

**The Seventy-Seventh Session  
of the United Nations General Assembly  
General Debate Statement by H.E. Mr. Vladimir Norov,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan  
(New York, September 24, 2022)**

*Mr. President!*

*Dear Secretary General!*

*Distinguished Heads of Delegations!*

*Ladies and Gentlemen!*

I congratulate His Excellency Mr. Csaba Kőrösi on his election as the President of the Seventy Seventh Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

I also take this opportunity to thank His Excellency Mr. Abdullah Shahid for the successful leadership during the Seventy Sixth Session.

The world today is facing a deep crisis of trust at the global level, an intensification of numerous challenges to stability and security, growth of geopolitical confrontation, and an increase of risks of bloc mentality.

The expansion and aggravation of armed conflicts in various parts of the world are destabilizing international trade and economic ties that have not yet recovered from the consequences of the pandemic. The challenges of ensuring food and energy security are aggravated.

The global climate shocks, the growing shortage of natural and water resources, the spread of infectious diseases - all contribute to the aggravation of conflicts and the emergence of humanitarian crises, as well as threaten the foundations of life.

Clearly, no country can avoid global risks and challenges or tackle them alone. Constructive dialogue and multilateral cooperation based on consideration and respect for the interests of all countries are the only way out of the dangerous spiral of crises. Effective international cooperation is essential if the world is to become more stable, predictable, and prosperous.

Under the current conditions, we strongly believe it is important to strengthen the central role of the United Nations in addressing global and regional challenges. The UN should evolve for it to respond effectively to the transformations taking place.

The establishment of intercivilizational and intercultural relations and dialogue is also extremely important in finding the coherent approaches and solutions, relieving global tension, uncertainty and unpredictability. With this in mind, at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit in Samarkand on September 16 the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev put forward the Samarkand Solidarity Initiative for Common Security and Prosperity.

Its goal is to contribute to the restoration of mutual trust and stability in international relations, as well as to strengthen solidarity through the establishment of a broad dialogue free from geopolitical rivalry, ideological contradictions, and disputes.

We propose to jointly exchange views on the practical implementation of this initiative at the Samarkand Forum in 2023 with the participation of UN representatives, political leaders, public, business community, and academia.

*Dear friends!*

This year, we adopted the Development Strategy for New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026, aimed at deepening the democratic processes, ensuring the rule of law, and improving the living standards of people.

This Strategy is based on the outcomes of the reforms carried out in our country over the previous five years and is designed to advance comprehensive implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In particular, by 2030 we intend to halve the level of poverty, increase the effectiveness of the social protection system to respond all those in need, strengthen food security, and become one of the world's upper middle-income countries.

Currently, Uzbekistan is on the eve of an important political event – a Constitutional Reform.

The key goal of updating the Constitution is to ensure sustainability and irreversibility of the process of fundamental transformation of the state system and public administration that shall respect and protect the honor and dignity of a person, guarantee his inviolable rights and freedoms.

The idea “For human honor and dignity” shall be deeply enshrined in the Constitution. The norms on the complete abolition of the death penalty, Miranda Rule and Habeas Corpus, as well as the environmental human rights shall be introduced to the Constitution.

The Constitutional amendments should become directly applicable aimed at guaranteeing and protecting the interests of people of all backgrounds. In particular, the prohibition of the use of forced labor and other worst forms of child labor, or the employment refusal for pregnant women or women with children will be guaranteed on constitutional level.

Furthermore, it is also proposed to introduce the norms that ensure openness, transparency, and accountability of state agencies.

The amendments to the Constitution were reviewed by public and will be put to a referendum.

*Ladies and gentlemen!*

We fully endorse the initiative of Secretary General António Guterres to hold a “Summit of the Future” in September 2023.

Uzbekistan highly appreciates the successful outcomes of the historic Transforming Education Summit, which has demonstrated the commitment of the international community to join efforts for the speedy restoration and modernization of education systems by increasing funding and innovation.

Uzbekistan has already achieved tangible results in this area. Over the past 5 years, enrollment in higher education has increased from 9% to 29%, and children with preschool education – from 27% to 67.2%.

It is the youth that should play a key role in the processes that are directly related to their fate and future. To this end, Uzbekistan plans to convene the first meeting of the Youth Council of the countries of Central and South Asia in 2023, which will become a platform for new ideas and specific initiatives. We count on the support of the UN in holding this important forum.

