

Uzbekistan Independence Day Special

Widespread reforms mark 30th anniversary

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AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE OF UZBEKISTAN



This year Uzbekistan is celebrating its 30th anniversary as an independent nation. The country continues to implement comprehensive reforms to create a "New Uzbekistan" where

the rights, freedoms and interests of the people are held in the highest regard. The global community has acknowledged the results of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's policy, describing the current processes as "a New Uzbekistan phenomenon."

The Uzbek government began by initiating structural reforms to liberalize the economy, improve the market mechanisms and expand the private sector's economic role. It then built on that by introducing legislation aimed at reducing the state's participation in economic processes, as well as laws that specify the principles of investment activities, guarantee investor rights and provide additional benefits to business.

Over the past four years, the country's position in the Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom has improved by 52 places, while its position in the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index has climbed by 19. In 2020, Uzbekistan ranked 69th in the World Bank's Doing Business report and was listed among the Top 20 reformer countries in terms of scale and effectiveness of its reforms. In 2020, foreign domestic investment increased 57% compared with 2019 and amounted to \$6.6 billion.

The ultimate goal of all reforms is to ensure the well-being of the people. Our gross domestic product growth



President Shavkat Mirziyoyev EMBASSY OF UZBEKISTAN

rate remained around 1.6% in 2020, and Uzbekistan was among the few countries to show positive growth during the pandemic.

The country has made significant foreign policy achievements as well. The main one is the strengthening of friendly and mutually beneficial relations with

states in Central Asia. Uzbekistan has managed to take its relations with the world's leading nations to fundamentally new levels. Uzbekistan became actively engaged in regional and international organizations, and the election of Uzbekistan to the U.N. Human Rights Council for 2021 to 2023 was a significant success for Uzbek diplomacy. The president noted that it was an acknowledgment of Uzbekistan's major reforms in improving the rights of women, youth and children, as well as a sign of support by the global community for its new active foreign policy.

Uzbekistan is playing an increasingly important role in initiating multilateral documents aimed at solving global problems, such as the Uzbek leader's proposals to develop an International Code on Voluntary Commitments of States during pandemics and his call to adopt a U.N. General Assembly resolution on increasing the role of parliaments in achieving the U.N.'s sustainable development goals. The adoption by the U.N. of a resolution declaring the Aral Sea region an environ-

mental innovations and technologies zone is also a good example.

Japan is our long-standing and reliable strategic partner. The visit of the president to Japan in December 2019 started a new era in deepening Uzbek-Japanese cooperation. The telephone conversation between our leaders in May this year contributed to the strengthening of the political dialogue between Tashkent and Tokyo. Despite the epidemiological situation, both sides managed to successfully undertake large-scale investment projects, such as the construction of an ammonia and urea plant at Navoiyazot, the Turakurgan thermal power plant and a second combined cycle plant at the Navoi thermal power plant. There is ongoing collaboration in the fields of education, health care, culture and tourism, among others.

I believe that the close historical and cultural ties between our countries, along with the enormous potential for economic and political cooperation, will continue to deepen the Uzbek-Japanese strategic partnership.

A key partner in Central Asia

TARO ASO
CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPAN-UZBEKISTAN
PARLIAMENTARY LEAGUE OF FRIENDSHIP



I would like to express my heartfelt felicitations to the leadership and people of Uzbekistan on their 30th anniversary of independence.

Our countries maintain close relations with deep historical ties that date back to the time of the Great Silk Road. Uzbekistan was the center of the Great Silk Road and cradle of ancient civilization.

Uzbekistan is a key strategic partner of Japan in Central Asia. Under the strong leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, a wide range of economic, social and democratic reforms are being implemented in the country.

Japan-Uzbek relations have been developing in the spirit of the 2002 joint

statement on friendship, strategic partnership and cooperation, as well as the 2019 joint statement on further deepening and expanding the strategic partnership between Japan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The official visits of then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Uzbekistan in October 2015 and the president to Japan in December 2019 were the most important events in the history of Japan-Uzbek relations and gave stimulus to the further development of our relations in the fields of politics, economy, finance, investment, tourism, technology and science.

During a Japan-Uzbek summit phone call in May, our leaders concurred on further developing this strategic cooperative relationship.

On the 30th anniversary of independence, I express my sincere belief in the further development of the cooperation between Japan and Uzbekistan and the further expansion of the ties of friendship between our peoples.

I wish the people and leadership of Uzbekistan peace, health and prosperity.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.

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to the People of
the Republic of Uzbekistan
on the Occasion of
the Anniversary of
Their Independence

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Overseas Merchandise Inspection Co., Ltd. (OMIC)

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