

## Uzbekistan independence day/world

## Moving forward in many aspects on the world stage

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AMBASSADOR OF UZBEKISTAN TO JAPAN

On Sept. 1, the people of Uzbekistan celebrate the 19th anniversary of gaining their independence. Historically, over the past short period of time our country under the leadership of H.E. President Islam Karimov has achieved significant results in the building of an open democratic state and strong civil society.

At the moment, the potential and capability of our country radically differ from what they were in the early years of independence. The authority and prestige of Uzbekistan is growing in the world, its might and strength are being consolidated. One of the major factors that serves for the strengthening of our confidence in the future is that we set before ourselves clear and precise goals.

An important condition and guarantee of ensuring the progress of the country is the further improvement of all spheres of life, be it the provision of reforms in the political, social or judicial system; the consolidation of social and political activeness in the population; the development of a multiparty system; the further liberalization of public life; the rise in status and influence of public and non-state organizations; in short, implementation of the transition from a strong state to a strong civil society.

Thanks to following the course of long-term principles,

Uzbekistan from the first days of its independence succeeded to realize the difficult package that secured the stable base of consistent economic growth and today it has become the leading industrial center of the region.

The "Uzbek model" of economic growth, which is based on five principles of reforms and renewal of the economy, as well as a restrained and considered economic policy, confirmed the precise strategy of Uzbekistan in overcoming the global financial crisis.

The active investment policy of our country, the technical modernization of various industries and manufacturing infrastructure have allowed for the creation and growth of new high-tech industries for Uzbekistan, such as motor vehicle construction, electrical technology, railway machinery construction, pharmaceuticals, textiles and other industries.

This became the base for providing the microeconomic stability and high rate in growth of the gross domestic product (GDP), which exceeded 7 percent in 2002-2007, and in the last three years the GDP growth rate in Uzbekistan was more than 8 percent.

Thanks to the adopted Anti-Crisis Program for 2009-2012, Uzbekistan was among the few countries in the world that secured a 8.1 percent GDP growth rate in 2009, 9 percent in industrial production, while the



President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Islam Karimov

volume of investment into the economy exceeded 26 percent and foreign direct investment increased by 1.8 times.

In the first half of 2010 the economic growth rate of Uzbekistan is 8 percent and according to forecasts of relevant international financial institutions, this figure will rise to 8.5 percent in 2010 and 9 percent in 2011.

I want to emphasize that the role and achievements of Uzbekistan in carrying out a stable policy of development for the country was recognized by the international community with the convening from May 1-4 this year of the 43rd annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank in Tashkent, the first time the ADB meeting was hosted in the Central Asia and

Caucasus regions.

This prestigious meeting in Tashkent is a proof of the stable policy development of Uzbekistan and the interest of world-leading countries to deepen multilateral cooperation with our country, which is rich in natural resources and has been effectively carrying out growing economic reforms. The international forum of the ADB was a good opportunity for discussion and understanding of urgent issues of regional and international significance, as well as further enhancement of cooperation in the investment sphere.

It is worth noting that the fruitful talks of President Islam Karimov with H.E. Naoto Kan, who is now the prime minister of Japan, who led the Japanese delegation to the meeting of the ADB, is a vivid evidence of the gradual strengthening of friendly relations between our countries and people, which started from the very first days of Uzbekistan's independence.

Another example of the growing authority of our country in the world arena was the chairmanship of Uzbekistan in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization from June 2009 to June 2010. During the presidency of Uzbekistan, the country paid special attention to the development of international contacts of SCO, consolidation of the legal framework, and development and implementation of initiatives to strengthen security and stability. The Joint Declaration on Cooperation between the Secretariats of the United Nations and the SCO, signed in Tashkent in April, during the visit of U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon to Uzbekistan, will contribute to the development of constructive relations between the two authoritative organizations.

Under the chairmanship of Uzbekistan in the SCO, on June 11, Tashkent hosted the annual meeting of the Council of Heads of Member States of the organization, which was notable for a remarkable number of participants: SCO member states, representatives of observing countries and other foreign countries, senior officials from various international organizations, including the U.N.

Undoubtedly, the Tashkent SCO Summit will secure a special place in the history of the SCO Summit, where important agreements on improving the

efficiency of its operation, strengthening of the regional cooperation and security were agreed upon.

As far as Uzbek-Japanese relations are concerned, I am delighted to note that Japan is one of the oldest and time-tested partners of Uzbekistan. The level and nature of our present cooperation fully meets the spirit and requirements of the 2002 Joint Statement on Friendship, Strategic Partnership and Cooperation. The volume of Japanese investments in our republic's economy has exceeded \$2.3 billion. The organization of the presentation of Uzbekistan at the Japan Parliamentary Museum with the participation of senators and deputies of leagues of the parliamentary cooperation (the League of the Democratic Party of Japan-Uzbekistan and Liberal Democratic Party of Japan-Uzbekistan) in February 2010 can serve as an acknowledgment of the deepening of diverse and comprehensive bilateral relations.

