

Uzbekistan independence day

Twenty-two years of dynamic growth and prosperity

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On Sept. 1, the people of Uzbekistan widely celebrate the 22nd anniversary of the independence. Over the past short period, under the leadership of H.E. President Islam Karimov, the Republic of Uzbekistan has achieved significant progress and sustainable development in all spheres of life.

In his speech at celebrations of the 21st anniversary of independence, the President Karimov noted: "Independence allowed us to regain our self-consciousness, human dignity, self-esteem, sacred religion, traditions and it shall eternally be enshrined as golden pages in the history of Uzbekistan. Today Uzbekistan finds its commendable place among sovereign nations, relies on its own might and potential, is capable to defend its frontiers, peaceful and tranquil life of its citizens, secures a worthy place in the international community and shows consistent growth rates."

The "Uzbek model" of economic growth confirmed the precise strategy of Uzbekistan in overcoming the consequences of the global financial crisis.

Thanks to the forward-looking economic policy of President Karimov, during the years of independence Uzbekistan's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 3.7 times, per capita ratio by 2.6 times and the real income of the population per capita rose seven times.

Through the realization of integrated measures in the country for sustainable and dynamic development of the



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

national economy, the consistent increase of the level of life standards, over the last six years the economy of Uzbekistan has grown 8.2 percent annually. The capacity of industrial production has increased to 8.2 percent, agricultural production to 7.3 percent, services to 12.1 percent, and retail trade turnover to 14.6 percent in the first half of 2013. The state budget has been implemented with a proficiency of 0.4 percent to GDP and inflation rate was not more than 7 percent.

Favorable business environment, the concession of a broad system of legal guarantees and privileges for foreign investors contributed to a significant increasing of foreign direct investment flows into the country. The export capacity of Uzbekistan increased to 11.6 percent and \$11.7 billion of investment was drawn in Uzbekistan in

2012.

For further encouragement and creation of favorable conditions for foreign investment and effective use of a large economic potential of the country, the Free Industrial Economic Zone "Navoi," Special Industrial Zones "Angren" and "Jizzakh" were created with concession through a special legal regimes, including: unprecedented customs, currency and tax incentives, making them one of the most liberal and attractive free economic zones in the world.

2013 was declared by President Karimov as the "Year of Wellbeing and Prosperity." Under this national program, in the first half of 2013 nearly 15,800 small entrepreneurs and 554,400 jobs were created. A characteristic feature of the state budget is its social orientation, where 60 percent of all government spending is directed to social development funding. As an outcome implementation of appropriate national programs on the sphere of social protection of population, the volume of housing grew nearly two times for recent years, and 98.5 percent of families own houses or apartments and 97.5 percent of the rural population has a plot of land.

The Republic of Uzbekistan has established very close political, economic and cultural ties with Japan, and Japan is one of the oldest and time-tested key partners of Uzbekistan. Legal bases of cooperation consist in more than 130 bilateral treaties.

Over the past period President Karimov visited Japan three times (1994, 2002 and 2011).

During the official visit of President Karimov to Japan on

Feb. 8-11, 2011, President Karimov met with His Imperial Majesty Emperor Akihito, the prime minister, speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of the Diet, the minister of foreign affairs, which gave an additional boost to bilateral relations and lifted the strategic partnership to the new level.

After the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011, President Karimov sent humanitarian aid to Japan and expressed his sincere condolences and shared the pain and sorrow of Japanese people.

Inter-parliamentary ties are also being actively developed through various forums with the participation of the parliamentary leagues of friendship the Liberal-Democratic Party of Japan-Uzbekistan, Democratic Party of Japan-Uzbekistan. During the visit of an Uzbek delegation led by the chairman of the Senate of Oliy Majlis of Uzbekistan to Japan in December 2010, the first inter-parliamentary forum Uzbekistan-Japan was held.

Both sides have been vigorous in bolstering multilateral contacts within the Central Asia plus Japan dialogue. The Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Dialogue is held constantly, the third of which was held in Tashkent (August 2010) and the fourth was held in Japan (November 2012).

From 1993 Uzbekistan consistently supports Japan's aspirations for a permanent seat in the U.N. Security Council.

Also since 2002 political consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of both countries have been held on a regular basis, where the 12th round of consultations was held

in June 2013 in Tashkent. The Japanese partners stressed Uzbekistan's key role in ensuring security, stability and sustainable development in the region. Tokyo supports the efforts of the Republic of Uzbekistan in addressing regional issues, including the use of water resources in the Central Asia region based on universally recognized principles of international law with regard to the interests of the region's states. It was stated that Uzbekistan and Japan were making an important contribution to the socioeconomic development of Afghanistan and stabilizing the country.

In 2012 the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations was widely celebrated in Japan and Uzbekistan.

Founded in 1994 the Uzbek-Japanese and the Japanese-Uzbek Committees on Economic Cooperation, whose 11th joint session was held on March 5, 2013, in Tashkent, play important roles in developing trade and economic cooperation.

In 2012 the trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$214.7 million. During the period of January-June 2013 bilateral trade amounted to \$126.5 million. The volume of Japanese financial enclosures is \$2.3 billion, including the government-privileged yen credits worth more than \$1.2 billion.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan External Trade Organization (JET-RO), the Uzbek-Japanese Center and more than 20 other Japanese company representatives carry out business in Uzbekistan. One of the vivid examples of econom-



Modern and traditional: Above, located in the center of the capital Tashkent, Amir Timur Square features a statue of Timur, the outstanding commander of the 14th century, and surrounded by many buildings, including Hotel Uzbekistan (left) and Palace of International Forums (right). Right, the Registan complex stands in Samarkand, a UNESCO World Heritage site. EMBASSY OF UZBEKISTAN



ic cooperation is the production of buses and trucks under the Isuzu brand at Samarkand Automobile Factory.

The cooperation in the cultural-humanitarian and educational fields is also successfully developing with public friendship organizations in Japan such as the Japan-Uzbekistan Association, Fukushima-Uzbekistan, Fukuoka-Uzbekistan, Central Eurasia-Gunma; the Japanese garden in Tashkent, Hiroshima Peace Stone, The Bell of Peace monuments in Tashkent are fruitfully contributing to strengthening of cultural cooperation.

Historical cities of the Great Silk Road — Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva and Tashkent — and twice-a-week direct Uzbeki-

stan Airways flights from Tokyo to Tashkent also contribute to the further growth of Japanese tourists to Uzbekistan.

In conclusion, it's emphasized that implementation of political, economic, democratic reforms,

peace, stability and inter-ethnic harmony in Uzbekistan and close friendly relations between the two nations will serve for the further strengthening of the strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and Japan.

Congratulations

to the People of the Republic of Uzbekistan
on the Occasion of the 22nd Anniversary
of Their Independence

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