in their future.

One can in fact be proud of this kind of generation and build the most daring plans with it.

With great satisfaction would I like to note that in the implementation of programs for individual housing construction in rural areas reputable international financial institutions and organizations have been taking an active part, such as the Asian Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank, the World Bank and others. In 2011, the Board of Directors of the Asian Development Bank approved the Multi-Tranche Financing of the project “Development of housing construction in rural areas in Uzbekistan” for a total of 500 million dollars, of which the first tranche of 160 million dollars was allocated in 2012, and the second tranche of the loan amounting to 200 million dollars will be transferred this year.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my deep gratitude from this podium to the leadership of the Asian Development Bank and other international institutions for their invaluable support afforded to the implementation of this strategic task for us.

Dear participants of the conference!

Ladies and gentlemen!

The program of individual housing construction in rural areas developed in Uzbekistan, and our understanding of it would not be complete if we were to consider it in isolation from the tremendous process of democratic changes and renewal taking place in our country.

Today, we can confidently say that the dynamic progress of Uzbekistan on our chosen path of formation of socially oriented democratic state, deeply thought out and consistently implemented priorities of political, economic and social reforms, the choice of an evolutionary, gradual transformation strategy have created that solid and reliable foundation which serves to secure sustainable and dynamic development of the national economy, ensure consistent growth in incomes and living standards, the growing international prestige of the country.

Let me cite some figures in this regard.

Despite the global financial and economic crisis, Uzbekistan has been one of the few countries in the world to achieve sustained high rates of growth. Only in the last 6 years, the annual rate of GDP growth has amounted to 8 per cent, with stable government budget surpluses and sufficient foreign reserves, external debt remains low, which does not exceed 12 percent of GDP.

A characteristic feature of the state budget continues to be its social orientation. About 60 percent of all government spending is directed to the funding of social development, including more than 34 percent to education, more than 15 percent the sphere of public health.

Reliable and stable has been the financial and banking system. Today the capital adequacy of banks is 24 percent, which is 3 times higher than the accepted international standards, and the liquidity of the banking system on the basis of 2012 figures is more than 2 times higher than the required minimum level.

Every year, hundreds of large investment projects are realized to create new, modern production facilities, modernization and technological renovation of existing enterprises.

Compared with the year 2000, annual investment in the country has increased 4 times in the past few years at an average of at least 12 billion dollars, of which almost 78 percent, please pay attention to it, funded from internal sources, including 21 percent of total investments are formed by the deposits of the population.

Thus in 2012, more than 22 percent of all investments, or more than 2.5 billion US dollars was made up of foreign investment, of which about 80 percent is foreign direct investment, which demonstrates the growing confidence of foreign investors in

Uzbekistan, to the conditions created here for doing business.

The amount of savings in banks in the year 2012 grew by 35 percent, and against 2000, they increased 60 times.

We established the Fund for Reconstruction and Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the capital of which has now reached 15 billion US dollars.

All of this is yet another confirmation of solid progress being made in Uzbekistan on the way to further our goal, that is, to join the ranks of modern democratic and economically developed countries, to provide its people a decent standard of living and a worthy place in the world community.

Dear friends!

We are well aware of the fact that in the present forum it is hardly possible to completely and exhaustively discuss all questions submitted for consideration, to cover all aspects of this multifaceted topic.

In forming our strategy of further bolstering housing development in the countryside, it will be a very useful and important for us to hear the comments and suggestions made by the participants of the conference in view of the valuable experience gained in other countries.

I would like to emphasize that Uzbekistan is interested in expanding cooperation with all international organizations and financial institutions, foreign banks and companies, scientists and experts in the implementation of the task, namely, a radical transformation of the village, a further gradual increase in the level and quality of life of the rural population, approaching the standards of advanced countries.

In your face, our dear guests and participants of the international conference, we primarily see people genuinely interested in the success of the ongoing reforms in Uzbekistan and the modernization of the country, and I take this opportunity to once again express my great respect and sincere appreciation.

I wish all participants a fruitful and creative work and a pleasant stay in the hospitable land of Uzbekistan, a sound health and every success in your jobs.

Thank you for attention.

— **Speech 11:** *Islam Karimov's speech at the inauguration ceremony of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the joint meeting of Chambers of the Oliy Majlis (2015).*

Dear compatriots, dear deputies of Oliy Majlis!

Dear guests!

It gives me great pleasure in addressing you, the deputies of the Legislative Chamber and members of the Senate, and through you to all our people, to express my sincere gratitude to all compatriots who have high confidence in me by electing the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Take this opportunity I express you, my dear, my high respect and esteem, I wish you health, happiness and prosperity.

Confidence in me I consider primarily as a great responsibility and a great honor, and once again I want to assure – I will put all my strength, dedicate my life to justify such a high, incomparable people's trust.

Dear friends!

We completely abandon the old, the obsolete totalitarian regime and becoming masters of our own destiny, have set before ourselves important objectives such as the construction of a new, democratic state and civil society, free to anyone and in no way inferior, prosperous life. Today, as a result of large-scale changes and reforms being implemented consistently by us in this way, we have achieved such great success and high goals, which no one can deny.

The most important factor of all our achievements, of course, became our evolutionary and incremental development path of Uzbekistan selected by us, based on five principles known and recognized throughout the world as the “Uzbek model” of reforms, and today life itself proves how correct is this way.

On the advantages and effectiveness of our model of development evidenced by the fact that it fully takes into account the natural, historical, national, demographic and environmental features characteristic of Uzbekistan, and it is fully justified itself in practice.

For example, if we talk about agriculture, we have given priority to the development of farmers' movement, based on the lease land, have actively supported this process, and thanks to all of this farmers' movement, it is safe to say, leave a bright trace in our recent history. Today, our farmers not only produce 90-92 % of the country's agricultural production, but also become more and more social and political movement, taking the responsibility for the development and future of our village.

Or if you take a small business and private entrepreneurship, it is now in this area produced 56 percent of gross domestic product and employs 75-77 percent of the total employed population.

Of course, our achievements, as reflected in such vivid terms and figures, will provide a powerful impetus towards deepening the reforms implemented by us, a solid foundation of tomorrow and the future development of the country.

Today, we have every reason to say – exactly due to the implementation of these reforms, we provide sustainable growth in the economy of Uzbekistan. In the last 10 years, the rate of growth of gross domestic product annually exceed 8 percent. Given the fact that, according to our calculations, in the current, 2015, these rates will remain at the same level, I think everything is even more evident.

In this regard, we can not say that at the heart of all our great successes primarily lies a fundamental change in consciousness and thinking, the growth of political and legal culture of

our people, our selfless and courageous people, has seen a lot in his lifetime. The main thing is the most reliable support for us is our youth, surely part of life as a decisive force, possessing modern knowledge and professions independently and re-thinking, the ability to take responsibility for the future of the country.

However, I would like all of us do not forget one important truth.

If we are satisfied with the progress and frontiers, addict to the self-complacency and euphoria, we can make the biggest, I must say, unforgivable mistake.

We all know that the world is developing, does not stand still, especially when you consider that we live in the XXI century – century of intellectual labor, the Internet and globalization, and rapidly changing time constantly reminds us of this.

Continuing on a global scale financial-economic crisis, competition and confrontation becoming more severe, such threats and challenges, as radicalism, terrorism and extremism are intensifying, require from all of us, above all, a greater cohesion, further mobilization of our forces and capabilities.

Of course, in the framework of the ongoing great work before us today the most urgent task is to speed up and improve the efficiency of democratic reforms, which radically changing our lives.

When we talk about this, of particular importance to us is the removal of the remaining totalitarian regime stereotypes, solving of a variety of current problems, the consistent implementation of the adopted laws and further deepening of the reforms.

First of all, we have to raise to a new, higher level of reform in the field of freedom of expression and information, human rights and freedoms, to further improve the legal system, the development of civil society, and it should be noted that in these areas there is still a lot to do.

It's no secret that if we do not ensure the competitiveness of our economy, i.e. modernizing and diversifying the industrial areas and spheres, their technical and technological renewal, the global market, and tomorrow – the domestic market will also not accept our products.

We all should be well aware of this truth.

Therefore, if we care about tomorrow, our future, we must openly admit that without further deepening wide-ranging reforms, being implemented in our economy, especially structural reforms, without deciding the question of its rise to a new, modern level, it is impossible to talk about achieving our most important goal – to enter the number of advanced democracies.

A key task for us is to remove all barriers and constraints to the development of private property and private enterprise, which are as enshrined in our Constitution, a priority area of diversified economy.

It must be emphasized that in the past years we have carried out a lot of work and continue to provide a solid legal framework and reliable safeguards to protect private property and private property owners, including the provision of benefits and preferences to small businesses and private entrepreneurship.

However, despite all the well-known benefits of private ownership as compared to the state, the work carried out in this area, unfortunately, was not able to completely solve the problem of providing the necessary freedom to private owners, and not giving the expected results.

That is why we must reduce to strategically and economically reasonable size and the level of the share of state presence in the economy.

Another challenge before us – we must abandon all forms of still existing administrative-command system, clear division of tasks and powers between public authorities, business and the private sector, go to the exchange system of trading operations, with the exception of retail trade.

Along with this, there should also be made appropriate adjustments in our corporate activities or joint stock association taking into account the experience of leading foreign firms and companies.

Our experience has shown that in Uzbekistan the most efficient, optimal and justifying itself is such an option, when the owners of the shares are also foreign investors in addition to domestic ones. It's advantage lies in the fact that foreign shareholders – founders, in addition to equipping joint venture with high-tech equipment, also implement modern methods of organization and management.

In this regard, I want to reiterate that we are open for further development of cooperation with foreign countries and companies, we are ready to create new, broader conditions and opportunities for this.

Consistent deepening of ongoing fundamental reforms, planned for 2015 and beyond, maintaining stable economic growth will undoubtedly serve to a qualitative improvement in the structure of government and a significant increase in the competitiveness of our economy, gaining by Uzbekistan its rightful place on the world stage.

Dear friends, compatriots!

I consider it necessary to dwell on one very important issue, which is certainly of concern to all of us.

We live in troubled, increasingly tense time when amplified various threats and challenges that may lead to unpredictable consequences.

Given all this, in order to preserve peace and tranquility and prosperity of our people prevailing today in our country, the integrity of our borders, we must consider as our primary objective – the further strengthening of friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation with the countries of near and far abroad.

I consider it my duty to reiterate – Uzbekistan never join to any military-political blocs, will not allow the deployment of foreign military bases on its territory, staying of our soldiers abroad.

In the current difficult situation today around us, we believe exactly such a position, such a policy most correct for ourselves, the only true. As I said earlier, our people, first of all, need peace and tranquility, and we have to fight for it.

Taking this opportunity, allow me, on my behalf and on behalf of all our people to express my deep gratitude to our supporters who provide assistance, foreign states and international organizations, which strengthen friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation with us, their representatives, all foreign guests present here today.

I express my sincere gratitude to the heads of state, political and public figures, to send their congratulations on the election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan me.

Again and again I bow to my people, which provided me such a high confidence.

Faithfully and selflessly, with filial love to serve our noble and generous people – is truly a great honor and a great happiness for me.

I wish all of you, my dear, peace and prosperity, success and good luck!

— **Speech 12:** *Путь к независимости: Проблемы и планы (1996).*

Приезжайте почаще в Узбекистан, встречайтесь с людьми, изучайте наши проблемы, успехи, накапливаемый опыт. Мы всегда рады видеть у себя настоящих профессионалов, честно рассказывающих о событиях, происходящих в одной из крупнейших стран Центральной Азии.

Поэтому я сторонник того, чтобы вы были не только в Москве, но и в Ташкенте. Не надо забывать о том, что Ташкент не только столица Узбекистана, он - ворота Востока. Его геополитическое положение, его традиции города-миротворца создали нашей столице славу и известность во всем мире. Так что я поддерживаю ваше стремление открыть здесь свои офисы.

Каковы перспективы сотрудничества и интеграции в рам-ках Содружества независимых государств, есть ли у него будущее? Или вам более выгодно строить среднеазиатский рынок?

ПРЕЗИДЕНТ: Одно другому не должно мешать и противоречить. У СНГ есть будущее. Невозможно разорвать многолетние экономические связи между ныне суверенными государствами. Но их нужно строить на цивилизованной основе, без какого-либо давления с любой стороны. Отношения должны строиться только на взаимовыгодной основе.

Что касается понятия "государства Центральной Азии" которое появилось в январе в Ташкенте, то это объективный, закономерный процесс. Народы, проживающие в этом регионе, объединены общностью истории, культуры, языка, религии. Исторические корни наших народов настолько сращены друг с другом и современные их реалии настолько схожи, что мы только сообща, в тесном сотрудничестве будем искать пути выхода из нынешнего кризиса. И мы сообща будем думать об использовании наших природных богатств, что является вполне естественным процессом. Я не случайно говорил о Ташкенте как о городе, имеющем особый статус. Так что вполне логично он избран информационным центром региона, откуда будет распространяться по всей планете оперативная информация. Надеюсь, что вас это тоже должно заинтересовать.

Есть еще одна причина повышенного внимания к Узбекистану. Дело в том, что наша республика занимает центральное место в Среднеазиатском регионе.

Будущее региона во многом зависит от Узбекистана.

Выбором пути развития, который сделает народ Узбекистана, предопределяется вероятность выбора того же пути в наших соседних государствах.

Это, в свою очередь, налагает на каждого из нас особую ответственность.

Теперь хотелось бы сказать несколько слов о месте Узбекистана в Содружестве независимых государств. Хотя кое-кто, погадав на кофейной гуще, предсказывал скорый конец Содружества. Ташкентская встреча показала истинную цену этих пророчеств.

Ташкент верен своему историческому предназначению города-миротворца, создателя и хранителя "духа Ташкент-". Майская встреча руководителей государств и правительств в

столице Узбекистана, итоги этой встречи послужили упрочению Содружества. Это, в свою очередь, способствовало росту международного авторитета нашей республики.

Один из руководителей государства - члена СНГ сказал: "Ташкентская встреча была самой плодотворной из всех прошедших встреч". Эта оценка представляется нам весьма примечательной.

Договор о взаимной коллективной безопасности - самое большое достижение Ташкентской встречи.

— **Speech 13:** *Узбекский народ никогда и ни от кого не будет зависеть (2005).*

НИКТО НЕ СМОЖЕТ СВЕРНУТЬ НАС С ИЗБРАННОГО ПУТИ. Заявление и ответы на вопросы корреспондентов на пресс-конференции для республиканских и зарубежных средств массовой информации в связи с событиями, происшедшими в городе Андижане 12-13 мая 2005 г. Стр. 158

ПО ПУТИ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ И СТАБИЛЬНОСТИ В РЕГИОНЕ. Выступление на саммите Шанхайской организации сотрудничества, 5 июля 2005 г стр. 256

В соответствии с первым вариантом, сторонником которого я являюсь, перспектива СНГ видится, прежде всего, в реализации модели Европейского Союза. Этот Союз создавался начиная с 1947 года, когда был учрежден «Концерн угля и стали». Я, конечно, подчеркнул, что должны быть привнесены и элементы других моделей, развитых азиатских стран и т.д.

Но модель Европейского Союза является лично для меня привлекательной. Конечно, она не нравится господину Лукашенко и еще кое-кому. Но я четко высказал свою точку зрения.

По-моему, наиболее перспективен этот путь развития. Он может оживить СНГ, дать ему новое дыхание. Перспектива, когда каждый член Содружества сможет найти свое достойное место, — это развитие по модели Европейского Союза.

Более того, я предложил на пути к такому союзу создать, в первую очередь, зону свободной торговли. И только после этого можно будет переходить к дальнейшей перспективе, подчеркиваю, долгосрочной перспективе - к созданию единого экономического пространства, о чем (200)

(201) сегодня так пекутся четыре государства. Но, повторяю, только создав зону свободной торговли, можно выйти на этап создания единого экономического пространства.

Ну и, разумеется, в области развития демократии и строительства гражданского общества мы должны будем перенимать стандарты Европейского Союза. Это мое твердое убеждение. Те демократические ценности - система образования, социальные гарантии, социальные права населения, которые присущи Европейскому Союзу, полностью подходят для нас. Я, конечно, не говорю о слепом копировании этой системы. У нас свой менталитет, свои проблемы, и мы будем учитывать это.

Вторая альтернатива, о которой я сказал, -

СНГ сохранится в том же аморфном виде, в котором оно сегодня существует. Это, конечно, кому-то и нравится, но мне, например, нет. Мне кажется, что мы должны собираться не для того, чтобы просто поговорить, сделать разные заявления и, как говорится, «попиарить». Знаете, это сейчас очень модно - использовать трибуну СНГ, чтобы выступить с очередной громкой инициативой. Выдвинуть инициативу ради выдвижения. Потом долго рекламировать по телевидению с помощью своих журналистов, как сей государственный муж здорово выступил, какие

(203) критические замечания сделал и т.п. А на поверку оказывается, что это было повторение того, о чем было сказано уже сотни раз.