At present, cooperation is actively developing in the areas of energy, mining, motor industry, telecommunications as well as energy-saving technology and pollution-free products.

A favorable example of beneficial cooperation between our countries could be the mobilization of investment and technologies of Japanese companies in various projects in Uzbekistan, particularly, manufacturing of buses, development of telecommunications, modernization of energy sources, geological exploration, etc. As one of the successfully implemented joint projects, one can highlight the manufacturing of Isuzu buses and trucks in the machine-building plant of Samarkand.

The investment conference called New Investment Opportunities in Uzbekistan for Japanese Partners, which was held in Tokyo in April with the participation of representatives of more than 400 Japanese corporations, ministries, agencies and broad political circles, became a vivid evidence of interest from the Japanese side toward the deepening of economic cooperation with our country.

In the framework of the conference the Japanese side was offered an opportunity for investment in the Navoi Free Industrial-Economic Zone of Uzbekistan, in the territory of which the investors are granted unprecedented privileges and favorable benefits. It is worth noting that the main factor for successful development of the Navoi FIEZ and the allocation of the manufacturing complex in its territory is inseparably linked with the implementation of plans for the creation of an international, multimodal logistics center on the base of Navoi International Airport, as well as the existence of an automobile road and railway network of international significance.

The development of the relations in the field of economy gives an appreciable impetus to the activity of bilateral committees for economic cooperation. The offices of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) in Tashkent, as well as the activity of the Uzbek-Japan center, favor the direct contacts of business circles, development of trade, economic and socio-humanitarian interaction between our countries.

One should emphasize the significance and importance of the visit of the Minister for Foreign Affairs Katsuya Okada to Uzbekistan to attend the Third Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Central Asia Plus Japan Dialogue on Aug. 7 in Tashkent. The event, which gathered the

heads of the foreign ministries of participant states, summed up the constructive work of sides concerning the realization of main regulations of the Action Plan adopted during the Second Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Tokyo in June 2006, and determined new specific courses for regional cooperation with the support of Japan.

We highly assess the fruitful negotiations and exchange of views regarding the urgent issues of the mutual interest of member states of the dialogue, including achieving the regional security and stability as well as integration of the economy of Central Asia to the world market structure. We assure that the Tashkent forum will contribute to the prosperity of regional and bilateral cooperation.

While mentioning the cooperation between Uzbekistan and Japan, it is important to draw attention to the enhancement of cultural and humanitarian as well as scientific and academic exchanges.

The organization of the international Uzbek-Japan scientific symposium, called Ancient Civilizations and Religions of Uzbekistan: In Search of Origins of Japanese Culture, in Tokyo and Nara in February, drew a wide response in Japan, with the participation of more than 1200 people. Those events were dedicated to the 1,300th anniversary of the formation of the ancient capital of Japan — the city of Nara, the easternmost point of the great Silk Road.

We are delighted to note that the scientific and archaeological study of the monuments of early Buddhism in southern Uzbekistan have been conducted for many years with the active participation of the Japanese archaeologist Kyudzo Kato, holder of the order of Uzbekistan "Dustlik" who was also awarded the diploma of gratitude of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan for the promotion of bilateral scientific exchange.

At the same time, under the initiative of the President Islam Karimov, 2010 was declared as "Year of the Harmoniously Developed Generation." In March, the representative office of Nagoya University was opened in Tashkent, which undoubtedly will deepen the scientific and educational ties between our countries.

The active promotion in Japan of the rich historical and cultural heritage of Uzbekistan by various public organizations such as the Friendship Associations (Japan-Uzbekistan, Fukushima-Uzbekistan, Fukuoka-Uzbekistan, Central Eurasian Club-Gunma, Date-Uzbekistan) is contributing to the enhancement of cultural and humanitarian cooperation between our countries through public diplomacy.

It is worth noting that Uzbekistan has an enormous tourism potential with around 4,000 historical monuments and architectural masterpieces, most of which are designated UNESCO World Heritage sites. Such ancient cities as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva and Tashkent, which were the centers of the great Silk Road, are attracting the interest of foreign tourists.

Twice-weekly, direct regular flights of Uzbek National Airways between Japan and Uzbekistan serve Narita and Kansai airports, promoting the stable growth of Japanese tourists to Uzbekistan.

In conclusion, we are pleased to note that the independent path of Uzbekistan is clear evidence of the successful reforms under the leadership of President Islam Karimov and a solid foundation for friendly relations with Japan, providing a basis for the deepening of the bilateral strategic partnership.



Imposing: Registan Square in Samarkand, a UNESCO World Heritage site, has been a center of Great Silk Road which attracts many tourists from all over the world. EMBASSY OF UZBEKISTAN

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to the People of the Republic of Uzbekistan  
on the Occasion of the 19th Anniversary  
of Their Independence

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