

Speech by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the 46th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council



Distinguished President Madame NAZHAT SHAMEEM KHAN!

**Distinguished High Commissioner Madame
MICHELLE BACHELET!**

Ladies and gentlemen!

Today, Uzbekistan is participating at this meeting for the first time as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

It should be noted, that in recent years we have been consciously pursuing this goal. Our democratic reforms have become irreversible and are aimed at establishing a new Uzbekistan.

We are committed to continuing close cooperation with the member states of the Council, all our partners in advancing the initiative of the United Nations «A Call to Action for Human Rights».

Distinguished participants of the session!

I would like to outline the priorities for further enhancing the democratic transformations in Uzbekistan and our work in the framework of the Council.

First. Ensuring fundamental human rights and freedoms shall remain central in reforming Uzbekistan.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development shall be implemented in our country in accordance with the

UN principle of «Leaving no one behind» to ensure the rights and legal interests of every person.

This is the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy, in the preparation of which the experts from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights have actively participated.

Second. In the issues of gender policy we intend to radically increase the role of women in the public, political and business life of the country.

This year we are planning to hold a Women Leaders' Dialogue of Central Asian states and a Regional Women's Business Forum in Uzbekistan.

Third. Special priority shall be given to ensure the rights of people with special needs.

A new Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has recently come into force in our country, in the near future the Parliament of Uzbekistan shall ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

We also propose to establish a Regional Council regarding the self-realization of persons with disabilities.

Fourth. The protection of rights of the youth, who make up more than half of the population of Uzbekistan, is constantly in the focus of our attention.

This year in our country it has been declared the Year of Supporting Youth and Strengthening Public Health.

We are preparing:

- to hold the World Conference on Youth Rights under the UN auspices;
- to present the draft Convention on Youth Rights at the tenth forum of the UN Economic and Social Council;
- and also to submit for consideration the issue of establishment the institution of a Special Rapporteur on Youth Rights.

Fifth. Jointly with the International Labor Organization and the World Bank we have accomplished a profound work in terms of the eradication of forced and child labor. This is one of the main achievements of our reforms.

This International Year for the Elimination of Child Labor, we shall adopt the Law on the Children's Ombudsman.

Sixth. We propose to hold together with the UN High Commissioner Office a Global Forum dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training.

In order to develop the human rights education system we intend to make our contribution to the UN Voluntary Fund for Human Rights.

Seventh. We support the proposal by the UN Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres for taking decisive steps to reduce the number of stateless persons.

Last year alone 50 thousand of our compatriots have acquired citizenship of Uzbekistan, this year more than 20 thousand people shall obtain it, as well.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen!

We intend to further develop the civil society institutions, continue improvements in this field and provide comprehensive support to the freedom of speech in Uzbekistan.

The preparation of codes on non-governmental non-profit organizations and mass media shall continue.

We take into consideration the UN Special Rapporteurs' recommendations on such issues as freedom of religion or belief, as well as on the independence of judges and lawyers.

We suggest the Council to consider the issue of developing the universal principles of the judicial councils.

As a part of introducing the national mechanism for the prevention of torture we shall continue to strictly suppress all forms of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment. Such crimes shall not have a statute of limitations.

We intend to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

For joint work on these issues we intend to invite the Special Rapporteur on torture to Uzbekistan.

Distinguished participants of the meeting!

Uzbekistan is firmly committed to its international human rights obligations.

Along with this, we understand that we are only at the beginning of this path, and we count on the support of our international partners.

In this regard, we are expecting the visit of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Madame Michelle Bachelet to our country, intend to take a decision to extend a standing invitation to all mandate holders to visit Uzbekistan.

We also intend to contribute to the creation of a mechanism for ensuring human rights in the Asian region on the basis of a permanent platform – the Samarkand Forum.

Dear friends!

The 75 years of the UN history has convincingly proved the universal value of human rights. Without it, peace, security and sustainable development would be impossible.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize once again that Uzbekistan as a member of the Human Rights Council shall protect and actively promote the universal principles and norms of the International human rights law.

Thank you for your attention.

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