Может быть еще и третий вариант - СНГ прекратит существование, его вообще не будет, он просто уйдет в историю, а отношения между государствами-участниками будут поддерживаться только на двусторонней основе.

Вот три варианта перспективы СНГ. Я склоняюсь к первому варианту. И думаю, что народ нашей страны полностью поддержит меня. В таком случае, т.е. когда население нашей страны, состоящее в основном из мусульман, поддержит именно европейскую модель построения СНГ, то это явится несомненным нашим успехом.

Думаю, на этом можно закончить. Спасибо за внимание.

14 мая 2005 года, Ташкент, Аксарай.

В регион стали стекаться эмиссары от всевозможных и не всегда безобидных течений мусульманской религии. На каждом шагу предлагали строить ме-чети, и строили, пока мы не опомнились. Это делается и у наших соседей, вы знаете. Ну, на-пример, в Южном

Казахстане сейчас 1 500 ме-четей, из них 500 не имеют регистрации. Предлагают кредит, а то и вовсе бесплатно построить мечеть.

Повторяю, пользуясь идеологическим вакуумом после краха коммунистических идей, «Хизб-ут-Тахрир» пустил глубокие корни в странах Центральной Азии, а в Узбекистане - в Ферганской долине. В городе Ташкенте тоже такие проявления есть. Эти люди, разумеется, нам известны. (184)

Возвращаясь к событиям в Андижане, хочу отметить, что среди боевиков были представители соседних стран. Если бы не было помощи извне, если бы не было долгой подготовки, у них ничего не получилось бы. (181)

Попытки развивать демократию, попытки ускорить, форсировать демократические процессы в странах, которые из-за определенных исторических условий в настоящее время пока далеки от стандартов демократии, попытки искусственно насаждать идеалы демократии могут привести к обратному результату - к возникновению ситуации, которой может воспользоваться третья сила. И эта третья сила - радикальный ислам.

В Центральноазиатском регионе, где не менее 80% населения исповедует ислам, такая ситуация может стать очень удобным случаем для разного рода и масти экстремистов и так называемых исламистов. Да, мы должны стремиться к тому, за что ратуют Запад, страны развитой демократии. Но сегодня даже такой признанный сторонник демократии, как Збигнев Бжезинский, признает, что нельзя экспортировать или импортировать демократию. Это может привести к серьезным трагическим последствиям. (180)

Первое. Быстро меняющаяся обстановка и сохраняющиеся угрозы дестабилизации ситуации в отдельных странах и в целом регионе Центральной Азии, возможности и ресурсы, которыми располагают стоящие за всем этим силы, не могут не вызывать озабоченности и тревоги у всех государств и людей, кто переживает за судьбы народов, живущих в этом регионе.

Ситуацию в целом регионе можно обозначить как состояние стратегической неопределенности и клубок сложных противоречий, требующих своего разрешения.

В событиях, имевших место в регионе за последнее время, на поверхность вышли только отдельные проявления большого стратегического далеко идущего плана, конечной целью которого является изменение в свою пользу политического, экономического расклада сил и доминирование в регионе.

Третье. Мощным пособником международного терроризма, ударной силой дестабилизации ситуации в регионе становится наркопроизводство и наркотрафик.

За последние несколько лет посевы маковых плантаций и объемы производства героина в Афганистане, по данным ООН, растут высокими темпами. Наркопроизводство поставлено на промышленную основу.

Присутствующий в Афганистане иностранный контингент вооруженных сил, к сожалению, практического влияния на все эти процессы не оказывает.

— **Speech 14:** *President Islam Karimov at the session of Commonwealth of independent states (CIS) Council of the heads of state (2014).*

Distinguished Chairman!

Dear Heads of State!

It gives me a great satisfaction to greet the heads of CIS nations and extend my sincere gratefulness to President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Grigorievich Lukashenko for a warm reception and hospitality.

Our meeting, as it has been noted here, is taking place amid a speedily changing international situation, a mounting geopolitical tension and political confrontation, an ongoing global financial and economic crisis with no clear signs as to when it is going to end or ease, a radicalizing and galvanizing religious fanaticism, an intensifying contention in our immediate environment and beyond.

To be sure, we cannot stand unalarmed by the scales of the crawling violence, the real threats of terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking, by the aggressive appeals of some politicians and state-mongers who have lost control of themselves, especially speaking on television channels, who suddenly caught themselves feeling as masters of the situation, exacerbating the situation and bringing the antagonism emerging in certain countries to a bloody massacre.

It is not hard to imagine what tragic consequences the underestimation of the unfolding distressing circumstances can lead to.

A case in mind is the fratricidal war in Afghanistan underway for about 35 years and which has produced millions of human victims and another millions of refugees as well as a complete destruction of the national economy and devastation. A new generation has grown up that is capable today of nothing but holding and using arms. Although it was initially known on the

examples from Afghanistan's history that that country is hard to conquer. We have as though let through all these cases and thus are convinced that the Afghan crisis does not have a military solution.

As Afghanistan's close neighbors, we are absolutely confident today that only a soonest completion of processes in the formation of the new Afghan government, which would represent the principal contending ethnic-religious political forces, can lay a road to a diminishing level of instability, to a liquidation of poverty, can restore the destroyed economy and secure peace and calmness in the country.

As far as the resolution of the Ukrainian crisis is concerned, we are convinced that only a denunciation of the application of forceful methods as a way to address all the emerging issues, only the use of political means built on the fundamental norms of international law and the UN Charter, only an unconditional adherence by the sides – not in words, but in deeds – to the Minsk Accords on ceasefire and truce can shape an environment essential for negotiations to reach peace in Ukraine.

Unfortunately, serious political issues that were envisaged and which cannot be managed without have simply not been embarked on in the negotiating processes.

There is another issue that is directly related to the current meeting of CIS heads of state.

Literally two days ago, the hot news of the hour was the information that the President of Ukraine P.Poroshenko would attend our session. However, yesterday evening it became clear that Mr. Poroshenko would not come to the meeting and that his plans underwent modification.

In our view, such a decision is hard to agree with. It has been already a year since the problem of confrontation in Ukraine turned into one of the most pressing and urgent issues of the

contemporary times that is discussed around the world, including the post-Soviet space. By the way, by means of television, people even in the remotest of our districts and kishlaks are pretty informed about the developments in Ukraine. In circumstances as such, there are no indifferent people, and practically all are enough knowledgeable of what has happened and what triggered everything. Everyone has been eager to know when and how this absolutely unnatural confrontation between the conflicting parties will end, a clash that should cease as soon as possible.

Let us ask ourselves a question as to which one of us, the leaders of CIS nations, has met with Mr. Poroshenko in person. The answer is: a mere handful of us have. For the past period he has been to many countries of Europe, especially in Brussels, and other nations.

Nonetheless, one could have made use of today's opportunity to attend and take part in the session of the CIS summit meeting. By the way, Ukraine is still a member of the Commonwealth. Emerging impression is that Mr. Poroshenko's stance has evidently been dividing into two and that he is still unable to decide whether quitting the CIS is to his good or bad. Crucially, had he spoken here today, we would have been offered a greater clarity with regard to the resolution of the Ukrainian crisis. Yet, unfortunate as it is, that is not the case.

Dear friends!

Alexander Grigorievich Lukashenko, presiding over our meeting, underscored in conclusion to his speech that it is time to openly discuss the prospects of the CIS.

For us, the importance of the Commonwealth is obvious, so is our factual interestedness in building up the mutually advantageous, multifaceted cooperation with all our partners, with an eye to one another's interests.

In the Commonwealth we see an institution providing extensive opportunities for maintaining direct international dialogue, for discussing urgent issues, resolving the differences and disputes among member countries with an account of the created and sufficiently robust acting normative base, garnered instruments and mechanisms of interaction.

The CIS serves as a platform for the elaboration of mutually suitable approaches, coordinated practical measures to assist with the sustainable development of our countries, to actively use the available potential in the sphere of trade and economic cooperation, to timely preempt, counter and neutralize the terrorist and extremist activities and, what is imperative, to stimulate communication among citizens in the post-Soviet area. Today, there are few countries in this part of the world that can imagine of generally existing further on without communication on the basis of the agreement base instituted in the CIS. In these circumstances, even in Georgia there are beliefs that they made a grave mistake in that particular time.

Securing sustainable development in the CIS space is contingent first and foremost on us – the states of the Commonwealth. What I mean is the willingness to find common language with our neighbors and those further, to pursue well-thought-out socio-economic policies with effectiveness, provide for worthwhile living standards for the population, and consolidate our societies around creative and constructive objectives and purposes.

Achievement of these target goals, creation of ultimately favorable conditions for the enhancement of mutual trade and investments among our countries will by and large be

facilitated by the formation and the soonest launch of a full-fledged free trade zone in the CIS area built on principles that do not distress the trade regime existing among the nations. Earlier today, I have listened with great satisfaction to the proposal by Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin that it is already time to launch this regime as the most appealing model to cement our relations.

This is an only economic model capable of making our peoples closer and tackling once and forever those issues that we – down the drain – fail to attach significance to and which are subject to rather serious haggling.

I would like to take this opportunity to declare once again that we do not see any impediments for the activity of the CIS, taking the simultaneous formation of other integration associations in the post-Soviet space into account. In particular, what I mean is the Eurasian Economic Union. Here we encounter no problem that would be subject to discussion.

At the same time, we deem it important that each of these interstate associations, particularly the CIS as the basic entity, on whose basis the Eurasian Economic Union is being built on (by the way, it would be of good use to think over what foundation this union is being built on) build its work independently, have an agenda of its own, a concept and a long-term development program, by not substituting and repeating each other. If these conditions are not met, it will be hard to bank on a coordinated activity of these associations.

In this sense, the current discussion of issues related to the CIS is suggestive once again of our judicious consideration of them. Sitting in this very hall, I stressed it in the past, as well, that I deem it as only a PR and not anything else by believing that these processes would keep on, by

coming here and traveling to other countries for stock sessions of CIS summits. Thus I join my colleagues who believe these issues, especially the prospects of the CIS, need to be thought over seriously.

Thank you for attention.

— **Speech 15:** *Karimov to Atambayev during the informal summit of leaders of CIS countries in the Kremlin (2015).*

(0:00) Годы Великой Отечественной войны. (0:04) Тут были мнения о том, что это не арифметика, это не бухгалтерия. (0:12) Я считаю, что такие замечания делать не тактично, во-первых, а во-вторых, некорректно.(0:19) И то, что здесь наш друг Атамбаев, Алмаз, (0:26) как будто упрекает кого-то за то, что есть попытки забыть то другое, (0:32) это тоже неуместное само по себе замечание, (0:37) которое ничего хорошего не принесет, кроме одного, (0:42) что кто-то очень аккуратный, кто-то очень в войне сыграл какую-то роль и так далее, (0:49) или очень дисциплинированный, (0:51) а другие как будто бы уходят от той ответственности, (0:56) которая несет в себе та победа, (1:00) которая была плодом, результатом общей тех испытаний невероятных, (1:09) что привело к победе, общей победе, (1:15) и от порабощения фашистского, это всем нам известно. (1:17) И каждая страна, каждый народ и каждый руководитель страны, (1:22) который сегодня избран и является представителем и олицетворяет свой народ, (1:29) он праве определять то, что где проводить, как проводить,(1:34) и не обязательно всем, так сказать, повторять то, что кто-то считает обязательным,(1:42) какие-то ритуалы, какие-то другие вещи. (1:45) Очень приятно ваше мнение, мы давно уже знаем.(1:50) Так вот, я еще раз говорю, упрекать за эти вещи, (1:54) или где-то нравоучение читать на эту тему, я бы считал некорректным.

*Speeches of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev (2017-2025)*

**Speech 1:** *President of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the General Debate of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly (19.09.2017)*

Dear Mr. Chairman!

Your Excellencies!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Allow me to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to speak from the high rostrum of the United Nations.

A few weeks ago, our people broadly celebrated the 26th anniversary of Uzbekistan's state independence.

Today, Uzbekistan is rapidly developing. Carefully preserving the wisdom of past generations, we are consciously going towards resolute reforms and are committed to forming a new image of the country.

The political activity is growing with profound reforms are being implemented in all spheres. Their goal is to build a democratic state and a just society, where the priority is implementation of a simple and clear principle – “The human interests come first”.

Following the results of the nationwide discussion, the five-year Development Strategy of Uzbekistan was adopted. While developing it, as if we have looked at ourselves from outside, so as not only to objectively assess our potential and opportunities, but also pay a close attention to our failures and mistakes.

The strategy is the program of real actions of renewal. It is already being put into practice.

We have declared the year 2017 as the Year of Dialogue with People and Human Interests in our country. Our goal is to strengthen the mechanisms that make the people's power in the country not nominal, but real.

We are deeply convinced: the people must not serve the government bodies, rather the government bodies must serve the people.

We have established the Virtual and People's Reception Offices of the President all over the country. Over a million of citizens have resolved their urgent problems with the help of these Reception Offices.

In cooperation with the International Labor Organization, we have taken effective measures to eradicate the child and forced labor.

Following the visit of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mr. A1 Hussein, a program of measures to strengthen the guarantees of human rights protection was developed.

We have abolished such an outdated legacy of the past as exit visas, which were limiting the freedom of movement.

An open dialogue with national and international non-governmental organizations on protection of human rights is being intensified.

Proceeding from the principles of humanism, many individual cases of detention of persons in custody have been reviewed. The stumbled citizens who came under the influence of the ideology of extremism are undergoing a social rehabilitation with conditions being created for them to return to a normal life.

Now the activities of all law enforcement agencies in terms of protection of human rights and freedoms are under constant parliamentary and civil supervision.

The role of political parties and civil society is growing, and the true independence of the judiciary is being ensured. The role of mass media has significantly increased.

The most important vector of reforms is liberalization of the economic system and creation of favorable investment climate. We proceed from one simple truth: the richer the people are - the stronger shall be the state.

From the beginning of this month, Uzbekistan has completely switched to free conversion of the national currency. Along with this, all necessary measures are taken to mitigate any possible negative consequences for the population.

For the first time the Institute of the Ombudsman for the Protection of the Rights of Entrepreneurs was established. The taxes on business were significantly reduced. The access of business to credits was expanded. New free economic zones have been launched, where investors are granted extensive benefits.

The cooperation with international financial institutions is successfully developing and partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development was renewed.

I want to note that the content of the Strategy is fully consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Dear participants of the session!

We are convinced that the United Nations must continue to play a central role in international relations, Uzbekistan stands for its gradual reform. We believe that, in accordance with the realities

of the modern world, the Security Council needs to be expanded. We support the steps taken by the new leadership of the United Nations to improve the system of its management.

I want to confirm -Uzbekistan will continue close partnership with the UN structures. We are determined to ensure the practical implementation of the “road map” developed following the recent visit of Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to Uzbekistan.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today, Uzbekistan considers the region of Central Asia to be as the main priority of its foreign policy. And this is a conscious choice.

Being in the heart of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is keenly interested in the region to become a zone of stability, sustainable development and good-neighborliness.

A peaceful and economically prosperous Central Asia is our most important goal and key task.

Uzbekistan is determined to engage in dialogue, constructive interaction and strengthening the good-neighborliness.

We stand ready for reasonable compromises with the countries of Central Asia on all issues without exception.

Thanks to joint efforts in recent months, the level of political confidence has significantly increased in the region. Fundamentally important decisions on many issues were found.

Signing the Treaty on the State border between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in early September this year became a truly landmark event. A breakthrough in this very sensitive issue achieved for the first time in 26 years became possible thanks to political will demonstrated by parties and the readiness to find mutually acceptable solutions.

In a word, absolutely new political atmosphere was created in the region in a short period of time.

I believe that holding the regular consultation meetings of the heads of Central Asian states would facilitate the consolidation of this trend.

We intend to discuss the fundamental problems of the region at the High-Level International Conference “Central Asia: One Past and Common Future, Cooperation for Sustainable Development and Prosperity” to be held under the aegis of the United Nations in Samarkand in November.

Based on its results, we intend to make a proposal on the adoption of a special resolution of the General Assembly in support of the efforts of the states of Central Asia in terms of ensuring security and enhancing regional cooperation.

We count on the support of this proposal by the leadership of the United Nations and the international community.

Distinguished Mr. Chairman!

Speaking about the problems of ensuring security and stability in Central Asia, one cannot overlook such an important issue as the joint use of the region's shared water resources.

We fully share the position of the UN Secretary-General that “the problems of water, peace and security are inextricably linked”.

I am convinced that there is no alternative to addressing the water problem other than equally taking into account the interests of the countries and nations of the region.

Uzbekistan supports the draft conventions on the use of water resources of the Amudarya and Syrdarya river basins developed by the United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy.

I would like to once again draw your attention to one of the most acute ecological problems of our time - the Aral Sea catastrophe.

I am holding the map of the Aral tragedy in my hands. I believe, comments are unnecessary here.

Overcoming the consequences of desiccation of the sea requires today the active consolidation of international efforts.

