

Uzbekistan and the United Nations: Long-term Cooperation and Key Directions, as Reflected in Resolutions Initiated by Uzbekistan



Uzbekistan, an active participant in international relations since its independence, has consistently strengthened its position on the global stage. Cooperation with the United Nations is the cornerstone of its foreign policy, which aims to achieve sustainable development, ensure peace and stability in the Central Asian region.

Over the years, Uzbekistan has transformed from a passive observer to an active initiator of significant international resolutions and projects. As noted, the interaction between Uzbekistan and the UN has reached unprecedented levels. Currently, 160 joint programs and projects are being implemented across various sectors, including environmental protection and the digitalization of public services, security, education and health protection. This cooperation has become a pivotal factor in promoting national priorities and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

On September 9, the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly commenced its work under the overarching theme “Better together: 80 years and more for peace, development and human rights.”

The current state of international security, humanitarian and economic crises, and financial issues within the UN system have led to growing concerns about the effectiveness of global governance institutions in addressing planetary challenges.

In this context, the primary objective of the UN General Assembly session, which commemorates the 80th anniversary of the Organization’s founding, is to reaffirm the commitment of Member States to the principles of multilateralism and to explore avenues for renewed international cooperation when feasible.

Uzbekistan, an active participant in international relations, places cooperation with the United Nations at

the forefront of its foreign policy objectives. This cooperation is instrumental in achieving sustainable development, ensuring peace and stability in the Central Asian region.

Uzbekistan joined the United Nations on March 2, 1992, marking the beginning of its integration into the global community. Over the years, Uzbekistan has transformed from a passive observer to an active initiator of significant international resolutions and programs. This partnership has led to unprecedented cooperation with the UN.

If in the 1990s, Uzbekistan focused on building its statehood and participating in key UN treaties on human rights and disarmament, in the 2000s and 2010s, the country actively participated in regional initiatives under the UN's auspices, particularly in the fields of security and sustainable development. However, it was after 2016 that Uzbekistan's role truly began to expand.

On the initiative of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Uzbekistan proposed several important initiatives. In recent years alone, at the country's initiative, 13 special resolutions of the UN General Assembly have been adopted. 160 joint programs and projects are being implemented across various areas, including environmental protection and digitalizing public services, security, education and health protection.

This cooperation has become a key factor in promoting national priorities and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Uzbekistan has made significant progress in this area, particularly in the economic, social, and environmental aspects of development. This success is evident in the fact that Uzbekistan is among the five most progressive countries according to the Global Index of Sustainable Development Goals.

Uzbekistan's cooperation with the UN places a strong emphasis on environmental direction. The country has actively participated in the development of several resolutions, proposing collaborative solutions to common environmental challenges. Notably, in April 2025, the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution "United Nations Decade for Afforestation and Reforestation in line with Sustainable Forest Management (2027-2036)", declaring the period 2027-2036 as the Decade of Action on Afforestation and Reforestation. Another resolution adopted by the General Assembly in August 2024 on the initiative of Uzbekistan, titled "Fostering sustainable forest management, including afforestation and reforestation, in degraded lands, including drylands, as an effective solution to environmental challenges", collectively contributes to sustainable forest management, including afforestation and reforestation, in degraded lands, particularly in drylands.

The Aral Sea tragedy, which has far-reaching and devastating humanitarian, environmental, and socio-economic consequences, transcends regional boundaries and becomes a planetary issue. In response to this global challenge, Uzbekistan recognizes one of its most pressing responsibilities as reducing the negative impact of the Aral Sea. The country aims to preserve the genetic diversity of the region, implement substantial reforms to ensure environmental stability and socio-economic development, and actively engage in initiatives at both international and regional levels.

A notable example of this is the General Assembly's adoption in May 2021 of a special resolution "Declaring the Aral Sea region a zone of ecological innovations and technologies." This marked the first time the General Assembly granted such a significant status to a region. Tashkent's role as a platform for the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Human Security for the Aral Sea region further underscores its potential for leadership in this area. Uzbekistan's accumulated experience in solving transboundary problems could be valuable to other countries.

To mitigate the environmental consequences of the dried-up bed of the Aral Sea, Uzbekistan has embarked on a massive tree-planting initiative. Planted trees on an area of 2 million hectares help contain sandstorms, improve the ecosystem, and generate income for local communities.

