

Uzbekistan strives for modern development with open, global outlook

By Mukhsinkhuja Abdurakhmonov, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Japan

Aug. 31, 1991, marks the day when the Republic of Uzbekistan became a new sovereign state on the world map. The 33rd Anniversary of Uzbekistan's Independence is widely celebrated across the country with the central theme, "United we stand — one nation, one Motherland!"



Mukhsinkhuja Abdurakhmonov

Thanks to our independence, Uzbekistan has become a sovereign, democratic, and secular state with a strong legal and social framework, earning full recognition from the international community. Our global connections are expanding, and our nation's standing and influence on the world stage are continually rising.

In recent years, under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's leadership, Uzbekistan has undertaken significant democratic reforms. These changes underscore the great honor and responsibility of being an independent nation, striving for modern development while maintaining an open and global outlook.

Our key domestic and foreign policy shifts, focused on protecting the national interests of our people, are receiving increasing international recognition and support. For example, the International Monetary Fund has noted that Uzbekistan's economy is experiencing significant growth. In the 2023 fiscal year, the country's GDP reached \$90.9 billion, with an annual growth rate consistently exceeding 5%.

Additionally, Uzbekistan ranked first on the Safety Perception Index 2023, standing out as the safest country among 121 nations, boost-



Courtesy of the Press service of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Shavkat Mirziyoyev, president of the Republic of Uzbekistan

ing its attractiveness to international tourists.

At the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, Uzbek athletes reached a historic milestone by winning eight gold, two silver, and three bronze medals, totaling 13 medals. This outstanding performance earned us 13th place in the global rankings and positioned Uzbekistan at the top among the Commonwealth of Independent States, Muslim, and Turkic countries.

In October this year, Uzbekistan will host another important political event — the elections for the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) and the Councils of People's Deputies. For the first time, these elections will employ a mixed electoral system, combining majoritarian and proportional representation. This change demonstrates Uzbekistan's commitment to technological innovation and inclusiveness, setting the stage for a more prosperous and democratic future.

The global recognition of "New Uzbekistan" is growing, reflecting the transformative achievements in human rights, the fight against

forced labor, media freedom, and civil society development over the past seven years. New Uzbekistan is open to establishing equal and friendly relations with countries worldwide.

Uzbekistan has historically enjoyed close cooperation with Japan, which was among the first to recognize our independence on Dec. 28, 1991. Diplomatic relations began on Jan. 26, 1992, and Japan has significantly contributed to Uzbekistan's modernization efforts, including infrastructure and personnel training.

The visit of our Head of State to Japan in December 2019 greatly enhanced business exchanges between our countries. Japanese companies have since implemented numerous projects in telecommunications, IT, energy, chemicals, petrochemicals, health care, and education.

Economic cooperation remains a priority in Uzbek-Japanese relations, with mutual trade turnover reaching about \$230 million in 2023. More than 70 joint enterprises are actively operating in Uzbekistan, boosting investment and trade.

A dialogue mechanism between our business communities has been established, including two Uzbek-Japanese business forums this year — one in Tashkent with the participation of representatives of about 200 large companies in March and one in Tokyo with the participation of representatives of the Uzbek business community led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Saidov in March. This marks the first time such forums have been held twice in a single year.

Since gaining independence, Uzbekistan has received over \$7 billion in technical assistance from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC)

for socio-economic and infrastructure projects.

Regular political consultations between our Foreign Ministries have created an effective framework for discussing mutual relations. The most recent consultation took place in Tokyo on July 10, focusing on enhancing political dialogue, trade, investment, and cultural cooperation.

On July 11, Tokyo hosted the first-ever "Uzbekistan-Japan Expert Dialogue: Strategic Partnership in New Conditions" conference. This event, involving analysts from both

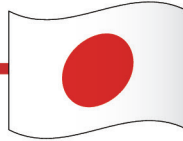
countries, explored the role of our bilateral relations in Central Asia's sustainable development and future cooperation opportunities.

Additionally, cooperation between specific regions has been established in trade, investment, tourism, and education spheres, including Tashkent-Nagoya, Samarkand-Nara, and Rishton-Maizuru. In particular, on July 19-22, for the first time in the history of relations between the two countries, a delegation led by the governor of Gifu Prefecture, Hajime Furuta, made a practical visit to Uzbekistan. In the







framework of it, bilateral cooperation negotiations were organized in the ministries' offices of Uzbekistan and the Samarkand city administration, and joint prospective contracts were signed. Now, the governor of Nara Prefecture, Mako Yamashita, is expected to visit our country this autumn.

The deep historical and cultural ties between Uzbekistan and Japan, coupled with the current level of relations, are crucial for elevating our strategic partnership and strengthening our friendly connections.


Congratulations on the Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan





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Courtesy of the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Japan

Registan Square, a historical monument located in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, is a UNESCO World Heritage site that is a symbol of Uzbekistan's rich historical heritage.

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