We stand for full implementation of the special UN Program to provide effective assistance to the population affected by the Aral Sea crisis adopted this year.

*Ladies and Gentlemen!*

Stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan is an important condition to ensure not only regional but global security, as well.

We are convinced that the only way to peace in Afghanistan is a direct dialogue among the central government and main domestic political forces without preconditions.

The negotiations should be Afghan-led on the territory of Afghanistan and under the auspices of the United Nations. The wise Afghan people have the right to independently define their own destiny.

We support the appeal of the administration of the U.S. President Mr. Donald Trump to Afghanistan's neighbor-states to promote the peace process of the inter-Afghan settlement.

Uzbekistan has been making and will continue its contribution to the economic reconstruction of Afghanistan, development of its transport and energy infrastructure, training of national personnel.

I am convinced that Afghanistan must remain at the heart of the global agenda.

The efforts of the international community should primarily be aimed at resolving acute social and economic problems of Afghanistan.

Our common determination to promote peace in this long-suffering country should not be weakened.

Dear participants of the session!

The aggravation of terrorist threats in the world, especially in recent years, indicates that the use of mainly forceful methods of counteraction does not justify itself.

Often the efforts are reduced to combating the consequences of challenges, rather than their root causes. I believe that along with other factors, ignorance and intolerance are at the heart of international terrorism and extremism.

In this regard, the most important task is to fight for the minds of people, especially young people.

Most of the crimes linked with extremist activity and violence are committed by the people under the age of 30.

Today's youth is the largest generation in the history of mankind totaling 2 billion people.

The planet's future and well-being depend on what kind of people our children will grow up into.

Our key task is to provide conditions for self-realization of the youth, create a barrier against the spread of the "virus" of the ideology of violence.

We believe that for this we need to develop the multilateral cooperation in the sphere of social support of the younger generation, protection of its rights and interests.

In this regard, Uzbekistan proposes to develop the UN International Convention on the Rights of Youth - a unified international legal instrument aimed at the formation and implementation of youth policy in the conditions of globalization and rapid development of information and communication technologies.

In our opinion, the signatory-states must make firm commitments to raise this sphere to the level of one of the main, vital priorities of their social policy.

We consider communicating the truly humanistic essence of Islam to a broad world community as the most important task.

We cherish our sacred religion as the focal point of time-honored values. We strongly condemn and we will never reconcile with those who rank our great faith together with violence and bloodshed.

Islam calls us to kindness and peace, preservation of a genuine human beginning.

I would like to especially note the invaluable contribution of a whole galaxy of outstanding representatives of the Central Asian Renaissance to the development of the Islamic and world civilization.

One of them - Imam Bukhari is acclaimed all over the world as the author of "Sahib Al-Bukhari", the second most important book in Islam after the Koran.

In order to preserve and study his richest legacy, disseminate his teachings on enlightened Islam, we decided to establish the Imam Bukhari International Research Center in Samarkand.

The activities of the Center for Islamic Civilization, which is being established in Tashkent, will contribute to implementation of this task.

I would like to address the participants of today's session with a proposal to adopt a special resolution of the General Assembly “Education and religious tolerance”.

Its main goal is to promote universal access to education, eradicate illiteracy and ignorance.

It is designed to promote tolerance and mutual respect, ensure religious freedom, protect the rights of believers, and prevent their discrimination.

Ladies and gentlemen!

While maintaining the non-aligned status, Uzbekistan is open to dialogue. We are interested in expanding cooperation with all partners in the name of peace, progress and prosperity.

In this we see a decisive condition for the successful implementation of the most important tasks of reforms carried out in our country, the main goal of which is a human, his needs and interests.

Thank you for your attention!

*Speech 2: Address by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the international conference on Afghanistan «Peace process, security cooperation and regional connectivity» (27.03.2018)*

**Your Excellency President Mr. Ashraf Ghani!**

**Dear Ms. Federica Mogherini!**

**Distinguished foreign ministers,  
heads of delegations!**

**Ladies and gentlemen!**

Allow me on behalf of the people of Uzbekistan to cordially welcome all participants and guests of the high-level international conference on Afghanistan in the capital city of our country.

I sincerely thank you for your participation in this Forum and I am pleased to see you on the hospitable land of Uzbekistan.

This conference is a joint initiative of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

It is a logical continuation of the efforts to ensure peace and stability in Afghanistan made by the international community.

I would like to extend a special gratitude to His Excellency President Mr. Ashraf Ghani for his personal participation in our Forum.

I also express a sincere gratitude to the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres, who from the onset has supported our initiative to hold the international conference and sent his welcoming address to its participants.

We highly appreciate the commitment of Mr. Antonio Guterres to advancement of negotiations in the framework of the process of peace settlement in Afghanistan, as well as his efforts in terms of assistance to security and sustainable development in our region.

In January this year the debate on Central Asia and Afghanistan under the presidency of Kazakhstan took place at the United Nations Security Council. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express a sincere gratitude to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbayev for the initiative to discuss this most important problem.

I am also grateful to all members of the United Nations Security Council for valuable proposals enunciated in the course of discussions. Many of them were taken into account in the draft of the final document of our conference – Tashkent Declaration prepared jointly with the Afghan colleagues.

I am pleased from the bottom of my heart to also welcome:

- High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ms. Federica Mogherini;

- the heads and representatives of foreign policy institutions of the People's Republic of China, Russian Federation, United States of America, Japan, Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, Turkey, India, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, as well as international and regional organizations.

I would like to underscore that the representatives of all Permanent Member States of the UN Security Council and countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are gathered today in this hall.

**Dear participants of the Conference!**

These days we are broadly celebrating our traditional holiday of spring and renewal – Navruz. From of old, during this period the wars used to cease, people forgave grievances to one another and used to come to accord even on the most, as it seemed, the insoluble problems.

I am confident that today we will also be able to constructively discuss and elaborate the joint solution on one of the most acute regional and global problems of modernity – the conflict in Afghanistan, which, to a great regret, has already been going on for nearly 40 years.

In essence, «the flame of war» was imposed to the Afghan people from outside. It is not his choice. For over these years hundreds of thousands of peaceful citizens became victims of the confrontation while millions of people had to flee their homes and seek shelter in other countries.

The constant engagement of new forces in the conflict has led to its unprecedented aggravation. This conflict has ceased to be exclusively Afghan one while transforming in greater terms into a complex international problem.

The expansion of presence of international terrorist groups in Afghanistan, ongoing violence and bloodshed, and drug business – all of this speaks about that it is inadmissible to ignore by the international community the situation in this country.

Most importantly, the entire generation grew up in Afghanistan in the conditions of armed confrontation and violence. However, this is not «a lost generation» as some experts cynically refer to.

These are just people who have tired of war, deprivations and hardships, who want and try to put an end to enmity and return to peaceful life and creativity for the good of their country.

I am deeply convinced: the Afghan people have strength, wisdom, courage and perseverance to start a new and peaceful life, and to build it for the sake of prosperity of their children and future generations.

The states and high-profile international organizations, whose representatives are today participating in our Forum, can and must play a decisive role in assisting peaceful settlement of situation in this long-suffering country.

The events in the Middle East and North Africa led to the fact that the situation in Afghanistan was left for some time out of focus of world politics. However, the conflict didn't lose its tenseness and sharpness.

The following factors have necessitated the proposal to hold the international conference in Uzbekistan and the need to unite efforts aimed at ensuring peace and stability in Afghanistan.

First, our initiative fully corresponds to Uzbekistan's foreign policy concept, which defines as a main priority consolidation of friendly and mutually advantageous relations with neighboring countries.

Second, for over the span of millennia the people of Uzbekistan and Afghanistan developed in one culture and civilization space.

Since the ancient times, the people have been residing on both banks of Amudarya River. They share similarity of languages, common sacred religion and spiritual values.

Amudarya River has always been a source of life for us, but never a barrier for a free movement of people, development of close trade ties, exchange with scientific achievements and mutual enrichment of cultures.

Such outstanding representatives of the Central Asian Renaissance as Abu Raikhan Beruniy, Lutfiy, Alisher Navoiy, Kamoliddin Bekhzod, Zakhiriddin Muhammad Babur, Boborakhim Mashrab and many others – our great ancestors lived and created in the Afghan land.

Today Uzbekistan and Afghanistan lead close political, trade-economic and cultural-humanitarian relations. Millions of Uzbeks live in Afghanistan. In line with Afghanistan's Constitution, Uzbek is one of the official languages.

Third, all of us are firmly convinced that security is indivisible and it can be ensured only through joint efforts. We must not, and speaking more concretely, we do not have a right to perceive some threats as «our own» and yet others as «not ours».

Afghanistan's security is security of Uzbekistan, linchpin of stability and prosperity of entire greater region of Central and South Asia.

It must not be allowed for the international terrorist organizations to turn Afghanistan into their constant safe heaven.

Fourth, Uzbekistan has the experience of assisting the peaceful process in Afghanistan.

In 1999 on the initiative of Uzbekistan the meeting of the Group «6+2» took place in Tashkent on the level of heads of foreign policy institutions of states neighboring on Afghanistan, as well as Russia and the United States.

The representatives of the Northern Alliance and Taliban movement also participated at that meeting.

On the outcomes of negotiations, the Tashkent declaration on major principles of peaceful settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan was adopted, which became an official document of the 54th Session of the UN General Assembly and Security Council.

In this regard, we have all grounds, both political and moral right to speak about our common future with Afghanistan and raise issues which equally bother both our Afghan brothers and us.

It is therefore that Uzbekistan calls upon all countries of the world to support our efforts in this noble cause.

**Dear friends!**

At present, the multifaceted and not simple issues of settlement of the situation in Afghanistan are broadly discussed on the regional and international levels.

The Kabul process, Moscow format, International Contact Group, Istanbul process – «The heart of Asia», Contact group «SCO-Afghanistan» and other multilateral platforms deserve most serious

attention which are established to seek ways of settlement of the military-political crisis in Afghanistan.

Uzbekistan supports decisions adopted by participants of the second meeting in the framework of the Kabul process in favor of launching direct talks between the Afghan government and Taliban movement «without preliminary conditions and threats of use of violence».

However, we believe that the main condition of advancement towards peace is, first of all, to draft and implement in practice the sole, both regionally and globally endorsed Comprehensive peace program for Afghanistan.

Proceeding from this, the following must become our major goals and tasks:

First is to draft basic principles of peaceful settlement and secure broad international consensus on them;

Second is to develop a mechanism to start negotiations between the Afghan government and the armed opposition;

Third is to adopt a «Road map» of assistance by the international community to the process of national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

And finally, it will be of invaluable significance the resolute and unanimous appeal of all interested external forces to the armed opposition with a call to come to the negotiating table with the Afghan government and put an end to confrontation and violence.

There is no alternative to this. In our opinion, this is the key message of today's meeting.

**Dear ladies and gentlemen!**

Taking into account the extremely complex and contradictory nature of the conflict in Afghanistan, the involvement of various forces in it, and based on the certain resolutions of the UN Security Council, we believe it is important to ensure promotion of a comprehensive peace process on three interrelated and interdependent levels.

At the intra-Afghan level – it is necessary to ensure start of a direct dialogue, without preliminary conditions, among the central government and main forces of the armed opposition, primarily, the Taliban movement.

The questions that the parties have towards one another may become a subject of the forthcoming negotiation process.

It is obvious that the start of the intra-Afghan political process can no longer be postponed. Its delay will cost the lives of many more innocent people.

In order to ensure success of peace process, it is important that the choice of format, time and venue of peace talks should be Afghan-led and Afghan-owned.

Primarily, the point is about refraining from combat activities and unconditional compliance with ceasefire both by the armed opposition and the Afghan national security forces.

Sharing the common responsibility for a peaceful future of Afghanistan and based on traditionally friendly relations between the Uzbek and Afghan people, we stand ready to create all necessary conditions, at any stage of the peace process, to arrange on the territory of Uzbekistan the direct talks between the government of Afghanistan and Taliban movement.

In case of the opposition's participation in the peace talks and achievement of national reconciliation, all conditions should be created for its integration into political life of Afghanistan.

The representatives of the armed opposition, including Taliban, as a part of the Afghan society and citizens of Afghanistan, have a voice in defining the future of their country.

Along with this, it is extremely important to start the inter-Afghan dialogue in the period before the parliamentary and presidential elections in the country which will provide for broad opportunities to all layers of society, including the opposition forces, for their full participation in the construction of a new Afghanistan.

At the regional level – it is necessary to ensure a firm consensus, primarily with the support of Pakistan, India, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and the countries of Central Asia.

I think we all well understand that addressing a whole range of key issues of economic development, ensuring security and stability in Afghanistan in many respects depends on neighboring states, on our good will and firm determination, readiness to actively promote national reconciliation and ending violence in this country.

The efforts of all neighboring countries and partners should not replace, but complement one another. We need to develop the agreed measures, approaches and practical mechanisms to resolve this problem.

As the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stated at the UN Security Council meeting in January this year, the new dynamics of regional interaction «will open up great opportunities to all of us to fulfill common, long overdue and urgent tasks».

We need to start considering Afghanistan as not a country from the territory of which the threat to peace and stability is emanating. Afghanistan is our friendly partner and neighbor.

I am confident that our common efforts to involve Afghanistan into the system of trade, economic, transport-communication and cultural-humanitarian relations with neighboring countries will significantly contribute to normalization of the situation and returning of this country to a peaceful life.

I have no doubt that in the long run peace on the Afghan soil will open up the new opportunities and bring real benefits to all states of the greater Eurasian continent. It will promote strengthening common security and stability, create favorable conditions for the construction of motorways and railroads, laying of pipelines, development of regional and trans-regional trade.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to note that Uzbekistan is contributing a fair share to the socio-economic revival of Afghanistan.

Since 2002 we have been supplying electricity to Afghanistan.

With commissioning of a new power transmission line Surkhan-Puli-Khumri the volume of electricity supply from Uzbekistan to Afghanistan will sharply increase.

We are jointly promoting the implementation of another strategic project – extension of the currently operating Hairaton-Mazar-i-Sharif railway built by Uzbek specialists up to Herat.

This project will allow to make a real and practical contribution to reconstruction of Afghanistan's economy, create new jobs and increase the transit potential of the country.

Launching the trans-Afghan transport-communication projects in close integration with other and not less significant regional projects such as Uzbekistan–Turkmenistan–Iran–Oman and Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan–China will also create all necessary conditions for the development of intercontinental transport corridors in almost all directions – from north to south and from east to west through the shortest route.

The relationships in the sphere of humanities are actively developing. A Center for training Afghan citizens specially established in our border town of Termez started functioning in January.

At present, about 100 young men and women from Afghanistan are already studying there.

We intend to expand the list of specialties and fields of training of Afghan specialists in this Center.

At the global level – it is necessary to ensure a principle political support by leading world powers and donor organizations to the peace process and ensure financial assistance to

Afghanistan's socio-economic recovery.

Thanks to their assistance, the country has already embarked on a path of peaceful development.

Today, Afghanistan is absolutely different country from what it used to be 20 years ago.

The open democratic elections gave a start to the new stage of state building and positive changes are witnessed in the life of ordinary Afghan citizens.

The government has been able to widely cover the population with education and health services.

All of this testifies to the aspiration of the Afghan people to a peaceful life and development.

The important political events – the parliamentary and presidential elections are due in the next two years in Afghanistan which must confirm the consistent progress of the country along the path of stable democratic development.

**Dear friends!**

Obviously, we all need to realize that we are struggling not just for the future of Afghanistan, but for our common security, for a world without terrorism, fanaticism and violence.

We must not repeat the mistakes of the past. We must remember our shared responsibility.

The task of achieving peace in Afghanistan is closely interlinked with efforts aimed at combating terrorism and extremism, which now have indeed turned into an unprecedented threat to global security and development.

We are deeply convinced that it is very important that all external forces unconditionally support the Afghan government in an effort to eliminate the strongholds of foreign terrorist organizations in Afghanistan, deny financial and logistical support to terrorism without any distinction.

Uzbekistan has always adhered to a principle position in the fight against terrorism, ideology of extremism and radicalism.

These threats must be fought not only by use of force, but firstly through enlightenment, especially among the youth, against ignorance which gives rise to violence.

Last year at the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly Uzbekistan proposed to develop and adopt the International Convention on the Rights of the Youth.

Our main goal is to provide universal access for young people to a quality education and create all necessary conditions for their self-realization.

We propose all our foreign partners a close interaction in terms of communicating to people, especially the youth, the humanistic essence of Islam.

To this end, I think it would be expedient to use the potential of the Imam Bukhariy International Research Center, Center of Islamic Civilization and Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan established in Uzbekistan.

As a follow-up initiative, we also propose to establish a special International Fund to Support Education in Afghanistan.

The primary goal is to assist Afghanistan in training its national cadres on the most demanded fields, allocation of scholarships and grants for talented students and young scientists.

We firmly believe that forming the prestige of education in society and promoting strive for self-improvement among youth is a guarantee of sustainable and steady development.