A large-scale nationwide program called "Yashil Makon" (Green Land) has been initiated by President

Shavkat Mirziyoyev. This program aims to plant a billion trees over five years and create over 21 million green areas throughout the country. Additionally, Uzbekistan aims to intensify its greening efforts by organizing a regional tree planting campaign called “Green Belt of Central Asia” every year on the eve of the spring holiday of Navruz. These efforts are expected to improve the environmental situation and enhance the quality of life for citizens of the region.

Prevention and overcoming the consequences of emergencies, compassion, and humanitarian support are crucial areas of international cooperation. On April 29, 2025, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution initiated by Uzbekistan, proclaiming April 29 as the “International Day in Memory of the Victims of Earthquakes.” The resolution, co-sponsored by over 80 states from all regions of the world, recognizes earthquakes among the most destructive natural disasters, often resulting in the most tragic consequences, urges UN Member States, UN agencies, and other international organizations to promote the observance of the International Day through information and educational activities aimed at raising awareness, strengthening resilience, and enhancing emergency preparedness.

The significance of the efforts made by Central Asian countries to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was also acknowledged in the special resolution “Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Development in Central Asia” adopted by the General Assembly in December 2019. Initiated by the President of Uzbekistan this document establishes a link between sustainable development and the development of tourism in the region, which historically passed through the Great Silk Road from Asia to Europe.

Uzbekistan recognizes that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in an interconnected world requires sustainable routes for the exchange of goods, services, and ideas that contribute to joint development. In response, Tashkent initiated a special resolution titled “Strengthening Connectivity between Central and South Asia”, which was co-authored by approximately 40 countries from various continents and unanimously approved by the UN General Assembly in July 2022.

The resolution emphasizes the significance of strengthening cooperation to implement the Vienna Declaration for Landlocked Developing Countries, highlights the crucial role of transport and transit corridors in accelerating economic growth, enhancing trade efficiency, and fostering economic ties between Central and South Asian countries. The resolution also underscores the potential of these regions for unique transport, transit, and investment opportunities.

Furthermore, the resolution recognizes the importance of exchanging experiences to promote sustainable development, provide access to clean energy technologies, address environmental challenges, and protect the environment. Additionally, the resolution acknowledges Afghanistan’s role in establishing links between Central and South Asia and the importance of its economic development and integration into interregional economic processes. This is crucial for ensuring lasting peace and stability in the region.

In the context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and collaboration with the UN, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev presented several important initiatives aimed at overcoming common challenges and problems faced by the participating countries at the Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, held this August in Turkmenistan.

First and foremost, the urgent need for coordinated actions to expedite the development of international transport corridors and infrastructure was highlighted. President of Uzbekistan emphasized the significance of equal access to global markets, stating that it is not merely an economic imperative but also a crucial prerequisite for sustainable development, fostering trust and cooperation in international relations.

In addition to the development of promising transport corridors within the region, the Head of Uzbekistan proposed several initiatives under the auspices of the United Nations. These initiatives aimed to ensure fair access to ports and communications for landlocked countries, thereby reducing inequality in global

logistics. Furthermore, the establishment of a UN Fund for Assistance to Logistics Integration of Landlocked Countries was suggested to create flexible investment instruments and finance substantial infrastructure projects.

The Head of Uzbekistan also highlighted the substantial investment requirements of Central Asian countries in transport infrastructure, estimating it to be approximately 40 billion dollars. To address this challenge, the development of a Global Vulnerability Index for Landlocked Countries was proposed to objectively assess the limitations of transit opportunities. This index would enable the expansion of international financial and technical programs and effective resource allocation based on real-world conditions.

Peace and security are the core principles of the United Nations mandate. In its foreign policy, Uzbekistan prioritizes multilateralism and cooperation, which are the key priorities of the 80th session of the General Assembly, focusing on fostering good-neighborliness, promoting dialogue and regional integration.

Uzbekistan actively contributes to ensuring regional stability. In June 2018, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution titled “Strengthening regional and international cooperation to ensure peace, stability, and sustainable development in the Central Asian region.” The document, which was developed jointly by Uzbekistan and neighboring Central Asian states, received unanimous support from all UN member states.

The adoption of this resolution marked a significant milestone in the history of the Central Asian countries, symbolizing their consolidation and unity, demonstrating their ability to collaborate on addressing common regional challenges and ensuring the well-being and prosperity of their citizens.

