

# Uzbekistan Independence Day

## 25 years of dynamic growth and prosperity

Farrukh Tursunov  
AMBASSADOR OF UZBEKISTAN

On Sept. 1, the people of Uzbekistan widely celebrate the 25th Anniversary of State Independence. From its first days of independence, thanks to the wise policies of President H.E. Islam Karimov, Uzbekistan, adhering to its own model of development, is steadily following the path of building a democratic state and strong civil society, while modernizing and renewing the economy and raising living standards.

At celebrations of independence, Karimov noted, "It is thanks to the independence and owing to the hard work accomplished by our brave and steadfast people, in a historically short period of time, our towns, villages and entire country are ever-flourishing and prospering, the living standards and quality of life of our people are rising and Uzbekistan is joining the ranks of modern states."

Karimov, in his keynote speech at the extended session of the Cabinet of Ministers of the

Republic of Uzbekistan, spoke on the outcomes of socio-economic development in the country in 2015 and the crucial priorities of economic programs for the year 2016. He mentioned that, despite the ongoing world financial and economic crisis, stable and sustainable high rates of economic growth and macro-economic balance have been achieved as a result of consistent and systemic implementation of the country's economic program's crucial priorities.

The achievements and prospects of economic development of the country, highly recognized by authoritative international financial and economic organizations and think tanks, once again confirm the high efficiency and success of the chosen development strategy, acknowledged in the world as "The Uzbek Model" of reforms. In particular, according to a World Economic Forum report, Uzbekistan is among the five countries with the fastest-growing economies in the world based on development outcomes for 2014-2015 and forecasts for 2016-2017.



President H.E. Islam Karimov shakes hands with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during the latter's official visit to Uzbekistan in October. EMBASSY OF UZBEKISTAN

Today our country ranks fifth among the fastest-developing states in the world with a six-fold increase of the gross domestic product in the years since independence, the real income of population rising nine times and the annual GDP growth rate over the last 12 years exceeding 8 percent.

A favorable business environment, the concession of a broad system of legal guarantees and privileges for investors increased foreign investment in the country. Free industrial economic zones in the cities of Navoi, Angren, and Jizzak were created as the most-liberal free economic zones in the region.

Meanwhile, the main wealth of Uzbekistan is its hardworking

32 million people which accounts for 55 percent of the entire Central Asia region. In Uzbekistan, in the atmosphere of peace, friendship and inter-ethnic and civic harmony, live more than 120 nationalities.

According to the latest data by the world's most prestigious economic and social centers, Uzbekistan ranks highly. Additionally, Uzbekistan ranks 44th among 158 nations in the Happy Planet Index and is second in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

During the years of independent development, we have achieved enormous successes, with the lives of the people flourishing and becoming more pros-

perous. At the core of these achievements there is the hard work, wisdom, astuteness and firm will of our people. Our people have been preserving peace and tranquility, while carefully safeguarding such aspirations, while bringing up our young generation in this very spirit.

At the initiative of President Karimov, 2016 was declared as the "Year of Healthy Mother and Child," which was a logical continuation of a socially oriented government policy.

As a result of the high level attention Karimov pays to social spheres, first of all to education and sports, talented athletes of Uzbekistan are demonstrating their great victories in international arenas. At the Olympic Games in Brazil, Uzbek athletes showed the highest result in the history of the country's independence. Uzbek athletes, having won 13 medals, took 21st place in the total medal count. Uzbekistan's delegation finished the competition in fourth place in Asia, second place in the CIS and first place in Central Asia.

Modern Uzbekistan is not only integrated into the global community and the global economic and financial markets, but also is an active player in international relations. On June 23 and 24, meetings of the heads of member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization were held under the Presidency of Uzbekistan in Tashkent. The meetings participants included the presidents of Kazakhstan, China,

Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Belarus, Mongolia, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, the Iranian minister of foreign affairs, as well as the U.N. under-secretary-general, the executive secretary of the CIS, the ASEAN secretary-general and others.

Japan is one of the key time-tested and the most reliable partners of Uzbekistan. The official visit by President Karimov to Japan in February 2011 and official visit of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in October to Uzbekistan afforded a potent impetus to the development of strategic cooperation between our countries. As a result of the visit, Karimov and Abe signed a joint statement on deepening and expanding strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and Japan, as well as a number of agreements on cooperation among various ministries and agencies of two countries, including the realization of joint investment projects worth over \$8.5 billion.

Cooperation between Uzbekistan and Japan is developing in all sectors and the current bilateral dynamics are of great importance in further strengthening our trade and economic, investment, cultural and humanitarian ties.

An important role in modern development of trade and economic relations is played by the joint Uzbek-Japanese Committee on Economic Cooperation whose 13th session was held in Tashkent in April. The Japan In-



Registan Square is a UNESCO World Heritage site in Samarkand. EMBASSY OF UZBEKISTAN

ternational Cooperation Agency, the Japan External Trade Organization, the Uzbek-Japan Center and 20 Japanese companies are actively working in Uzbekistan.

As part of our cultural and humanitarian ties, the spouse of Japan's prime minister H.E. Akie Abe and a delegation of Japanese cultural representatives visited Uzbekistan from Aug. 3 to 5 with the aim of further developing and enhancing mutual cooperation of the two countries in the cultural-humanitarian sphere. During the visit she held meetings with the spouse of the President of Uzbekistan, H.E. Tatyana Karimova.

In January our countries will celebrate the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations. However, the history of cooperation between our nations goes back to period of the dawn of the Great Silk Road.

Uzbekistan represents a rich world for tourists. A unique location at the crossroads of the Silk Road is an important factor in the dynamic development of this sector in Uzbekistan, as well as the fact that the country has more than 7,000 monuments of different epochs and civilizations, many of which are included on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

UNESCO World Heritage and Silk Road cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Shakrisabz, Tashkent and Termez, as well as direct Uzbekistan Airways flights from Narita to Tashkent contribute to further growth of Japanese tourists visiting Uzbekistan.

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

### Close friends, strategic partners

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 the occasion of their 25th Anniversary of Independence.

Uzbekistan is a key partner of Japan in Central Asia. Our countries maintain traditionally close relations that have deep historical roots. Uzbekistan was one of the key countries on the Great Silk Road and a cradle of ancient civilization.

Uzbek-Japanese relations have been developing in the spirit of the joint statement on friendship, strategic partnership and cooperation agreement and the joint declaration to deepen and expand our strategic partnership. Official visits by the President of Uzbekistan H.E. Islam Karimov to Japan in February 2011, and by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Uzbekistan in October raised the relations between our countries to a new level.

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



**Congratulations**  
to the People of  
the Republic of Uzbekistan  
on the Occasion of  
the 25th Anniversary of  
Their Independence

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