All of this, of course, will contribute to protecting younger generation from the ideology of violence and radicalism.

**Dear participants of the forum!**

I am confident that conducting this Conference, engaging in constructive dialogue and discussions, and adoption of the final Tashkent Declaration will allow to achieve practical positive results and become a kind of a «Road map» of the peace process in Afghanistan.

In fact, with your support, a document will be adopted which reflects the political will and mutual understanding of all stakeholders on the key issues of Afghan settlement.

The future of Afghanistan must not turn into an example of failure of the international community to counter challenges and threats shared by all of us.

Today, more than ever it is important for all of us to unite and extend the hand of peace, cooperation and support to the long-suffering people of Afghanistan.

I sincerely wish all participants of the Conference a productive work!

Thank you for your attention.

**Speech 3:** *Speech by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly (23.09.2020)*

Distinguished president Volkan Bozkir!

Distinguished secretary-general Antonio Guterres!

Distinguished heads of delegations!

Ladies and gentlemen!

The seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly is being held for the first time in the history of the United Nations in a completely new format – an online videoconferencing due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Such a global catastrophe has not been observed on our planet in the last hundred years.

This calamity has vividly revealed humanity's vulnerability.

The current threatening and complex situation has proved that all states and peoples of the world are interconnected and that regular dialogue, trust and close cooperation among us are extremely important.

In this context, all of us have deeply realized the need to consolidating the mutual efforts of governments, parliaments, civil society institutions; strengthening the principles of common responsibility; coordinating international partnership accordingly; increasing the status and capacity, as well as expanding the competences of the World Health Organization.

Our goal is to jointly create fair global system that ensures basic rights, freedoms, health and well-being of every human being.

In this regard, we propose to develop under the UN auspices an International Code of Voluntary Commitments of States during pandemics.

This document should reflect each state's commitments to its citizens and international partners.

Ladies and gentlemen!

Since the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak in Uzbekistan, we have focused all our efforts and resources to containing this dangerous disease and, most importantly, saving the people's lives.

Social protection and health systems are being cardinally strengthened to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic; targeted support is provided to the population, sectors of the economy and businesses.

Special funds have been set up to this end.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to all our friends and partners who have generously supported during this time of trials.

We fully support the international community's all efforts to effectively combat the pandemic, including the development and widespread use of essential drugs and vaccines.

We also welcome the proposal of Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to hold a summit on the pressing issues of food security in the current context of the crisis.

Dear participants of the general assembly!

Three years ago, speaking from the high rostrum of the United Nations, I stated that Uzbekistan was firmly determined to implement radical reforms.

As a result of our large-scale measures on political, social and economic modernization of society, a new Uzbekistan is being formed.

Today, the process of democratic transformations in our country has become irreversible.

Last year's parliamentary elections demonstrated the growing political activism of the population and parties, the role of civil society institutions and the influence of the media.

The gender equality policy became a priority for us.

The role of women in public administration is growing. In our new Parliament the number of women deputies has doubled.

The human rights situation has also completely changed. The forced and child labour were fully abolished. The National Human Rights Strategy was adopted.

In response to a call from the United Nations to reduce the number of stateless persons, this year alone 50,000 of our compatriots were granted Uzbek citizenship.

The situation with religious freedom in our country has also improved dramatically.

Further strengthening the inter-ethnic harmony and inter-religious tolerance is a constant important task for us.

Comprehensive reforms to ensure true independence of the judiciary and the rule of law are being consistently implemented.

The uncompromising fight against corruption has reached a new level.

In this regard, important legislation has been adopted and independent Anti-Corruption Agency was established.

The economic reforms are being dynamically continued in our country.

For the first time, we have publicly declared our determination to reduce poverty.

We are achieving this through development of entrepreneurship and job creation; improving the investment climate and business environment; building a modern infrastructure and providing targeted social assistance to the population through training people to new professions.

In our country, where over half of the population is young, an extensive work is underway to ensure that every young person takes a worthy place in society and demonstrate their potential.

The Youth Parliaments and the Agency for Youth Affairs are operating in Uzbekistan.

In August the Samarkand International Forum on Youth Rights was successfully held under the auspices of the United Nations.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again call on you to support Uzbekistan's initiative to adopt the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Youth.

In addition, we propose to adopt a special resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on enhancing the role of parliaments in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring human rights.

Dear friends!

**The fundamental changes are taking place now in the region of Central Asia.**

**We have managed to create an atmosphere of good neighbourliness, mutual trust, friendship and mutual respect among the states of the region.**

**Our common achievement is consultative summits of the Central Asian Heads of State, which was put forth as an initiative at the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly and has been regularly held since then.**

Over the past four years, Uzbekistan's bilateral trade with neighbouring states has grown almost five-fold.

During these days of trial our countries are standing by and not leaving one another alone.

**Today, the Central Asian states face an important strategic task.**

**This is to ensure deep integration of our region into the global economic, transport and transit corridors.**

**In this regard, we propose to establish a Regional Centre for the Development of Transport and Communications under the auspices of the United Nations.**

**Today, the effective security cooperation is maintained in Central Asia.**

**The United Nations Global Anti-Terrorism Strategy is being successfully implemented.**

**We stand up for conducting the International conference on the ten-year results and forthcoming prospects of this Joint Plan of the Regional Strategy.**

**As it is well-known, the ancient cultural and rich spiritual heritage of our region is of global importance.**

**We are ready to hold the International Forum “Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations” in the ancient city of Khiva in 2021 in cooperation with UNESCO.**

Dear participants of the session!

**We see Afghanistan as an integral part of Central Asia.**

**The Tashkent High-Level Conference on Afghanistan in March 2018 marked a new stage in the mobilization of the international community’s efforts to resolve the Afghan problem.**

**We fully support the peace talks among the Afghan political forces launched this year in the city of Doha in September.**

**We express hope that these talks will serve for bringing in peace and stability in the long-suffering land of Afghanistan.**

**In order to broadly involve Afghanistan in the process of economic integration in the region, we have started the implementation of major infrastructure projects such as "Surkhan-Puli Khumri" power line and construction of a railway from Mazar-i-Sharif to the sea ports of the Indian Ocean.**

**We believe that the issues of ensuring peace and stability in Afghanistan must remain a constant focus of the United Nations.**

**Only together and through close cooperation we can realize all the dreams and aspirations of the Afghan people.**

**In this regard, it is important to work on the principle of “From instability and destruction – to peace and prosperity”.**

**To this end, we propose to establish a permanent UN commission on Afghanistan that would address the concerns of long-suffering Afghan people.**

**The main task of this Commission must be to promote and facilitate the economic and social development of Afghanistan.**

Distinguished heads of state and government!

Another acute problem of our time is related to global climate change.

Today, every country feels the negative effects of this process.

**Unfortunately, such negative developments also pose a great threat to the sustainable development of Central Asia.**

**I would like to once again draw your attention to the devastating effects of the drying up of the Aral Sea.**

**The Aral Sea region became the centre of an environmental tragedy.**

**To mitigate the current situation, we are carrying out an enormous work to create two million hectares of new plantations and forests, to form a layer of soil.**

**On our country's initiative, the United Nations Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region was established.**

We hope that this Fund will serve as a base platform for the international community to provide practical assistance to the population living in a stressed ecological zone.

We propose to adopt a special resolution of the UN General Assembly declaring the Aral Sea region an area of ecological innovation and technologies.

It would be expedient to mark the date of adoption of this important document as the International Day for the Protection and Restoration of Ecosystems.

Ladies and gentlemen!

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize yet another point: the continuing unrest in various parts of the world, the growing conflict and violence, environmental disasters and other modern threats are exacerbating the global problems of misery and poverty.

These problems become especially acute in the condition of pandemic.

The voice of poverty, which is getting even more alarming today, must raise concerns in entire world community and all of us.

In this regard, we propose to set the issues of poverty eradication and the fight against poverty as one of the main topics of the next session of the United Nations General Assembly and hold a Global Summit on these issues.

Dear friends!

It is clear to all of us that the socio-economic landscape of the post-pandemic world will be completely different.

We need to work on the basis of new approaches and close cooperation against common threats to security and sustainable development.

The central role of the United Nations as a coordinating international structure needs to be further strengthened.

Uzbekistan always stands ready to develop a wide-ranging and mutually beneficial partnership with all countries of the world, as well as practical dialogue with the United Nations and its institutions.

Thank you for your attention.

**Speech 4:** *Speech by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to the opening ceremony of the third China International Import Expo 2020 (4.11.2020)*

Distinguished Heads of State and Government!

Esteemed heads of delegations and exposition participants!

First and foremost, allow me to express gratitude to His Excellency President of the People's Republic of China Mr. Xi Jinping for the invitation to take part in the opening ceremony of the third China International Import Expo.

I greet all the participants of the event, who have gathered to demonstrate the economic achievements of their countries, the latest developments and products.

Good to know that representatives of 180 nations and international organizations are taking part in Expo 2020.

This is a clear indication of the growing dynamics of relations between the PRC and foreign partners.

Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic has had a negative impact on the international economy. The volume of world trade has decreased, and global production chains and trade links have been partially disrupted.

The global socio-economic crisis caused by the pandemic has highlighted the urgent need for closer international coordination and interaction at the bilateral and regional levels.

Holding such a large-scale event as this Expo is suggestive of China's success in restoring the national economy as well as the exceptional demand for broader international trade and economic cooperation.

Such platforms can prove an important factor in the development of international economic dialogue and the soonest resolution of the global socio-economic problems caused by the pandemic.

I will take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to the leadership of the People's Republic of China for the significant assistance and support provided to Uzbekistan in combating the coronavirus infection.

Dear exhibitors!

Uzbekistan sees great prospects in extensive economic partnership with China building on the mutual complementary nature of our economies.

Our country took an active part in the first two Expos in Shanghai, which gave a significant impetus to bilateral trade and investment cooperation.

This time around, the pandemic notwithstanding, Uzbek companies are energetic again at the Expo.

Dear friends!

Uzbekistan highly appreciates the new strategic course of the President of the PRC, aimed at ensuring stability in commerce, eliminating trade barriers, as well as stimulating global economic growth by bolstering the interconnectedness of the economies of diverse nations.

I would like to dwell on the most critical aspects of trade and economic cooperation.

First. Liberalization of the national economy, including the foreign trade regime, has been a consistent priority in Uzbekistan.

The objectives of joining the World Trade Organization and delivering an even more favorable investment climate are being addressed.

We are actively working to harmonize our regulatory framework with international standards. We are improving and significantly simplifying the mechanisms of customs and tariffs, fiscal regulation and export-import procedures, continuing to create green corridors.

We propose to agree on the range of products in demand in the markets of the two countries and to stimulate investments in projects designed to organize their production.

Second. Consolidation of transport cooperation is a key priority.

Uzbekistan pays much attention to the accelerated development of transport and transit potential, to the formation of an effective system of land communications in the region.

We have actively supported the One Belt One Road initiative, which offers wide-ranging prospects for strengthening regional and interregional connectivity.

**Today, Central Asia, as in the days of the Great Silk Road, can once again become a hub of trade, economic and transport-transit corridors between Europe and Asia.**

**We welcome the launch of a new multimodal transport corridor China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan, and are in favor of speeding up the development of project for the construction of a railway along this route.**

We also propose to join efforts in shaping an integrated network of land ports, logistics and wholesale distribution centers within the framework of the Belt and Road initiative.

Initiatives to create new transport corridors linking the railroad systems of Central and South Asia are of great importance.

This would seal the overland transport system of the Eurasian continent.

At the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Uzbekistan came up with a proposal to establish a Regional Center for Transport and Communication Connectivity under the auspices of the UN.

We look forward to receiving energetic support for this initiative by partners and international organizations.

Third. Uzbekistan is currently boosting its industrial development. We are pursuing a policy of reducing raw material exports, diversifying and increasing the production of goods with high added value.

In this context, we stand for the dynamic advancement of industrial cooperation, organization of new joint ventures, primarily for the deep processing of mineral resources and the production of goods with high added value for export markets.

To this end, we propose to adopt a joint program of industrial cooperation and encourage business representatives of the two nations to implement specific projects through various instruments of joint investment funds, investment guarantees and insurance.

Fourth. Given the pandemic, stepping up the processes of digitalization of the economy has acquired particular urgency.

We propose to work out joint measures for the even wider introduction of information technologies in international trade, customs clearance, transport and education.

Growth in trade volumes through the use of electronic trading platforms is rather essential.

Uzbekistan is ready to cooperate in the implementation of promising schemes in e-commerce.

Fifth. The COVID-19 pandemic remains a key issue on the global agenda. This crisis is likely to be protracted.

It is clear that in the face of declining production, mounting demand for medical supplies, financial instability and disruption to global supply chains, no country can overcome the negative effects of the pandemic by its own.

The situation requires solidarity, coordinated and, crucially, effective action in addressing this vital issue.

In this respect, we also propose to build up interaction in healthcare, exchange experience in countering the pandemic and epidemiological threats of trans-boundary nature.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are convinced that Expo 2020 will afford an additional impetus to the process of restoring world trade and expanding international economic cooperation.

I wish all the participants every success in their endeavors.

Thank you for attention.

**Speech 5:** *President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's speech at the SCO videoconference summit (10.11.2020)*

Dear Vladimir Vladimirovich!

Dear Heads of State!

Let me cordially greet all the participants of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit.

I am sincerely grateful to President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin for organizing our meeting.

Notwithstanding all the difficulties caused by the pandemic, the high efficiency of the Russian chairmanship in the SCO should be underscored in particular.

Indisputably, the documents prepared for consideration today will contribute to the consolidation of the role and authority of our organization in the world.

I am glad to see the respected Sadyr Nurkhojyevich Japarov at our Summit.

As the closest neighbor and strategic partner, Uzbekistan fully supports the brotherly people of Kyrgyzstan in their strive for peaceful development and prosperity.

We also welcome the agreements on complete cease of all hostilities in the zone of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, reached with the active assistance of the Russian Federation.

We express our hope for the soonest restoration of peaceful life and stability in that region.

Dear colleagues,

Today, the SCO is at a fundamentally new stage in its development.

Entailing sharp reduction in trade and economic bonds, production decline, unemployment growth, the current pandemic has had a grave impact on the dynamics of our development.

Along with this, the military-political situation in certain regions of the world is aggravating, confrontation on interethnic and interreligious ground has been mounting.

These global challenges and threats can only be overcome by preserving and enhancing our traditions of good neighborliness, equality, trust and consideration of each other's interests.

Never before has it been more important to bolster the Shanghai Spirit, a unique experience of multilateral cooperation, which is our shared heritage and expresses our desire for common development, respect for the diversity of cultures.

The SCO is strong only when every of us is strong.

To this end, mutual support and joint search for compromises on key issues on our agenda are crucial.

It is this very approach that is becoming the foremost prerequisite for ensuring security and sustainable development in the Eurasian space.

This meets the interests and aspirations of the peoples of our countries.

Dear Summit Participants,

Let me briefly dwell on our vision of the urgent tasks SCO should address.

First. Consolidation of economic interaction requires special attention.

We seek to revitalize trade and economic ties and industrial cooperation.

I feel convinced that its achievement in the most effective way comes through delivering on joint anti-crisis programs, including:

- elimination of barriers in mutual trade;
- simplification of customs procedures, their harmonization and digitalization;
- development of electronic commerce among our countries;

- encouragement of mutual investments.

I propose to work out new, including nonconventional, approaches to the promotion of our trade, economic and investment relations in the context of pandemic.

They should become the basis of the SCO plan for the implementation of the program of trade and economic cooperation.

It is vital to formulate concrete measures to implement the Food Security Cooperation Program.

We also stand for the adoption of a program to stimulate industrial cooperation among the business circles of our countries.

Second. The pandemic has accelerated the digitalization process. Information technologies are becoming driver of economic growth.

I propose that an SCO program be devised for the promotion of digital literacy, aiming at enlightening the population in this field, training dedicated specialists on the basis of agreed curricula.

We believe that the Statement on Cooperation in Digital Economy, being adopted today, is rather timely.

Third. In the current circumstances, it is essential that we direct joint efforts to support the needy segments of the population and reduce poverty.

To coordinate our interaction in this area, I consider it necessary to deliver a mechanism for meetings of the heads of government agencies responsible for combating poverty.

I propose to elaborate a program of cooperation among SCO member nations on this front, and hold an international forum in Uzbekistan to contemplate on coordinated measures for its realization.

I feel confident that the successful experience of the People's Republic of China would be useful in implementing this initiative.

Fourth. It is critical to expand joint counteraction to new challenges and threats to the health of the population of our countries.

Humanity today is faced with infections previously unknown. Fighting them becomes a part of our daily life.

In this respect, we welcome the adoption at this Summit of the Comprehensive Plan of Joint Actions to Counter Threats of Epidemics.

It is vital to ensure its practical implementation, establish an effective information exchange on the spread of perilous infectious diseases.

In order to shore up effectual interaction among specialized clinics of our countries, we recommend that a network of medical institutions to combat epidemic-bound diseases be established.