Building on this momentum, in December 2018, the UN General Assembly, on the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan, adopted a special resolution titled “Enlightenment and religious tolerance”, which aims to promote universal access to education, eliminate illiteracy and ignorance, and foster tolerance and mutual respect. It also seeks to ensure religious freedom, protect the rights of believers, and prevent discrimination against them. The resolution received unanimous support from all member states and was co-authored by over 50 countries.

It should be noted that representatives of over 130 nationalities and 16 religious denominations coexist in today’s Uzbekistan in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual respect. The country of 37 million people boasts more than 2,300 religious organizations representing diverse faiths and 155 national cultural centers that preserve the languages, traditions, and customs of its diverse population. Remarkably, over the past five years alone, more than 100 new religious organizations have been registered in Uzbekistan. Conditions have been established for teaching in seven languages, broadcasting television and radio programs in twelve languages, and publishing printed publications in fourteen languages.

In May 2022 and September of this year, two international forums “Dialogue of Declarations” were organized, serving as a unique platform for exchanging experiences and opinions on ensuring peaceful coexistence among different peoples and religions. The “Bukhara Declaration,” adopted following the first forum, was recognized as an official document of the UN General Assembly, affirming the Republic of Uzbekistan’s contributions to international efforts to strengthen tolerance.

The Republic is organizing events to enhance the potential of the countries of the region in countering cross-border threats, preventing terrorist movement, and strengthening confidence-building measures. In June 2024, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution initiated by Uzbekistan, titled “Central Asia’s unified resolve and cooperation to effectively address and counter drug-related challenges”. The resolution emphasizes the close link between achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Central Asia and combating drug trafficking and abuse in the region. It highlights the positive changes in the region and underscores the commitment of states to effective anti-drug cooperation within a global approach to addressing the drug problem. The document calls for comprehensive measures to

combat illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, their precursors, and the development of strategic initiatives and action plans. This resolution received broad support from over 30 member states, reflecting its relevance to the wider global community.

Tashkent's efforts have fostered international trust in Uzbekistan, as evidenced by its election to key UN bodies like the Human Rights Council (2021-2023), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (2024-2027), the Governing Body of the International Labor Office (2024-2027), and the UN Human Rights Committee (2025-2028).

Uzbekistan aims to actively participate in all UN structures, presenting national and regional initiatives and securing additional financial resources for project implementation. A new five-year cooperation program with the UN, in line with the SDGs, will synchronize cooperation with over 20 UN agencies, funds, and programs, including UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, FAO, UNFPA, and ILO.

Priority areas of partnership with the UN include deepening integration in Central Asia, promoting initiatives for new transport corridors and logistics infrastructure for landlocked countries, and developing digital public administration.

Joint development and implementation of multisectoral programs, such as integrated rural development, the development of digital skills among youth, and innovative financing of healthcare, will maximize efficiency and attract additional resources.

Uzbekistan's cooperation with the UN stands as a testament to a successful multilateral partnership. This partnership aims to address regional problems that have a global impact.

Over the years, Uzbekistan has achieved remarkable results in sustainable development, human rights protection, and environmental conservation. Moreover, it has actively participated in important international resolutions and served as a crucial platform for cooperation between the region and the UN. This partnership has catalyzed the development of interstate cooperation in Central Asia.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres emphasized the importance of creating conditions rather than waiting for ideal ones: "We cannot wait for ideal conditions. We must create them. We cannot postpone efforts to establish peace until the suffering becomes unbearable". Uzbekistan fully supports this approach and continues to work towards strengthening multilateral dialogue and cooperation in the Central Asia region and beyond.

In its ongoing efforts to implement strategic initiatives, Tashkent makes its utmost effort to achieve the common goals of the international community. It has emerged as a center of knowledge and innovation in Central Asia, fostering the development of the entire region.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev highlighted the progress made after 20 years of misunderstandings and doubts. "We have created an effective platform for regular dialogue (among the countries of the Central Asian region) and joint identification of "new points" and growth drivers." Uzbekistan is ready to exchange its experiences with and learn from other countries.

President Mirziyoyev emphasized Uzbekistan's unwavering commitment to strengthening deep and long-term cooperation with the United Nation and all countries. This commitment was reiterated during the 78th session of the UN General Assembly.

We anticipate that the 80th session of the UN General Assembly will reaffirm the countries' commitment to multilateralism and cooperation, even in times of crisis. We hope that this anniversary meeting will not disappoint the people around the World.