On November 14-16, 2022, jointly with the UNESCO, we will host the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education in Tashkent. The Forum will facilitate the exchange of best practices to ensure universal, equitable, and quality education.

We invite Ministers of Education from your countries to participate at this High-Level Forum.

*Dear participants!*

Today, thanks to the joint efforts of the Central Asian States, a fundamentally new political atmosphere has been created in our region.

Launched at the initiative of Uzbekistan, the mechanism of Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of the region has become a vivid symbol of a new era of regional cooperation.

At the last Consultative Meeting, held on July 21, 2022, a truly historic Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighborliness and Cooperation for the Development of Central Asia in the 21<sup>st</sup> century was agreed upon.

The international recognition of the deepening partnership of the countries of the region is reflected in a number of resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly in support of strengthening peace, stability, and regional cooperation in Central Asia.

We rely on further support from the international community for the processes of rapprochement and cooperation between the countries of Central Asia, and integration of the region into global economic and transport ties.

We express our gratitude to Secretary General António Guterres for supporting our initiative to hold an International Conference on the Implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, which took place in March 2022 in Tashkent.

Taking into account the outcomes of the Forum, we propose to establish the UN Counter-Terrorism Regional Office in Central Asia in order to successfully implement the Global Strategy and continuously monitor the implementation of the updated Joint Action Plan.

*Mr. President!*

The prospects for the development of Central Asia are inextricably linked with ensuring peace in neighboring Afghanistan.

We are concerned about the decline in international attention to this country, which is experiencing a deep humanitarian crisis. We consider it extremely important to prevent the isolation of Afghanistan, leaving it alone with the existing problems. This will undoubtedly have negative consequences for regional and international security.

The International Conference on Afghanistan held in July in Tashkent with the participation of the delegation of the interim government showed the interest of the world community in the development of coordinated approaches towards this country.

We are convinced that the general priority of the international community should be the restoration of the Afghan economy, its integration into interregional economic processes, the implementation of infrastructure and socially significant projects. To solve these problems, the support of the UN, international financial institutions, and donor countries is needed.

Uzbekistan is making a feasible contribution to the international efforts to assist Afghanistan. Uzbekistan has established the International Transport and Logistics Hub in the border city of Termez, which is actively used by UN agencies to provide humanitarian assistance to this country.

We propose to create a special Humanitarian Support Fund for Afghanistan in Termez and send its financial resources to overcome the social crisis, implement educational programs for the youth as well as healthcare projects.

The UN General Assembly Resolution on “Strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia” adopted in July 2022, at the initiative of Uzbekistan prioritizes the involvement of Afghanistan in economic cooperation, and its transformation into a bridge connecting the two regions.

The practical implementation of these ideas will be facilitated by the implementation of trans-regional infrastructure projects, such as the construction of the Termez-Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway.

The solution to the problems of involving Afghanistan in the regional trade and economic ties will be facilitated by the proposed establishment by Uzbekistan with the support of the UN of the Interregional Center for Connectivity in Tashkent

*Dear participants!*

Today, the negative consequences of climate change are acutely manifested in our region.

We stand ready to actively participate in the multilateral efforts to promote the topical issues of the green agenda and curb climate change processes.

Uzbekistan has taken on an additional obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Paris Agreement and is implementing a comprehensive strategy for the transition to a green economy and the development of renewable energy.

In 2021 President of Uzbekistan launched a massive initiative called “Yashil Makon” (Green Land) on planting 1 billion trees and shrubs across the country over the next five years.

The Aral Sea is the biggest environmental crisis in our region. Over the past 5 years, 1.7 million hectares of forest plantations have been planted on the drained seabed.

I take this opportunity to thank the General Assembly for adopting the Resolution on “Declaring the Aral Sea region a zone of ecological innovations and technologies”.

This year we plan to host the First Aral Sea International Forum under the UN auspices in Nukus.

In 2023, for the first time, we will host the 14th Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, as well as a meeting of the Committee to Review the Implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification in Uzbekistan.

We invite the Member States and the UN agencies to take part at these events at high-level.

*Mr. President!*

This year we celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Uzbekistan’s membership in the United Nations, which is the only universal structure for maintaining international peace and security.

We reaffirm Uzbekistan’s commitment to the UN Charter and express readiness to deepen multifaceted cooperation with the United Nations.

*Thank you for your attention!*