

# Uzbekistan independence day

## 24 years of dynamic growth

Farrukh Tursunov  
AMBASSADOR OF UZBEKISTAN

On Sept. 1, the people of Uzbekistan celebrate the 24th anniversary of Independence. Over the past short period, under the leadership of H.E. President Islam Karimov, Uzbekistan has turned into a modern, stable country with a sustainable pace of industrialization of the economy.

Karimov noted that "Independence is a sacred good comparable with nothing, while its attainment is a great, vital event that brought freedom to our people, awakened our national self-consciousness, honor and pride, the sense of dignity, an event that returned our native language, our religion, values and traditions to us. Independence for us is an opportunity to dispose freely of our fate, that of our country, its natural, economic and intellectual resources, mobilize its immense material and spiritual potential for the good of our people, and acquire a well-deserved place in the world community."

During the years of independence, the economy of the Republic of Uzbekistan has been evolving on basis of the national model developed by Karimov, considering such factors as the social and economic potential of the country, history of the Uzbek people, national values, as well as the best international practices.

Implementation of five basic principles of transition to a socially oriented free market economy during reforms has enabled the country to achieve desired results, provide sustainable economic growth and improve national welfare in a short historical period.

As a result of reforms, the structure of the economy was radically changed, a reliable legal framework for dynamic economic development and a favorable investment climate were created.

This is supported by such macroeconomic indicators as a more than five-fold increase of the gross national product during the years of independence, and an increase in the real income of the population of nine times. The annual GDP growth rate over the last 10 years exceeded 8 percent.

A favorable investment climate and stimulus measures, as well as guaranteed protection of the rights of investors, contributed to the increase in the volume of accumulated investments to \$190 billion.

In turn, steady investment flow into Uzbekistan's industrial sector, creating entirely



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

new industries such as automotive, petrochemical, oil and gas equipment, railway engineering, production of modern building materials, home appliances, pharmaceuticals, food and textiles. These sectors produce more than 60 percent of industrial output.

Additionally, A free industrial economic zone in the city of Navoi and special industrial zones in Angren and Jizzak were created and are some of the most liberal and attractive free economic zones in the Central Asia region.

One of the promising areas, strengthened by huge potential, is the tourism industry, the development of which is gaining rapid momentum. The rich historical heritage of the Uzbek people is attracting growing interest among foreign tourists, thanks to the fact that Uzbekistan occupies one of the leading positions in the world in terms of number of historical sites in the form of more than 4,000 ancient monuments. Ancient traditions and Uzbek culture, which are densely intertwined with the history of the Silk Road, are also appealing. There are over 100 tourist itineraries covering all regions of Uzbekistan and focusing on familiarization with the unique historical, architectural ensembles and monuments, 140 of which are listed as UNESCO historic sites.

UNESCO World Heritage cities and historical cities of the Silk Road: Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Tashkent, as well as twice-weekly direct Uzbekistan Airways flights from Narita to Tashkent contribute to increasing Japanese tourism in Uzbekistan.

Today, with the passing of time, we are convinced again of the correctness of the well-thought-out strategy of demo-



An ancient religious square, the Hasti Imam complex in the capital Tashkent has been an important center of Islamic culture in Uzbekistan for over a thousand years. EMBASSY OF UZBEKISTAN

cratic reforms we opted for, acknowledged throughout the world as the "Uzbek Model" of development that completely meets the interests of the people.

Uzbekistan is also consistently modernizing the country, deepening democratic reforms and liberalizing all aspects of society, as well as working to further increase the living standards of its people. Deep reforms in the sphere of the formation and development of an effective and democratic election system were held. Last December saw nationwide elections to the parliament (Oliy Majlis), as well as elections for regional and city councils. Additionally, in March, presidential elections were held under the ideas of democratic principles, transparency and international norms.

Meanwhile, the biggest wealth of Uzbekistan is its hardworking 32 million people, who make up 55 percent of the entire Central Asia region. In Uzbekistan more than 120 nationalities live in an atmosphere of peace, friendship and interethnic and civic harmony.

As a logical continuation of a socially oriented government policy, at the initiative of President Karimov, 2015 was declared as the year of "Care for the Older Generation."