The network would serve to advance mutually beneficial projects designed to swap experience in the field of diagnostics, prevention and treatment of contagious diseases, arrange for the activities of joint teams of doctors and their training.

I will take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all our partners, especially Russia and China, for the tremendous assistance and support provided to Uzbekistan to fight coronavirus.

Amid the pandemic, obvious is the growing need for the introduction of new remote technologies into healthcare.

To this end, we consider it expedient to work out a concept for cooperation in the field of telemedicine.

The idea is to provide for the training of doctors in telemedicine methods in the treatment of a wide range of diseases, as well as the exchange of best practices in this area.

Fifth. In contemporary circumstances, the threats of terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking are not only not weakening, but are intensifying, acquiring new forms.

The role of information technologies, social networks in the recruitment and radicalization of youth, and in funding the terrorists has been on the rise.

Against this background, rising is the demand for the adaptation of SCO RATS to the solution of fundamentally new tasks of ensuring security in the Organization's space.

From this perspective, we consider it necessary to significantly increase the frequency of working contacts among relevant government departments, and think up new mechanisms of interaction.

It is important to ensure regular discussion of the current situation, coordination of joint measures to counter challenges and threats, including those in the information field.

Ultimately, our common contribution to bolstering peace and stability in the vast SCO region will depend on this effort.

In all these areas, we propose to intensify equally advantageous cooperation with observer nations, dialogue partners and international organizations.

Distinguished Heads of State,

Today, never before has it been more salient not to miss the historic chance to achieve the long-awaited peace in Afghanistan.

Security and harmony in that country should be viewed as a seminal component of stability and economic wellbeing in the entire SCO region.

Thanks to the efforts of the world community, including the SCO nations, promising prospects for a peaceful settlement of the conflict have emerged in Afghanistan.

We deem it crucial to unite efforts to support these positive signals of progress towards tranquility and provide economic assistance to the Afghan people.

I am convinced that the peaceful, sustainable development of that country will also be facilitated by the engagement of Afghanistan in regional trade and economic processes.

In this sense, we are in favor of the soonest possible elaboration and adoption of a plan of practical actions to assist the social and economic reconstruction of Afghanistan within the framework of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group.

**New prospects for all SCO countries are opening up through the initiatives of transport corridors that would help restore Afghanistan to its historic role as a bridge connecting the Central and South Asia.**

**We offer to discuss these and other issues in April 2021 in Tashkent at the international conference “Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities”.**

Along with this, I would like to propose to convene next year, on the eve of the 20th anniversary of our Organization, an international conference on the role of SCO in the system of contemporary international relations.

Esteemed Heads of Delegations,

Allow me also congratulate the President of Tajikistan Emomali Sharipovich Rahmon on assuming the chairmanship in the SCO and wish him great success in fulfilling this honorable and responsible mission.

Thank you for attention.

**Speech 6:** *Address by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the 14th Videoconferencing Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (04.03.2021)*

**Your** **Excellency,**  
**distinguished President Recep Tayyip Erdogan!**

**Distinguished heads of state and government!**

**Distinguished Secretary-General Mr. Soleimanpour!**

First of all, allow me to sincerely congratulate all the participants of the Economic Cooperation Organization Summit.

I express my deep gratitude to the distinguished President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for his effective presidency in the Organization, despite the conditions of the pandemic, and for organizing the high level forum.

I express my gratitude to our Turkish friends and personally Mr. Erdogan for a profound support in countering COVID-19 pandemic.

I cordially congratulate distinguished President Gurbanguly Malikgulyevich Berdimuhamedov on Turkmenistan's taking on the presidency in the Organization.

I look forward to our face-to-face meeting at the next summit in the city of Ashkhabad.

**Dear participants of the meeting!**

The area of the Economic Cooperation Organization is a one region with a common history, religion, culture and values, as well as great potential.

From time immemorial, the mutual respect and trust, trade, transport and communication ties closely link our friendly countries.

Today's Post-Covid-19 Regional Economic Cooperation Summit has a profound meaning. Since, the pandemic, which has a negative impact on the global economy, has not bypassed our countries.

It has clearly shown our strengths and weaknesses, how interdependent we are, and the need to further strengthen our economic partnership.

In today's world of technology and resources, investment, competition for access to foreign markets, it is important to combine our strength and capacities in order to take full advantage of the complementarities of our economies.

Along with this, it should be noted that the existing trade, economic, financial, investment, transport, logistics and energy opportunities in our Organization are not being fully exploited.

Therefore, for further expansion of the multilateral partnership in the «ECO Vision 2025» main directions, I would like to put forward the following proposals.

First, the key driver of economic growth, without a doubt, is strengthening the trade and investment relations.

In recent years, the total trade turnover of Uzbekistan with the member states has doubled. Last year we have managed to maintain these volumes despite the difficult situation.

We believe that it is a high time for the members of the Organization to lift the trade and transport restrictions imposed during the quarantine period.

I think that the widespread adoption of digital technologies and electronic commerce in the industry would greatly facilitate our trade relations.

In this context, we consider it necessary to accelerate the negotiation and adoption of the Agreement on mutual trade that Turkey is pushing forward.

Second, the development of industrial cooperation based on the principle of finding complementary perspectives serves to improve the overall well-being of the population.

We believe that in order to implement this important action plan it is necessary to develop a joint «Road map» that would include the clear directions and projects.

Third, ensuring the free circulation of funds, goods and services between the member states, expanding inter-bank relations and financing are relevant.

To accomplish these tasks, we propose to hold a Banking and Financial Forum in the near future with the participation of the banks of our countries.

Fourth, expansion of the transport corridors of our regions and the increase in transit potential shall accelerate the mutual economic cooperation.

**We stand for the development of access corridors to Turkey and European countries, through the «Uzbekistan – Turkmenistan – Iran – Oman», «Uzbekistan – Kyrgyzstan – China», Azerbaijan routes.**

**Moreover, the construction of the newly proposed «Mazar-e-Sharif – Kabul – Peshawar» railway is of a great importance in the integration of Afghanistan into our wider regions and ensuring sustainable development.**

Fifth, we consider it necessary to develop and adopt, jointly with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), a new Program of our Organization on the Food security.

In this regard, we stand ready to hold this year a regular meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization member states' ministers of agriculture in Uzbekistan.

Sixth, the development potential of «green economy» is enormous in our region, which is rich in renewable and alternative energy sources.

I propose the development and approval of a Medium-term Strategy to ensure energy stability, investment and broad involvement of the modern technologies to the sector.

**Seventh, we are clearly feeling impacts of environmental and global climate change problems in our area, including the Aral Sea region. We must unite all our efforts to find a solution to this problem.**

We consider it is expedient to implement effective regional cooperation mechanisms in this direction.

Eighth, cooperation in the field of healthcare needs to be further strengthened.

We propose to introduce a system of monitoring the epidemiological situation and preplanning appropriate measures within the Organization.

**Distinguished members of the meeting!**

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize once more that, undoubtedly, by joint efforts, we are able to raise cooperation within the Organization to a new, higher level in the future.

Thank you for your attention.

**Speech 7:** *Speech by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the Third Consultative Meeting of the Heads of States of Central Asia (6.08.2021)*

Distinguished Gurbanguly Myalikhulyevich!

Dear participants of the meeting!

I express my sincere gratitude to the distinguished President of Turkmenistan and the fraternal Turkmen people for the traditionally warm hospitality and excellent organization of the summit in beautiful Avaza.

I am glad to see my most esteemed colleagues in this hall.

I welcome the participation of the High Representative of the United Nations, Ms. Natalia Gherman, at the event.

Thanks to the common political commitment and joint efforts, today our region is becoming a space of good-neighborliness, mutually beneficial cooperation and sustainable development.

**The role of the Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia in the formation of a new political atmosphere cannot be overemphasized.**

Our regular top-level meetings allow us to fully realize the unique potential of the region.

We consider the agenda proposed by our Turkmen friends to be relevant and important.

In turn, I would like to express the vision and proposals of Uzbekistan.

**First, the current realities require us to take bold steps to form a new model of economic cooperation in Central Asia.**

**It is important to identify new growth points, new drivers of our development in the long term.**

**It is necessary to increase intraregional trade. In order to transfer to a full-fledged free-trade regime, it is important to eliminate existing barriers.**

We can create long value chains by developing industrial cooperation, innovation and digital technologies.

For this, direct business contacts between entrepreneurs and regions of our countries should be encouraged; investment and economic forums and industrial exhibitions should be held regularly.

**Taking into account the important initiatives and proposals in this area voiced by my esteemed colleagues, I believe that it is high time for the adoption of an Agreement on General Directions of Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation.**

Second, it is necessary to effectively use the transport and transit potential of the region in our common strategic interests.

We are deeply convinced that the extensive and integrated transport system of our countries is able to become a key transit hub on the Eurasian continent.

In this regard, we support the fullest possible loading of the existing transport corridors and infrastructure, including the ports of the Caspian Sea, large trans-border logistics centers.

**In addition, we expect to use the potential of the Trans-Afghan corridor Termez-Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar, the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan road and railways.**

We also consider it important to resume a full transport connection between our countries, in compliance with sanitary requirements.

Third, as has already been noted, the issues of energy security of the region are acquiring even more relevance, taking into account the growth of national economies and population.

In this regard, we deem it necessary to continue efforts to expand mutually beneficial cooperation in this area, paying special attention to the introduction of «green» energy and energy efficient technologies.

**For this, we propose to intensify the activities of the Electricity Coordination Council of the Central Asian countries, expanding its mandate and powers, as well as increasing the level of representation of our countries.**

Fourth, in the context of the pandemic, the problems of providing the population with food products have become aggravated. In some regions of the world, there is price increase and basic food shortage.

I support the initiative to hold regular meetings of the ministers of agriculture of our countries. We propose to include the issue of introducing a regional food security monitoring system in the agenda of their first meeting.

This will allow to determine specific areas and joint programs to increase food production and control their quality, including world market supplies.

Fifth, unfortunately, the pandemic is still causing severe damage to public health and negatively affecting the economy.

According to the forecasts of the World Health Organization, we will experience these consequences in the coming years. This requires close regional cooperation and mutual assistance.

To this end, I suggest to launch a unified information system for the recognition of test results and vaccination certificates, expand the exchange of experience in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases, to train medical staff, establish scientific collaboration in pharmacology and cooperation in the production of vitally important medicines.

Sixth, the environmental problems of the region are always in the focus of our attention.

**It is necessary to expand the scale of cooperation, to take all possible measures to mitigate the consequences of the Aral Sea crisis.**

**We also stand for the development of a regional program «Green Agenda» for Central Asia», which would contribute to the adaptation of our countries to climate changes, as well as the large-scale implementation of resource-saving technologies.**

Esteemed Heads of delegations!

**Speaking about the prospects of our constructive plans, we cannot ignore the Afghan factor.**

**The security and sustainable development of our entire region largely depends on a political settlement in neighboring Afghanistan.**

**We see the peace process as a complete ceasefire and non-violence, the achievement of mutually acceptable compromises based on negotiations.**

**In order to restore the destroyed economy of the country, we will promote the implementation of large transport, communication and energy projects.**

**We will continue to provide all possible humanitarian assistance to the friendly Afghan people.**

Esteemed colleagues!

**In recent years, we have made significant progress in consolidating regional cooperation in Central Asia.**

**This allows us to consider practical implementation of the tasks of a new order - the establishment of closer ties with other regions of the world.**

**The results of the International Conference on Regional Connectivity of Central and South Asia recently held in Tashkent clearly demonstrated the demand for such an approach.**

**I would like to take this opportunity and thank you once again for supporting our forum.**

**I am confident that by combined efforts we will ensure the adoption of a special resolution of the UN General Assembly on strengthening the connectivity between the two regions.**

**We count on the support and active participation of the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in this regard.**

Dear friends!

We all know that young people, who make up the majority of the population in the region, play an important role in the development of our countries.

Today, in the context of the struggle over winning hearts and minds of the young generation worldwide, we need to educate our youth in the spirit of patriotism and respect for national and universal values since the future of Central Asia depends on it.

**To this end, we propose to hold a Central Asian Youth Forum in Uzbekistan next year, which will be a significant step towards the formation of a platform for consolidating trust and friendship between our countries.**

The organization of such a dialogue will contribute to the preservation, augmentation and transmission of high moral values and the richest spiritual heritage of our peoples to the next generations.

Another important factor in strengthening the fraternal relations of our peoples is the development of cultural and humanitarian ties.

**Today, the festivals, days of culture and cinema, as well as the joint publication of books on the cultural heritage of Central Asia, are becoming more and more popular.**

We support the initiatives of our Turkmen friends – to organize a joint gala concert and a festival of national cuisine, a business forum and an industrial exhibition today.

It is good to turn such events into a good tradition.

Another effective factor that contributes to bringing our peoples together is intraregional tourism.

**We suggest to instruct our governments to start the practical implementation of the joint program «One tour - the whole region» covering the entire spectrum of tourist destinations.**

Distinguished participants of the meeting!

Today's Summit is taking place on the eve of a significant event - the 30th anniversary of the Independence of our states, which brings it a distinct value.

These were challenging years for all of us.

The main conclusion is that only together, hand in hand, by supporting each other, can we achieve an effective solution to the problems we face, ensure the sustainable development of the region and increase the well-being of our peoples.

There is no alternative!

It is important to make the processes of regional cooperation stable and irreversible, to engage the resource of «people's diplomacy», to involve parliaments and mass media.

**We welcome the further development of the Women Caucus in Central Asia, extension of contacts to achieve global goals in gender equality.**

Bearing in mind the growing role of parliamentarism, we also propose to hold a Regional Parliamentary Forum in Tashkent.

We consider it important to adopt a Joint Statement, which will consolidate our common position on key issues of cooperation at the end of the summit.

I am sure that the results of the Consultative meeting organized at a high level at the initiative of the President of Turkmenistan, distinguished Gurbanguly Myaligulyevich Berdimuhamedov, will become a worthy contribution to the further strengthening of the multifaceted partnership of the fraternal peoples of Central Asia.

Thank you for your attention!

**Speech 8:** *Address by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at a Meeting of the Council of Heads of States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (17.09.2021)*

Dear Emomali Sharipovich!

Dear colleagues!

Participants of the meeting!

I cordially greet you and join in all the congratulations on the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

I would like to express special gratitude to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, esteemed Emomali Sharipovich Rakhmon for the traditionally warm hospitality and excellent organization of our anniversary meeting.

We highly appreciate the successful chairmanship of the Tajik side, during which an open and productive dialogue was ensured in all the areas of our multilateral cooperation.

The Dushanbe summit is a good opportunity to exchange views on the role and significance of our Organization, to take a fresh look at its potential and prospects for joint work.

Indeed, over the past period, the SCO has become an important subject of world politics, and has taken its rightful place among influential international structures.

The regional partnership is being strengthened based on the principles of the «Shanghai Spirit».

Our joint potential is growing in confronting the new challenges and threats, as well as economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation is expanding.

Dear colleagues!

Today, all of us witnessing growing tensions in the world and the region.

The negative effects of the pandemic remain. All this requires from us even greater solidarity and mutual support in the framework of our Organization.

We believe that for these purposes it is necessary:

- to preserve the openness, non-directionality of the SCO against third parties and other organizations;
- timely and jointly respond to common challenges and threats;
- to build up regional economic cooperation;
- to strengthen friendship, good-neighborliness and trust, to deepen cultural and humanitarian interaction in the SCO space.

Dear summit participants!

As it is noted in the statements of my colleagues, all of us are extremely concerned about the current situation in Afghanistan.

**Today a new reality has developed in this country. The new forces came to power. This is an accomplished fact. In this regard, it is necessary to develop the coordinated approaches to the situation in Afghanistan, as well as develop a dialogue with the new authorities of the country.**

**In particular, it is important to achieve broad political representation of all strata of Afghan society in public administration; prevent the possible growth of extremism in the region and the export of radical ideology, the use of the territory of Afghanistan for subversive actions against neighboring states; ensure the observance of fundamental human rights and freedoms, including of women and national minorities; prevent a large-scale humanitarian crisis, an increase in the flow of refugees, continue to assist this country in tackling the social problems.**

**In this regard, the possibility of unfreezing Afghanistan's state assets held in foreign banks should be considered.**

To consolidate our efforts and broadly discuss the issues of political settlement in this country, we propose to regularly hold the high-level meetings in the SCO-Afghanistan format, with the involvement of observer states and dialogue partners. We stand ready to organize the first such meeting in Tashkent.

Dear friends!

Following the outcomes of today's Summit, the honorary and highly responsible mission of chairmanship in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is transferred to the Republic of Uzbekistan.

I sincerely thank my esteemed colleagues for congratulations and good wishes.

In turn, I would like to outline the priorities and tasks of joint work for the coming period.

First. It is important to continue the efforts to further strengthen the potential and authority of the SCO.

We propose to prepare to our next meeting a Comprehensive program for the implementation of the Treaty on long-term good-neighborliness, friendship and cooperation for the next five years.

