

Uzbekistan Independence Day

New national milestones

Sept. 1 stands out as a special date for Uzbekistan, as its people widely celebrate the 26th Anniversary of Independence. From the initial days of sovereignty, the nation has spearheaded its own model of development and embarked on building a democratic constitutional state and robust society.

The 26-year independent voyage has proved a period of unprecedented transformation, and a gradual, yet perseverant implementation of cardinal reforms, something that has come to be the backbone of current inspiring achievements of the nation across many spheres and industries. Uzbekistan's accomplishments have been possible owing to the atmosphere of peace and civic harmony prevailing in the country, benevolence and cohesion, along with political stability and an environment conducive for economic growth.

During the festive celebration of the 24th anniversary of the country's Constitution in December, President of Uzbekistan H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev insisted that "the most critical and pressing task to be addressed is what is envisaged in the Constitution — comprehensive securing of human interests." In this regard, the head of state proposed to announce 2017 as the Year of Dialogue with People and of Human Interests in Uzbekistan.

To this end, initiated by our president, the Strategy of Actions along Five Priority Directions for the Development of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021 was approved in February and has been realized. The policy document outlines essential milestones for the nation to secure within the next five years and specifies mechanisms to raise living standards. The business-friendly environment, including the extensive system of legal guarantees and privileges for investors, has facilitated mounting foreign investments into the country. To address this, free economic zones in Navoi, Angren, Jizzakh, Khazorasp,

Urgut, Kokand and Gijduvan have been set up and are currently considered the most liberal industrial zones in the wider region.

Today, Uzbekistan has secured a well-deserved place in the world community. The country is open for close cooperation and practical dialogue with all countries of the world. Uzbekistan has successfully played host to the Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in June 2016, 43rd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in October, the Session of the Foreign Ministers of the CIS in April, "Melodies of the East" UNESCO International Music Festival and conference in August. In the first half of 2017, our president paid state and official visits to Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Russia, China and Saudi Arabia and held bilateral and multilateral meetings with the leaders of more than 50 countries.

In international cooperation, Uzbekistan has regarded Japan as one of the time-tested and the most reliable partners. Our two nations have been tied with close friendship from the ancient times of the Great Silk Road and currently enjoy a strategic partnership.

In 2017, our countries are widely celebrating the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. In this period, we were able to enhance close cooperation in the political, financial, economic, technology, science, cultural, humanitarian and tourism areas. The official visits by the first President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov to Japan in 1994, 2002 and 2011, as well as the official visit by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Uzbekistan in October 2015, afforded a potent impetus to the development of strategic cooperation between our two countries. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov met with his counterpart Fumio Kishida on the sidelines of Central Asia+Japan Ministerial Meeting on April 30.



President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev

The joint Uzbek-Japanese Committee on Economic Cooperation — the 13th session of which took place in Tashkent in April 2016 — plays an important role in trade and economic relations. The Japan International Cooperation Agency, Japan External Trade Organization, the Uzbek-Japanese Center and other Japanese agencies have all been active in Uzbekistan. In the cultural aspect, First Lady of Japan Akie Abe and a Japanese culture representatives' mission visited Uzbekistan in August 2016 with an eye to enhancing the cultural-humanitarian cooperation of the two nations.

Uzbekistan, as one of the world's tourism centers, is an attractive destination for Japanese travelers. A unique location with more than 8,000 historical monuments, the beauty of UNESCO World Heritage cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva and the direct Uzbekistan Airways flights from Narita to Tashkent are crucial factors in the dynamic development of tourism. Particularly, the efforts of the Uzbek government have resulted in organization of 10 charter flights in 2017 from Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka and Sendai directly to the heart of the Silk Road; Samarkand.

The solid bedrock of historical and cultural bonds between our countries along with enormous potential of economic and political cooperation will continue to serve for the further enhancement of the Uzbek-Japanese strategic partnership.

By Askarali Hasanov, Head of Press Section, Embassy of Uzbekistan in Japan

Friendly ties with strategic partner

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

26th Anniversary of Independence.

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

Japanese-Uzbek relations have been developing in the spirit of the 2002 joint statement on friendship, strategic partnership and cooperation and the 2015 joint declaration on deepening and expanding our strategic partnership.

The official visit of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Uzbekistan in October 2015 was the most important event in the history of Japanese-Uzbek relations and gave greater dynamism to the further development of our ties in the political, trade and economy, financial and investment, technology and scientific spheres.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, I express my sincere belief in the further development of cooperation between Japan and Uzbekistan and the extension of the ties of friendship between our peoples.

Finally, I wish the people of Uzbekistan peace, health and prosperity and 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 26th Anniversary
of Their Independence

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