Uzbekistan's achievements and milestones are also widely recognized by the world community. In particular, the country ranks fifth among fast-growing economies, according to the World Economic Forum. According to the "World Happiness Report" carried out by sociologists at Columbia University, with the assistance of the U.N., Uzbekistan took 44th place out of 158 countries and first place among countries in the Commonwealth of Inde-

pendent States.

In 2015 our countries celebrated the 23rd anniversary of diplomatic relations. However, the history of the relationship of our countries goes back to the dawn of the Silk Road.

Japan is a time-tested key and strategic partner of Uzbekistan. Regular visits at senior governmental and parliamentary levels, growing interest in establishing further cooperation of business groups and a richness of cultural and humanitarian cooperation represent modern and dynamic development.

The official visit by Karimov to Japan in February 2011 provided a potent impetus to the development of strategic cooperation between our countries.

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visited Uzbekistan in August 2006. Moreover, Japan's Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso and Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Toshimitsu Motegi visited Uzbekistan in 2014 to hold discussions with the leadership of Uzbekistan.

Inter-parliamentary ties are being actively developed through various forums with the participation of the "Japan Parliamentary League of Friendship with Uzbekistan" and the "Democratic Party of Japan-Uzbekistan."

Uzbekistan also consistently supports Japan's aspiration for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council. The Japanese partners stress Uzbekistan's key role in ensuring security, stability and sustainable development in the region. Tokyo welcomes the efforts of Uzbekistan in addressing regional issues, including the use of water resources in Central Asia based on universally recognized principles of interna-

## Historically close ties mark modern, strategic partnership

Taro Aso  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPAN-UZBEKISTAN PARLIAMENTARY LEAGUE OF FRIENDSHIP

I would like to express my heartfelt felicitations to the government and people of Uzbekistan on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of their Independence.

Uzbekistan is a key partner of Japan in the Central Asia region. Our countries maintain traditionally close relations, which have deep historical roots. Uzbekistan was a major stop on the Silk Road and a cradle of ancient civilization.

During my visit to Uzbekistan in May 2014 I met with H.E. President Islam Karimov and we discussed the issues for strengthening our partnership by accelerating political, economic and cultural relations. As an outcome of our meeting, I welcomed First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Uzbekistan Rustam Azimov in Tokyo in January.

Furthermore, Japan is expanding cooperation in various spheres with Uzbekistan, the major power in Central Asia and a country seeing dynamic economic growth and a significant population increase.

Finally, I wish to the leadership and the people of Uzbekistan peace, health and prosperity and for the further development of friendly and warm relations between our nations.



tional law with consideration of the interests of all states in the region. Uzbekistan and Japan are making an important contribution to the socio-economic development and stabilization of Afghanistan.

The third foreign ministers meeting of the "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue was held in Tashkent in 2010. Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov held negotiations with his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida during the fifth foreign ministers meeting in Bishkek last July.

An important role in bilateral economic relations is played by the Joint Uzbek-Japanese Committee on Economic Cooperation whose 12th session was held in Tokyo in January. During the visit, First Deputy Prime Minister and

Minister of Finance of Republic of Uzbekistan Rustam Azimov was received by Prime Minister H.E. Shinzo Abe.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency, JETRO, the Uzbek-Japan Center and nearly 20 Japanese companies' offices are successfully working in Uzbekistan.

In 2002 President Karimov was awarded honorary doctorates by Waseda and Soka universities, and in 2004 on the grounds of Soka University, a monument to the famous Uzbek poet Alisher Navoi was unveiled.

A solid foundation of historical and cultural ties, as well as strong potential for economic and political cooperation will further serve to deepen the Uzbek-Japanese strategic partnership.



Independence Square in the center of Tashkent is a favorite recreation spot for residents. EMBASSY OF UZBEKISTAN

### Congratulations

to the People of the Republic of Uzbekistan  
on the Occasion of the 24th Anniversary  
of Their Independence

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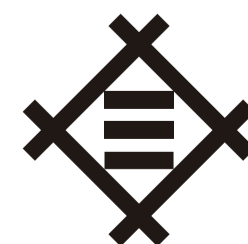
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