Second. We are in favor of developing a Joint Action Plan for the development of SCO intraregional trade.

It should include the joint steps to remove trade barriers, approximate technical regulations, digitalize customs procedures, as well as other measures to facilitate the mutual access to markets.

Third. It is important to expedite the adoption of the SCO Industrial Cooperation Program.

The practical mechanism for its implementation will be the creation of Industrial Cooperation Centers in our countries.

We are also ready to host the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Economic Forum and Industrial Innovation Week next year in Uzbekistan.

Fourth. The adoption of the SCO Strategy for the development of transport connectivity will allow us to fully use the transit potential of our countries and increase the efficiency of the East-West and North-South corridors system.

In addition, we are taking the initiative to jointly prepare a long-term Program of Infrastructure Development in the SCO area, which could include the cross-border projects in the field of energy, communications, and «green» development.

Fifth. The issues of poverty reduction and food security are of particular relevance to us.

We consider it extremely important to launch a mechanism of regular ministerial meetings and expert consultations in these areas in the near future.

Sixth. A key priority is to intensify efforts to ensure peace and stability in the SCO space.

This will be facilitated by the practical implementation of the adopted Decision on improving the mechanisms for countering security challenges and threats, including a more complete use of the potential of the SCO RATS.

The initiatives reflected in this document will strengthen our interaction in the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime, as well as in the field of cyber security.

In addition, we propose to resume the meetings of the Ministers of Internal Affairs and Public Security of our countries.

Seventh. Taking into account the successful experience gained by our partners in the field of information security, it is advisable to establish an SCO expert Forum on this topic.

This will allow developing coordinated measures to adequately respond to modern threats and challenges in cyberspace.

Eighth. We appreciate the joint achievements of «public diplomacy», we are interested in the development of multifaceted cooperation between the regions of our countries, in holding joint cultural, scientific, educational, sports and other events.

To this end, we support the establishment of an SCO Goodwill Ambassador Institute.

We are also making a proposal to draft an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation between our countries in the field of tourism.

Ninth. The pandemic has highlighted the need for closer collaboration in the health sector. In this context, we should adopt a «Roadmap» for the cooperation in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, post-Covid rehabilitation, and mutual recognition of vaccination certificates.

Tenth. Uzbekistan, as the chairman, intends to actively involve observers and dialogue partners in cooperation projects in the framework of our Organization.

We welcome the decisions taken today to begin the procedure for admitting the Islamic Republic of Iran to the SCO and granting the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the State of Qatar the status of dialogue partners.

Dear heads of delegations!

We support the candidacy of Mr. Zhang Ming for the post of SCO Secretary General and wish him a profound success.

I would like to thank my colleagues for supporting Ruslan Mirzaev's candidacy for the post of Director of the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure.

I also express my gratitude to the Secretariat and the Executive Committee of the SCO RATS for their active work in promoting the common goals and objectives of our Organization.

Dear colleagues!

I am convinced that the most important decisions and documents adopted today will contribute to the further development of our countries and enhance the authority of the SCO.

Taking this opportunity, I invite you to the next meeting of the Council of Heads of States, which we intend to hold on September 15-16 next year in Uzbekistan.

Thank you for your attention!

**Speech 9:** *Address by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at a SCO-CSTO Format Meeting (Afghanistan) (18.09.2021)*

Dear colleagues!

I fully share the common concern over the situation in Afghanistan.

Indeed, today a completely new reality has developed in this country – in a very short time, the Taliban movement has gained almost full power.

The new authorities still have a difficult path to go – from the consolidation of society to the formation of a capable government that includes all ethno-political groups.

**In fact, this will determine the prospects for stabilizing the situation, restoring Afghan statehood and, in general, developing interactions between the international community and Afghanistan.**

In the current conditions, there are no firm guarantees that the country shall not return to the situation of the 90s, when it was engulfed in a civil war and a humanitarian crisis, stood in international isolation, and its territory turned into a «hub» of international terrorism and drug production.

As the closest neighbor, we have directly faced these challenges and threats in those years, and we are clearly aware of all the possible negative consequences of the development of the situation in Afghanistan according to this scenario.

**In this regard, I would like to share my vision of the main aspects of cooperation on Afghanistan.**

**First. The territory of Afghanistan should not be allowed to remain a source of challenges and threats to our security.**

I mean, above all, the growth of extremism and the export of radical ideology, the use of Afghan territory for subversive actions against our countries, the risks of the infiltration of fighters across the borders.

It is important, through joint efforts and decisive actions, to jointly cut off the channels for the transfer of terrorists from «hot spots» to Afghanistan.

In this regard, we are in favor of expanding practical cooperation through the Executive Committee of the SCO RATS and the CSTO Secretariat, as well as the special services of our States.

**Second. It is extremely important to work out a common strategic approach of the SCO and CSTO to the development of the situation in and around Afghanistan in order to create conditions for entering the process of recognition of the new authorities.**

**Third. A dialogue with the new government should be implemented with the fulfillment of its obligations.**

Among them – not to patronize international terrorist organizations; prevent the use of the territory of Afghanistan against third countries; ensure the observance of fundamental human rights and freedoms, including those of women and national minorities.

**Fourth. It is important to continue the implementation of socio-economic and infrastructure projects in Afghanistan.**

**Despite the difficult situation, we did not stop the work of the Uzbek-Afghan transport hub – the most important artery for the supply of food and oil products to this country, as well as uninterrupted supply of electricity.**

I would like to emphasize that the suspension of assistance will exacerbate the already difficult situation of the long-suffering Afghan people.

Along with this, the new authorities must guarantee the safety of the implementation of joint projects.

**Fifth. It is important to prevent the isolation of Afghanistan and its transformation into a «rogue state».**

In this context, we believe that the United Nations could take on even greater responsibility for mobilizing and coordinating the international efforts to assist Afghanistan.

Dear colleagues!

Uzbekistan intends to continue close and effective interaction with all interested parties in stabilizing the situation in Afghanistan.

Thank you for your attention!

**Speech 10:** *Speech by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (21.09.2021)*

Distinguished 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!

**Speech 11:** *Address by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the 15th summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (28.11.2021)*

I am very pleased to meet you on the Day of our Economic Cooperation Organization in the beautiful city of Ashgabat.

I join the words of gratitude to His Excellency President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov for organizing today's forum at a high level and for his sincere hospitality extended to all its participants.

I would like to emphasize Turkmenistan's effective chairmanship of the Organization and its significant contribution to extending the multilateral practical relations.

In particular, the Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on partnership with the Economic Cooperation Organization adopted in September this year served as an important step in this direction.

Distinguished summit participants!

Our fraternal peoples with close history, religion, customs and traditions have historically been linked with trade and cultural ties.

Over the past period, the Economic Cooperation Organization has turned into a major regional structure with enormous economic potential, representing the common interests of our states.

All the views expressed by my esteemed colleagues today have clearly confirmed the growing role and significance of our Organization on the international arena, our common aspirations to strengthen the mutual friendship and cooperation, as well as ensure stability.

In our turn, we stand for the further development of comprehensive relations in the framework of the Organization. We are committed to the effective implementation of our forthcoming chairmanship.

DEAR HEADS OF STATES AND GOVERNMENTS!

At present, we are all witnessing a global and regional situation, which is becoming an ever increasingly complex.

There is still no a clear answer to the questions of what trends shall be observed in the development of the world economy under the influence of the ongoing pandemic and what new threats the international community shall face.

In such a changing context, we believe it is necessary to unite our common efforts on the following priority directions.

First. It is necessary to fully use the enormous opportunities in the spheres of trade and investments of our countries with population of more than 500 million people and a huge market.

On the basis of the adopted conceptual program «ECO Vision 2025», it is expedient to further increase the trade, economic and investment relations between our countries and achieve the practical results.

To this end, we believe that it is a high time to develop and adopt an updated and comprehensive Trade Agreement in the framework of our Organization.

This document must address the issues of removing the trade barriers, digitization of customs procedures and introduction of an electronic commerce, which is at present assuming greater importance.

It is a requirement of today to increase the mutual investment flows in our countries and ensure their reliable protection, adopt the Joint Action Plan («Road Map») aimed at enhancing the production cooperation between our countries.

Along with this, we need to increase the mutual trade, develop the regionally significant projects and solidify our overall competitiveness in the world market.

**With such a purpose, in cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the SPECA Special Program for the Central Asian Economy, we propose to establish a Trade, Investment and Innovation Center at our Organization and locate its headquarters in Tashkent.**

**Second. More efficient use of the new and available transport corridors in our region.**

In this context, it is necessary to find specific solutions to a number of pressing issues. First of all, this is the establishment of interregional transit hubs, the development of modern transport and road infrastructure, the optimization of transport and transit tariffs and the provision of additional discounts, the simplification of conditions for international freight and passenger traffic, and the introduction of digitalization in the transport industry.

In order to implement these specific plans, it is expedient to develop a regional strategy aimed at developing the transport and communication links and increasing a transit capacity of our country.

Third. We should mobilize our practical efforts to achieve «green development».

At a time, the environmental problems and climate change are becoming an acute issue, which requires solving such most urgent tasks on our agenda as the effective use of best expertise gained in our countries and abroad, the active joint development of the "green economy", the broad application of the resource-saving technologies in industries, achieving a carbon neutrality.

To this end, we propose to establish a permanent High-Level Dialogue Council (ministers of ecology) with the participation of the international environmental scientists and experts.

Fourth. The restoration of touristic exchanges.

**At the next regular meeting of tourism ministers in Bukhara in 2022, I would like to announce an initiative to adopt a Regional program for the development of safe tourism in the post-pandemic period.**

Given such initiative, a serious attention would be paid to the development of «pilgrimage tourism» and other joint tourism products, expansion of the geography of flights and development of the tourism infrastructure.

Dear summit participants!

**I would like to specially dwell on the current difficult situation in Afghanistan, which is a Member of our Organization.**

**Day after day, this country is facing an aggravating humanitarian crisis.**

**The Afghan people alone will not be able to withstand these ordeals without the assistance on the part of the international community, including its close neighbors.**

**Therefore, we should combine our efforts to provide the necessary assistance to the Afghan people and develop the common approaches.**

**We are also in favor to continue our cooperation with Afghanistan on major trade, transport and energy projects of regional importance.**

DEAR HEADS OF STATES AND GOVERNMENTS!

I would like to dwell on yet another crucial issue.

It is a demand of the time to enhance the international status of our Organization, to establish our unique agenda as compared to other regional organizations, to strengthen the interactions with high-profile international structures, and to develop institutional mechanisms for our cooperation.

We put forward an initiative to establish a High-Level Expert Group to draft concrete proposals and recommendations for further improvement of the Organization's activities.

Along with this, I believe it would be appropriate to introduce the tradition of naming each year proceeding from the priorities and current tasks of our cooperation.

We propose to declare the «Year of Strengthening the Interconnectivity» in our states during Uzbekistan's chairmanship in the Organization.

Distinguished colleagues!

We also support the adoption of the final document of our Summit today, the Ashgabat Consensus of Actions.

Taking this opportunity, I sincerely congratulate the new Secretary General of our Organization Mr. Khusrav Naziri on the beginning of his responsible tenure and wish him success in his future endeavors.

I want to express my gratitude for your sincere wishes on the transfer of the chairmanship in our Organization for the first time to Uzbekistan.

In conclusion, I would like to especially emphasize that with our aspirations and efforts, we shall be able to raise the multifaceted and mutually beneficial cooperation in the framework of the Organization to a completely new level in the near future.

It is with a great pleasure that I invite all of you to Uzbekistan to participate at our next summit.

Thank you for your attention!

**Speech 12:** *President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's speech to the Second International Forum for Northern Economic Cooperation (22.11.2022)*

**Distinguished Mr. Chairman!**

**Esteemed Heads of Delegations!**

**Dear Participants of the Forum!**

**Ladies and Gentlemen!**

It is a great pleasure for me to greet the participants of the Second International Forum for Northern Economic Cooperation.

I would like to thank His Excellency the President of the Republic of Korea Mr. Moon Jae-In for the invitation to take part in this important event dedicated to the efforts towards joint overcoming of the impact of coronavirus pandemic and enhancement of our partnership.

Amid the complicated situation in the world and the global crisis, it is this very format of multilateral dialogue that allows us to effectively confront new challenges and threats, contributing to the stability, prosperity and sustainable development of our countries.

**Dear Forum Participants!**

We in Uzbekistan highly appreciate the New Northern Policy of the President of the Republic of Korea, aimed at ensuring security and enhancing the multifaceted cooperation in the vast Eurasian space.

I would like to briefly dwell on the most significant aspects of regional policies and the prospects for our interaction.

**First.** The global spread of COVID-19 has shown the need for close coordination and broad international cooperation among the states of the region.

I thank our Korean and other partners for their support in confronting this disease in Uzbekistan.

We propose to continue our joint efforts in the following areas:

- development of effective vaccines and serums, systems for rapid and accurate diagnosis of diseases on the basis of a pharmaceutical cluster being set up in cooperation with Korean companies;
- establishment of cutting-edge laboratories and modernization of sanitary control points at our borders;
- training of epidemiologist and virologist doctors with the participation of leading higher education institutions of the Republic of Korea;
- creation of enterprises for the disposal of medical waste;
- introduction of an integrated system for monitoring and early warning in the epidemiological situation in the region.

**Second.** We consider the Republic of Korea one of the key promoters of digital and green technologies to our country.

Currently, dozens of major projects in high-tech industries are being realized in Uzbekistan with the participation of leading Korean companies and banks.

We intend to continue to fully support and encourage the activities of Korean investors.

We are also willing to take an active part in the Seoul Summit of Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030.

Third. The consistent implementation of the New Northern Policy has highlighted the exigency of developing efficient regional transport corridors.

First of all, it is about combining the routes of the Trans-Siberian Railway and the Western Europe - Western China corridor with projects of new railways in our region.

In these circumstances, the Korean Peninsula can become a critical communication bridge connecting the Pacific region with the countries of Central and South Asia.

We suggest considering these unique opportunities at the expert level.

**Fourth.** The Central Asia - Republic of Korea Cooperation Forum is instrumental in consolidating our partnership.

New initiatives and projects are being implemented within its framework, and mutually advantageous cooperation in investments, innovation, transport, healthcare, education and culture has been enhancing.

In the meantime, there is an objective need today to bring our interaction to a new, higher level, and hold a meeting of the Forum with the participation of the heads of government.

I am convinced that together we will turn the Central Asia - Republic of Korea Cooperation Forum into an effective mechanism for promoting priority programs and projects.

**Fifth.** Uzbekistan fully supports President Moon Jae-In's energetic efforts to achieve lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula and regards them as an important contribution to ensuring regional and global security.

In Central Asia, we have accumulated unique experience in creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The corresponding treaty initiated by Uzbekistan went through a complex process of coordination among the participants, and it received essential guarantees from the major nuclear powers.

Today it is an effective political and legal mechanism in providing for nuclear safety in Central Asia.

For extensive exchange of experience, we propose to hold an international expert forum on nuclear disarmament and nuclear-weapon-free zones.

**Dear ladies and gentlemen!**

The Republic of Korea is a special, reliable strategic partner for the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The history of diplomatic, trade and cultural relations between our two nations goes back to millennia.

These bonds of friendship are built on the similarity of mentality, traditional values and customs of our peoples.

An important factor in strengthening our robust ties is the considerable Korean diaspora in Uzbekistan.

These citizens of ours make a remarkable contribution to the advancement of the country.

In conclusion, I would like to express my confidence that today's Forum will open up new prospects for the development of long-term and comprehensive cooperation of our countries in the interests of peace and prosperity of the entire region.

Thank you for attention.

**Speech 13:** *Выступление Президента Республики Узбекистан Шавката Мирзиёева на Консультативной встрече глав государств Центральной Азии. (09.08.2024)*

Уважаемые коллеги!

Присоединяюсь к словам искренней признательности в адрес Президента Республики Казахстан, уважаемого Касым-Жомарта Кемелевича Токаева за традиционно радушный прием и прекрасную организацию саммита.

Хотел бы особо отметить Ваши активные усилия, уважаемый Касым-Жомарт Кемелевич, направленные на укрепление регионального взаимодействия и продвижение общих интересов наших стран.

В Вашей программной статье «Ренессанс Центральной Азии: на пути к устойчивому развитию и процветанию», опубликованной накануне, Вы представили глубокий анализ нашей совместной работы и видение перспектив региональной кооперации на новом этапе.

Шесть лет назад именно здесь, в Астане, мы провели первую Консультативную встречу.

За прошедший период состоялись саммиты – без преувеличения исторические встречи во всех наших странах. Мы открыли новую страницу в многовековой летописи дружбы и добрососедства.

Наш открытый и плодотворный диалог, выдвинутые важные инициативы, запущенные многосторонние проекты и программы, большое количество проведенных совместных мероприятий и многое другое кардинально изменили облик и имидж региона.

Мы стали эффективно взаимодействовать и решать насущные вопросы. В разы увеличились объемы взаимной торговли, инвестиций, грузоперевозок, поездок граждан.

Заметно повысился практический интерес со стороны наших внешних партнеров. Об этом свидетельствуют, как было уже сказано, различные встречи в формате «Центральная Азия плюс».

Сегодня мы уже можем с уверенностью говорить о начале формирования общерегиональной идентичности.

Пользуясь случаем, хочу поблагодарить всех моих коллег за поддержку общих усилий по укреплению единства и сплоченности, расширению многогранного сотрудничества в регионе в качестве приоритета внешней политики наших стран.

Поддерживаю высказанные сегодня предложения о запуске механизмов и институтов регионального взаимодействия, включая встречи национальных координаторов, отраслевых министерств и ведомств.

Считаю, что на данном этапе нужны действенные инструменты реализации принимаемых нами решений и продвижения совместных проектов.

В целом, полагаю, пришло время вместе рассмотреть вопросы дальнейшего совершенствования нашего формата Консультативной встречи для углубления региональной интеграции и наполнения повестки долгосрочного партнерства.

В этих целях предлагаем провести в Узбекистане очередное заседание Центральноазиатского экспертного форума ведущих аналитических центров и исследовательских институтов стран региона. Их концептуальные рекомендации и предложения мы можем вместе рассмотреть в ходе нашего следующего саммита.

Уважаемые участники встречи!

Центральная Азия в силу своего геополитического положения в полной мере испытывает на себе все негативные последствия глобального кризиса доверия и эскалации конфликтов.

То, что происходит вокруг Украины и на Ближнем Востоке напрямую влияет на стабильное и устойчивое развитие региона. Были нарушены традиционные торгово-транспортные цепочки. Мы оказались заложниками санкционной политики, заметно увеличились логистические издержки, растет инфляционное давление. Сокращаются возможности на мировом рынке капитала, усиливается протекционизм и появляются все новые барьеры.

На второй план международной повестки ушли вопросы, связанные с развитием ситуации в соседнем Афганистане – важным фактором стабильности нашего региона.

Подчеркну, что сегодняшний и завтрашний день Центральной Азии, благополучие наших стран и народов во многом зависят от наших общих усилий, от нашей готовности тесно сотрудничать, принимать решительные меры и вместе продвигать интересы региона.

Считаем целесообразным разработку нашими внешнеполитическими ведомствами стратегического документа – Концепции обеспечения региональной безопасности и стабильности.

Уважаемые коллеги!

Хотел бы вкратце обозначить приоритетные, на наш взгляд, направления практического регионального взаимодействия.

Первое. Нужны новые драйверы, новая модель развития экономического партнерства на долгосрочную перспективу.

Наши страны являются естественными торговыми партнерами, а национальные экономики взаимодополняют друг друга.

В то же время анализ показывает, что сегодня на внутрирегиональную торговлю приходится незначительная доля общего товарооборота наших стран. Все еще сохраняются барьеры на пути формирования в Центральной Азии полноценной зоны свободной торговли.

С подключением международных экспертов мы провели анализ и выявили первоочередные меры, которые позволят обеспечить двукратный рост объемов взаимной торговли в ближайшие пять лет. Это более пятисот товарных позиций.

Прежде всего речь идет о следующих мерах: устранении тарифных и нетарифных барьеров, взаимном признании сертификатов соответствия и унификации регламентов, цифровизации таможенных операций и фитосанитарных процедур, рассмотрении возможности взаимного доступа к государственным закупкам.

Нашей стратегической целью должно стать формирование в долгосрочной перспективе Единого регионального рынка.

Для рассмотрения всех этих вопросов предлагаем запустить Экономический совет – регулярные встречи на уровне заместителей Премьер-министров наших стран.

Первую такую встречу готовы принять в Ташкенте в следующем году и в ее рамках провести Неделю бизнес-партнерства Центральной Азии с организацией Форума регионов и отраслевых конференций, выставки-ярмарки индустриального потенциала, презентаций экспортных возможностей.

Второе. Взаимная поддержка и стимулирование промышленной кооперации.

У нас уже есть успешные примеры такого партнерства с каждой страной региона. Это особые зоны приграничного сотрудничества, проекты по выпуску современных автомобилей, бытовой электроники, фармацевтических препаратов, аграрные и текстильные кластеры, логистические центры и инфраструктурные проекты.

Считаю, что, объединив усилия, мы сможем сформировать Единую карту индустриализации региона с созданием коротких цепочек добавленной стоимости, привлечь инвестиции и технологии ведущих международных компаний, внедрить новые формы кооперации.

По этому приоритетному направлению важно запустить Совет на уровне министров и подготовить программный документ.

Перспективными также являются учреждение Центральноазиатского инвестиционного совета, создание Банка инновационного развития стран региона, регулярное проведение совместных инвестиционных форумов.

Отмечу, что от скоординированной работы в этом направлении зависит инвестиционная привлекательность всех государств Центральной Азии.

Третье. По оценкам Всемирного банка, наши страны все еще остаются одними из наименее «соединенных» экономик в мире.

Речь идет о внутрирегиональной транспортно-коммуникационной сети.

Более того, из-за особенностей географии региона доля затрат на транспортировку внешнеторговых грузов доходит до 50 процентов от конечной стоимости товаров. Это в четыре-пять раз выше среднемирового показателя.

Признателен моим коллегам за поддержку принятия комплексных мер по развитию эффективных транспортных коридоров.

Сегодня на повестке много проектов, обеспечивающих выход на рынки Европейского Союза, Китая, Южной и Юго-Восточной Азии, Ближнего Востока.

Требуют системного подхода вопросы формирования и проведения согласованной тарифной политики, применения льгот и преференций для поддержки национальных

перевозчиков, модернизации транспортной сети и инфраструктуры, увеличения пропускной способности пунктов на границе, цифровизации транспортного сектора.

Пользуясь случаем, хочу поблагодарить за поддержку нашего предложения принять Соглашение о транспорте и транзите. В целях реализации его положений предлагаем провести Экспертную конференцию с участием министерств транспорта, перевозчиков и экспедиторов, логистических компаний и специалистов.

Четвертое. Нужна скоординированная работа в области обеспечения продовольственной безопасности.

Как подтверждают национальные эксперты и специалисты Продовольственной и сельскохозяйственной организации ООН, мы не только можем обеспечить внутрирегиональные потребности по основным видам продуктов питания, но и занять прочные позиции на международном рынке.

Важно внедрять инновационные методы агропроизводства, водосберегающие технологии, повышать урожайность, развивать глубокую переработку, усиливать научную работу в области селекции, создавать кластеры и «умные» фермы.

В сентябре в Ташкенте совместно с ФАО намерены организовать Международный форум по обеспечению продовольственной безопасности стран, не имеющих выхода к морю. Предлагаем на его площадке провести отдельную встречу министров сельского хозяйства для разработки Региональной стратегии.

Пятое. Последствия глобального изменения климата ощущаются в каждой из наших стран. Повышение температуры, таяние ледников, паводки, засухи, пыльные бури и многие другие вызовы продолжают наносить серьезный ущерб.

В ходе предстоящего Климатического саммита в Азербайджане в ноябре этого года наши страны могли бы выступить с единых позиций.

Речь идет о проведении совместной презентации экологической ситуации в регионе для привлечения внимания международной общественности, фондов и донорских организаций к решению этих острых проблем, включая Аральскую катастрофу.

В числе наших новых предложений разработка и принятие комплексной Программы устойчивого развития Центральной Азии, Региональной стратегии рационального использования водных ресурсов трансграничных рек.

Шестое. Особо актуально партнерство в энергетическом секторе.

Сегодня в региональном масштабе прорабатывается ряд стратегических проектов по наращиванию генерации электроэнергии и ее экспорту в третьи страны. Кроме того, есть планы по развитию атомной энергетики, увеличению поставок углеводородов.

Считаю, что это одно из ключевых направлений для проведения скоординированной работы в рамках регулярных встреч министров энергетики.

Уважаемые главы делегаций!

Мы высоко оцениваем и всесторонне поддерживаем развитие плодотворных обменов между парламентами наших стран.

В следующем месяце планируем провести в древней Хиве очередной Межпарламентский форум стран региона.

Учитывая общность культурно-исторического наследия, следует уделять больше внимания развитию у населения чувства сопричастности, сплоченности, осознания общей ответственности за будущее региона.

Думаю, что скорейший запуск Международной медиаплатформы «История и культура Центральной Азии: одно прошлое и общее будущее» станет важным практическим шагом в данном направлении.

В целях дальнейшего укрепления взаимопонимания и сплоченности народов региона предлагаем провести Научный форум, посвященный практическим аспектам формирования региональной идентичности.

Для продвижения «Молодежной повестки Центральной Азии – 2030» и вовлечения молодого поколения в программы сотрудничества предлагаем регулярно проводить Региональный молодежный конкурс инновационных идей и проектов.

Считаем важным принять Центральноазиатскую программу образовательных и академических обменов, разработать Соглашение о взаимном признании дипломов ведущих вузов наших стран.

Предлагаем также выделить на взаимной основе стипендии для обучения одаренных студентов из государств региона.

Для предметного обсуждения этих проектов намерены провести в октябре в Ташкенте Первый образовательный форум Центральной Азии.

Был бы признателен за включение в национальные делегации ваших стран министров образования, ректоров ведущих университетов, ученых и экспертов.

Новым драйвером регионального партнерства становится сектор туризма. Доля внутрирегионального туристического потока в наших странах в последние годы значительно увеличилась.

В целях расширения туристического обмена предлагаем изучить вопрос взаимного признания национальных ID-карт и разработки массовых туристических продуктов по принципу «Один тур – весь регион».

Уважаемые коллеги!

Сегодня мы подписываем важные документы, включая Концепцию развития регионального взаимодействия на период до 2040 года.

Для укрепления договорно-правовой базы и дальнейшего развития наших отношений предлагаем подготовить к подписанию многостороннее Соглашение о стратегическом партнерстве и сотрудничестве в Центральной Азии.

Убежден, что плодотворные результаты сегодняшней встречи послужат дальнейшему укреплению дружбы и добрососедства в регионе, расширению практического взаимодействия на благо наших народов.

Пользуясь случаем, приглашаю всех вас в Узбекистан для участия в седьмом Саммите глав государств Центральной Азии в августе следующего года.

Уважаемые коллеги!

Искренне приветствую Президента Азербайджанской Республики уважаемого Ильхама Гейдаровича Алиева.

Считаю, что с участием Азербайджана открываются новые возможности для реализации колоссального потенциала региона.

Речь идёт прежде всего о продвижении совместных проектов кооперации в сфере торговли, промышленности, сельского хозяйства, энергетики, транспорта и логистики, развитии культурно-гуманитарного и туристического обмена.

Уже есть успешные примеры многостороннего сотрудничества.

В частности, идёт экспертная проработка вопросов организации поставок «зелёной» энергии в направлении Европы.

Кроме того, обсуждаются вопросы формирования эффективных транспортных коридоров с выходом на международные рынки.

Выступаем за активное участие наших азербайджанских партнёров в запланированных бизнес-форумах, промышленных выставках и других деловых мероприятиях.

В своём выступлении в первой части нашей встречи я говорил о важности проведения совместного мероприятия на предстоящем Климатическом саммите в Азербайджане в ноябре этого года в рамках скоординированных усилий по противодействию экологическим вызовам.

Ещё раз хочу пожелать уважаемому Ильхаму Гейдаровичу успешного проведения Глобального саммита.

Это несомненно наш общий успех!

Рад видеть на нашей встрече главу Регионального центра Организации Объединённых Наций по превентивной дипломатии господина Каху Имнадзе.

Отмечу, что возглавляемый Вами Центр вносит действительно большой вклад в развитие регионального диалога.

Подтверждением моих слов стал недавний визит в страны нашего региона Генерального секретаря господина Антониу Гутерриша, который дал высокую оценку и решительно поддержал динамичные процессы сближения и интеграции в Центральной Азии.

Прошу передать ему наши наилучшие пожелания.

Ещё раз выражаю признательность уважаемому Касым-Жомарту Кемелевичу за прекрасную организацию нашего саммита.

Благодарю за внимание.

Speech 14: *Address by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the first “Central Asia – European Union” summit (04.04.2025)*

**Distinguished heads of delegations!**

**Ladies and gentlemen!**

I am delighted to welcome you all at the first Central Asia – European Union Summit.

I would like to express the words of special appreciation to the President of the European Council, Mr. Antonio Costa, President of the European Commission, Ms. Ursula von der Leyen, and all my colleagues - the leaders of the countries of the region, for supporting our initiative to hold the summit at this very place, the ancient city of Samarkand.

For many centuries, this renowned city, located at the main crossroads of the Great Silk Road, was an important center for dialogue of civilizations, diplomatic, trade and cultural exchanges between the East and the West.

Many historical facts are there to it. Namely, more than six centuries ago Amir Temur, the ruler of Maverannahr, established active relations with European monarchies to ensure free and safe trade.

I cannot overlook the contribution of the great scholars and thinkers of our region, Khorezmi, Ferghani, Biruni, Avicenna, Ulugbek, and others to the development of world science and philosophy, also in Europe.

And today, I am pleased to highlight that our relations, having deep roots, are dynamically developing and strengthening in the current conditions.

Open, constructive and productive meetings that we held yesterday, once again show political will and determination to deepen the partnership and practical cooperation for the benefit of our countries and regions.

Once again, I extend my gratitude to the heads of the main institutions of the European Union for their understanding and comprehensive support to the integration processes and sustainable development in Central Asia.

**Distinguished colleagues!**

In the wake of the Ashgabat meeting, our ministers and experts have prepared the summit's agenda that covers all of the main directions of the multi-faceted cooperation.

Today, we will also participate in the plenary session of the Samarkand Climate Forum dedicated to the modern ecological challenges that Central Asia is facing.

**Distinguished heads of delegations!**

Our meeting is taking place amid dynamic and unpredictable global processes.

We are witnessing growing geopolitical tensions, aggravating security problems, large regional conflicts, social and economic challenges to sustainable development.

It is obvious that no region can address such complex issues alone without wide international cooperation. In this regard, I'd like to underline that Central Asia and the European Union are traditional partners and the demand of closer cooperation keeps growing.

We share the commitment of the European side to the principles and norms of international law.

We welcome and fully support the wake of the negotiation process on the peaceful settlement of the situation in Ukraine.

We understand that very difficult and complicated issues need to be solved. However, we don't see any other alternative to the current diplomatic efforts and political settlement.

**Dear colleagues!**

The deep transformation in Central Asia that has gained sustainable and irreversible nature thanks to our shared political will is facilitating the development of our multidimensional cooperation.

The countries of the region are strengthening trust and good neighborliness among each other, expanding large-scale collaboration and cooperation.

Seven to eight years ago, there were even no prerequisites for this. The borders between certain countries were closed. There was no trade, no transit, no business, or any humanitarian exchange. The relations were simply frozen.

No one could even imagine that in the nearest future we would be representing our region together during discussions with European leaders.

I want to highlight that Central Asia's openness and commitment to mutually beneficial cooperation with all partners became the most important condition for ensuring the region's security and prosperity.

In September this year we will host the seventh Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of our region, a platform where we openly and constructively resolve all topical issues on our mutual agenda.

I want to highlight in particular a historical event that took place on the eve of today's summit.

I am talking about the full settlement and signing of agreements on the delimitation of State borders between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Once again, I sincerely congratulate my distinguished colleagues Presidents Emomali Rahmon and Sadyr Japarov.

It is worth noting, that together with our partners we are implementing large investment and infrastructure projects in the region. Meanwhile, joint investment funds and companies are operating to provide support to such projects.

Intraregional trade is increasing. To incentivize it further, border trade zones are established.

I'd like underscore that all of this facilitates sustainable economic development of our countries and the region as a whole.

EBRD experts estimate this year's regional GDP to grow up to six percent, which is visibly higher than the average figures in other regions.

In particular, Uzbekistan is ensuring sustainable economic development by industrialization, investments in infrastructure, liberalization of economy and supporting business.

I would like to note particularly our joint work on the formation of a common regional identity, as well as support to the cultural-humanitarian and educational exchanges.

We are opening branches of leading national educational institutions in our countries.

We are promoting the project of a single Central Asia visa for foreign tourists.

### **Distinguished heads of delegations!**

Our first summit is a logical continuation of two meetings of Central Asian and EU leaders, which were successfully held in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

These interactions were useful to understand the mutual interests and define common avenues of partnership.

I'd like to note that in recent years we have been witnessing noticeable intensification of engagement with the EU.

For the past seven years trade between Central Asian and EU countries has increased several times, reaching 54 billion euros.

Effective cooperation platforms have been launched.

Ministerial meetings, forums, summits and conferences in all key areas are held regularly.

At the same time, I believe that this meeting should become the starting point of a new stage in the development of multi-faceted relations.

In this regard, I would like to share our vision of priorities of further joint work for the mid - and the long-term period.

**First. Efforts and investments in strengthening political dialogue, as well as the legal and institutional framework of multilateral cooperation.**

Based on the outcomes of the summit, we are going to adopt a historic decision on establishing strategic partnership between Central Asia and the EU. We believe it is important to jointly develop and take comprehensive measures for practical implementation of the document.

I am convinced that our strategic partnership must be full of specific decisions, projects, and programs.

In this regard, we propose to consider the issue of signing a fully-fledged Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between our two regions.

We also support the following:

- regular ministerial-level meetings of the heads of foreign ministries to synchronize on the international and the regional agendas;
- intensification of interparliamentary ties and establishing the “Central Asia – EU” Interparliamentary Cooperation Forum with its first meeting to be organized this autumn in Uzbekistan;
- expanding cooperation among leading think tanks.

We fully support the proposal of holding this summit once every two years.

In order to ensure systemic work for the timely implementation of the agreements, we are ready to act as the Summit's Secretariat until the next meeting.

**Second. Investments in economic and technological modernization must become the priority of our interaction.**

In the beginning of June, we are hosting the Tashkent Investment Forum in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

As part of the event, we intend to showcase the current portfolio of projects with leading European companies and banks worth over 30 billion euros.

It is worth mentioning that today, all business “captains”, industrial and innovation leaders of Europe are working successfully in Uzbekistan and other countries of the region.

Among them are such corporations as “Total”, “Siemens”, “Linde”, “Airbus”, “BASF”, “EDF”, “Orano”, “OTP Group” and many others.

We propose to hold a dedicated session at the forum with the title “Investment opportunities of the two regions”.

We also intend to present the Concept of Regional Industrial Park for European companies in Uzbekistan.

I am confident that the Agreement signed earlier on the establishment of the Office of the European Investment Bank in Tashkent will provide incentives for the inflow of direct investments from the EU countries to Central Asia.

We build on the European partners' support for yet another initiative – the launch of an Investment platform for promoting major regional projects in the fields of green energy, innovation, transport, infrastructure and agriculture.

In addition, we are making a number of new proposals to bring closer the economic interests of our countries.

These include, in particular:

- Conclusion of a multilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement;
- Establishment of a joint Central Asia – European Union Chamber of Commerce with broad engagement of the private sector;
- Adoption of a joint regional program for the support of small and medium-sized enterprises, especially female entrepreneurs.

We are ready to host in Uzbekistan the next Economic Forum and the Investors' Forum for Transport Connectivity.

It is also important to expand technical assistance of the European Union to increase the potential of our exporters, set up laboratories and centers of standardization and certification.

**Third. During the Summit decision will be taken on the deepening of cooperation and investments in the field of critical raw materials.**

It is noteworthy that Uzbekistan has a significant positive experience of cooperation with leading European companies in the field of geological exploration and development of strategic raw materials deposits, establishing high-tech production and their in-deep processing.

We are committed to deepening the expansion of mutually beneficial cooperation with the European Union in this area.

The main obstacle is the lack of efficient transport corridors to deliver the production, as well as finished industrial and agricultural goods to European market.

In particular, we need to develop coordinated measures and create favorable business conditions for expanding and fully utilizing the capacity of Transcaspian transport corridor.

I am confident that these tasks are fully in line with the goals of the “Global Gateway” program.

In this regard, and with a view of developing coordinated approaches, we propose to convene under the auspices of the European Union, the meeting of Transport Ministers of the countries located along this route.

**Fourth. Investments in “green” energy and ecological environmental sustainability are of strategic significance.**

Uzbekistan fully supports the international project to supply electricity from Central Asia to Europe. On the eve of the Summit, the relevant agreement on the implementation of this project was ratified.

It is noteworthy that we intend to increase the share of renewable energy in the country's energy mix up to 54 percent, and commission 24 thousand megawatt of green capacities by 2030.

Establishment of Central Asia – European Union Partnership on Clean Energy can become an important platform for engagement.

In order to develop the project financing and facilitate the growth of carbon credits market, we propose to form a Working Group at the level of the heads of relevant agencies.

During the upcoming Climate Forum, we are going to present Central Asia Green Development Concept.

**Fifth. Investments in human capital will expand educational, cultural and humanitarian exchanges.**

This can be facilitated by providing special quotas to the countries of the region as part of “Erasmus Plus” Program for training highly qualified specialists.

We are ready to establish the office of “HORIZON EUROPE” Program in Uzbekistan in order to enhance the scientific and educational cooperation with the countries of Central Asia.

In addition, we propose to develop a joint Program of Scientific and Technological Exchanges in the fields of artificial intelligence, “big data”, digital transformation and cosmic studies.

Uzbekistan is also putting forth the following initiatives:

- Inclusion of the regional countries in the European Digital Education Action Plan;

- Implementation of partnership roadmap among leading universities of Central Asian countries and European Union.

The staging of national ballet “Lazgi” with participation of European specialists has been a vivid example of cooperation in cultural sphere.

In Europe, the largest museums such as the Louvre, the Neues Museum (New Museum) in Berlin and the Weltmuseum Wien (World Museum) in Vienna held successful exhibitions of Central Asian historical heritage.

During the upcoming UNESCO General Conference to be held this autumn here in Samarkand for the first time in forty years outside Paris, we would like to introduce even wider the rich culture and art of the peoples of the region to all our foreign partners.

This year we also intend to host the first Central Asia – European Union Tourist Forum in Bukhara.

We count on the support of our European partners in the implementation of “One Travel – Entire Region” Concept, which builds on the expertise of EU countries. In addition, we hope that visa facilitation for tourists from our regions will be given due consideration.

### **Distinguished heads of delegations!**

There is a growing significance of cooperation in the fight against common security threats, including terrorism, extremism, radicalism, cybercrime, drug trafficking and illegal migration.

We support the proposal of European partners on the launch of the counterterrorism dialogue.

We believe it is important to expand the practical interaction as part of BOMCA and CADAP programs.

We are ready to continue the political consultations on peaceful development in Afghanistan. Regrettably, the global community underestimates all challenges emerging from the territory of this country.

We believe it is important to actively engage the Afghan side in regional economic processes, also through implementation of investment and infrastructure projects, restoring the social sector. We hope for understanding and support in facilitating the international community's constructive dialogue with the Afghan authorities to meet the current commitments.

**Dear participants of the summit!**

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the importance of introducing the mechanisms for practical implementation of our initiatives and agreements.

In this regard, we believe it would be appropriate to establish the "Central Asia – EU" Partnership Committee at the level of Deputy Prime Ministers and hold its meetings on annual basis.

**Dear friends!**

I once again extend my deep gratitude to all of you for open, trust-based and constructive dialogue.

I am confident that the heads of leading European institutions and financial organizations have learnt for themselves that the countries of Central Asia have shared positions and are committed to large-scale cooperation as a reliable and responsible partner.

I congratulate all of you on the adoption of historical decision on the establishment of strategic partnership between our two regions.

For the practical implementation of all agreements reached and initiatives, I suggest that within one month, the Secretariat jointly with the experts develops a roadmap that could be approved in a working order.

*Thank you for your attention.*

*Speech 15: Address by the President of the Republic Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the 150th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (07.04.2025)*

Your Excellency distinguished Tulia Ackson!

Your Excellency distinguished Martin Chungong!

Honorable leaders and members of parliaments!!

Ladies and gentlemen!

I am delighted to welcome the distinguished delegations from all continents of the world to Uzbekistan for the participation in the 150th Anniversary Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The Union Assembly bringing together 181 national parliaments and 15 regional associations, is held in the Central Asian region for the first time. We are immensely proud that the conference is being held in our magnificent capital city of Tashkent.

We perceive such high trust and respect as recognition of the profound accomplishments secured in the large-scale democratic reforms in our country, the development of parliamentarism and representative authority.

I was also a member of the parliament for 15 years. I know and understand the responsibility of your noble mission aimed at making the world more peaceful and societies more prosperous.

You act as a strong bridge of friendship connecting peoples. You are a powerful force capable of taking care of people's concerns and problems, and elevating them from the lowest levels of the system to the regional and, if necessary, to international level, and offering effective solutions.

You are indeed playing a key role in expressing the will of your people, elaborating national development models, and adequately responding to modern threats.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the leadership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, representatives of the legislative bodies of the member and observer states of the organization, as well as international parliamentary associations.

Welcome to Uzbekistan, dear guests!

Dear participants of the Assembly!

It is no secret that in recent years, armed conflicts, environmental and technogenic disasters, economic crises, trade wars, threats of terrorism and extremism have been increasing in various regions of the world.

In such extremely complex conditions, the time itself demands that parliaments increase their involvement and influence in maintaining peace, ensuring social development and justice in the world.

I would like to emphasize that the Inter-Parliamentary Union has become the most prestigious and largest multilateral institution in implementing parliamentary diplomacy and systemically addressing urgent issues based on the common interests of the peoples and states.

Its contribution to global stability and cohesion is reflected in the Union's permanent observer status at the United Nations. The fact that more than 2,000 participants from almost 140 countries are taking part in today's Forum clearly attests to this.

There is undoubtedly a profound symbolic meaning behind the fact that, at our initiative, the Assembly is being held under the slogan “Parliamentary Action for Social Development and Justice”.

According to analyses, over the past thirty years, the volume of world GDP has increased by 4.5 times. However, unfortunately, the incomes of poor layers of global population have not changed much.

If this trend persists, 575 million people in the world will live in poverty by 2030. Meanwhile, 84 million children will be deprived of the opportunity to attain education.

It is obvious that this situation causes great harm to the economy and society, weakens the functioning of socio-economic institutions, and ultimately limits people's opportunities.

Certainly, identifying the root causes of such inequality and mitigating its consequences is a primary task for all of us.

I believe that the establishment and further expansion of multifaceted cooperation between the representative bodies of states in this direction will make a significant contribution to our common development.

I hope that parliaments will mobilize their full intellectual capacity and opportunities, utilize and exchange the best traditions and advanced practices, while uniting their efforts.

I wish you all every success and best of luck in such an honorable mission.

Dear leaders and members of delegations!

Today, the New Uzbekistan is taking bold steps towards irreversible democratic reforms and pragmatic foreign policy, conducting an open and active dialogue with the world community.

We are creating favorable conditions for building a strong and responsible parliament in our country and implementing effective parliamentary diplomacy.

We specifically defined the development of the parliamentary institution in the "Uzbekistan – 2030" Strategy as an important objective. In recent years, more than 20 laws aimed at enhancing the role of the legislative branch in the life of society and the state have been adopted.

The new Constitution adopted at a national referendum in 2023 has significantly increased the powers of parliament. The absolute powers of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis were increased from 5 to 12, and the powers of the Senate – from 14 to 18. A number of presidential

powers to form judicial, anti-corruption and anti-monopoly bodies have been transferred to the legislature. Parliament's participation in the formation of the government has been further strengthened, as well as mechanisms of control over law enforcement agencies.

In alignment with these changes, the powers of the local Kengashes (councils) of people's deputies in our regions were also expanded. In particular, more than 30 powers were transferred to the local Kengashes, and these processes are continuing steadily.

Currently, the share of women in our national parliament has reached 38 percent. We are particularly pleased that this indicator has been recognized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and ranked the highest growth in the Asian region in the last thirty years.

Additionally, in 2021, youth parliaments were established for the first time ever under the chambers of the Oliy Majlis.

Currently, our national parliament has established close relations with nearly 100 foreign partners. Eighty joint friendship groups and commissions are functioning effectively.

Uzbekistan is advancing a number of international initiatives of global importance in the parliamentary sphere. In particular, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution on "Enhancing the role of parliaments in accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals".

In cooperation with the Union, the Inter-Parliamentary Global Cooperation Forum is held every two years to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Representatives of Uzbekistan actively participate in the Assembly of Asian Parliaments, the Forum of Central Asian Parliaments, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and other platforms.

In general, today our representative bodies have assumed significant responsibility in achieving sustainable development goals, supporting civil society institutions, social protection and poverty reduction, ensuring gender equality, fighting corruption.

In pursuit of these noble goals, our parliament is composed of people's elected representatives who have won the trust of the electorate, are dedicated to the cause, have great potential, advanced thinking and rich experience.

Ladies and gentlemen!

Today, global changes in the world are presenting new challenges for the Inter-Parliamentary Union and our national parliaments.

Uzbekistan, as a full member of the Organization, is currently actively participating in the work of all its structures and forums. We have established productive practical cooperation on the priority areas of the global agenda.

Allow me to focus separately on the following issues.

First. Conflicts in various parts of the world pose a serious threat to global and regional peace and security.

I would like to once again emphasize that Uzbekistan strongly believes in resolving conflicts and tensions solely through diplomacy and peaceful negotiations.

We hope that the started negotiation process concerning the situation around Ukraine will ultimately bring to a positive outcome.

We believe it is crucial to find solutions to the most pressing issues based on the universal principles of international law, as well as the UN Charter and resolutions.

This includes the resolution of the Palestine-Israeli conflict through “Two state solution” principle, which we believe is the only fair way.

We cannot but mention Afghanistan - our neighboring country.

We must not forget our neighbor – Afghanistan. We believe it is important to prevent the isolation of this country on the international stage, to establish a constructive dialogue with the current authorities, and to view it as an integral part of the Central Asian region that offers new opportunities. We count on the support of parliaments on this matter.

Uzbekistan recognizes the United Nations as the only universal and global structure which has no alternatives. We fully support the systemic efforts undertaken by Secretary-General António Guterres to deeply reform this international organization and enhance its capacity.

At the same time, we wholeheartedly welcome the statement made by the Eurasian Group dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the Victory in the Second World War.

Second. Climate change, which has become a key challenge of our time and a serious obstacle to the development of our planet, must remain in our focus.

Its devastating consequences are, first and foremost, having the most profound impact on developing countries.

Now, it is more important than ever to fully meet our commitments undertaken under the Paris Agreement and in pursuit of carbon neutrality.

We also thoroughly discussed these issues at the recent International Climate Forum held in Samarkand.

We will achieve substantial progress only if parliaments make it a key priority to support forward-looking initiatives in national climate policies, facilitate the transition to renewable energy sources and “green” technologies.

We believe that climate change must hold a permanent place among the core items on the Assembly’s agenda.

Third. Women’s empowerment is one of the key prerequisites for social development.

According to analysis, if women equally participate in all sectors of the economy, global GDP would increase by 26 percent.

It is certainly encouraging that the share of women parliamentarians worldwide has risen from 11.3 percent in 1995 to 27.2 percent this year.

There is no doubt that through impactful measures to support women's active role in public governance, we will achieve new heights.

I would like to specifically highlight that in recent years, our country has successfully hosted the Asian Women's Forum and the 14th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament in partnership with United Nations institutions and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Taking this opportunity, I hope that you will support our initiative to adopt the United Nations General Assembly resolution "Expanding the socio-economic, political, legal, and cultural-humanitarian activities of Asian women."

Fourth. Youth empowerment to ensure their full participation not only in parliamentary activities but also in all spheres of public life is a highly urgent matter.

Raising a new generation for parliaments and establishing effective international cooperation in this area is a key factor for our future.

Therefore, I believe it is necessary to actively involve young people in the work of national parliaments and the Union, and to strengthen ongoing dialogue.

In this regard, I propose to establish a Global Platform of Youth Parliaments as part of IPU system, and hold its inaugural forum in Uzbekistan.

Fifth. Ensuring every individual's right to social protection and providing high-quality services in accordance with international standards and norms is more relevant than ever.

By declaring Uzbekistan a social state, we have made comprehensive protection of the population a top priority of our policy. We are currently implementing the “From Poverty to Prosperity” program.

Over the past eight years, 7 million people have been lifted out of poverty, reducing its rate from 35 percent to 8.9 percent. This year, we aim to bring it down further to 6 percent.

We invite representatives of your national parliaments to actively participate in the upcoming international conference on poverty reduction, which will be held in our country this September.

Yet another important issue. The time itself is demanding that we strengthen systemic cooperation in the field of artificial intelligence, which is now rapidly penetrating all spheres of life.

If a model law on the ethics of AI use is developed, this innovative legal framework would offer a valuable template for all countries in effectively regulating this rapidly-evolving domain.

Honorable leaders and members of parliaments!

It is important to note that all our proposals and initiatives are fully aligned with the goals of the Inter-Parliamentary Union’s strategy.

At the same time, I believe our approaches will also be reflected in the Tashkent Declaration, which will be adopted based on the outcomes of this historic Assembly.

Certainly, no state or society can develop solely through the adoption of numerous laws or resolutions.

We can achieve our shared objectives by uniting on this path, strengthening the spirit of law-making, and mobilizing all our knowledge and experience towards this common goal.

I believe that during the nearly 70 events and debates held within the framework of the Assembly, there will be a comprehensive exchange of views on the most important tasks facing parliaments, and promising plans will be outlined.

All decisions adopted will open a new chapter in the history of our multi-faceted and long-term cooperation.

Dear friends!

I wish you all strong health unwavering energy in your noble efforts to achieve the international community's sustainable development goals, to ensure social justice and equality and promote high democratic values!

I wish every success and great achievements to the Assembly.

Thank you for your kind attention!