

# UZBEKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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## ADDRESS

by H.E. Mr. Bahtiyor NIYAZMATOV

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**at the High-level meeting on a comprehensive review  
of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment  
on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS**

**11 June 2008  
New York**

Dear Mr. President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, please allow me to sincerely greet participants of this high level Forum!

It is honor for me to address you today from this high podium of the United Nations on behalf of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

I believe that our discussion should make an important contribution both to understanding and to finding solutions to one of the most serious problems, which all international community is facing with.

Today, spread of HIV has become a global problem, and our common success in defeating AIDS depends on contribution of every country. Since the first HIV diagnosis in 1981, this infection has become the foremost global problem, affecting social, economic and demographic spheres of international development.

Taking this opportunity to discuss the problem of HIV/AIDS in open and constructive manner, I would like to highlight several most important efforts taken by the Republic of Uzbekistan in this area.

Protection of population's health is one of our country's priorities and has always been in the center of attention of our country's leadership. Declaration by H.E. Mr. Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, of the year of 2005 as «The year of Health», the year 2006 – as «The Year of Charity and Medical Workers», the year of 2007 – as «The Year of Social Protection», and the year of 2008 – as «The Year of Youth» has primarily been aimed at mobilization of all knowledge and forces in the sphere of health protection to prevent infectious and non-infectious diseases.

It should be noted that the Republic of Uzbekistan faced with the AIDS problem rather later than other countries, and it is currently comparatively safe country in terms of the HIV spread.

Uzbekistan is the most populated country in Central Asia, and it has specific demographic structure, where youth between 15 and 24 of age make up more than 60% of the population.

Taking into account this factor, the government attaches great attention to protection of population's health and to improvement of life standards, which are the main priorities of our state's policy and reflected in the guiding documents of the Republic.

I would like to bring your attention to the fact that the national policy on the problem of HIV/AIDS in Uzbekistan is developed at the highest governmental level and provides for significant results.

In response to the epidemic, the Government, with participation of international organizations and nongovernmental institutions, is conducting purposeful activities to slow down the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Since 2003, there has been successfully functioning the Country Coordination Committee on coordination of strategic programs on countering the spread of HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis created under the Cabinet of Ministers and headed by Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Coordination Committee consists of 25 members representing governmental, public, nongovernmental, religious and international organizations. In particular, the organizations representing or supporting PLWH contribute greatly to the activities of the Coordination Committee. The main Coordination Committee's concept is aimed at creation of tolerant attitude towards HIV-infected people, fight against stigma and discrimination, implementation of the National Program based on the UN principles. A unified monitoring and evaluation system to oversee the implementation of strategies in order to stabilize the HIV epidemic has been established.

Since 2003, the «National Strategic program on response to HIV/AIDS for 2007-2011» has been implemented in the Republic in the framework of the Coordination Committee.

The principles of the Strategic Program are based on Uzbekistan's international commitments stated in the Millennium Development Goals, 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS.

The Strategic Program for 2007-2011 foresees:

- Effective prevention programs aimed at meeting the needs of vulnerable groups;
- Ensuring access to qualitative medical care;
- Support and care of PLWHA, including the provision of antiretroviral therapy;
- Creation of favorable environment to enable work with vulnerable groups, and protection of the rights of PLWHA.

Since 2001, funding for fight against AIDS has increased by three times. Access to key prevention and care services has considerably expanded. The Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, as well as our UN partner organizations – UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, World Bank implement their projects in the country.

So called Fund «Mahalla», which belongs to local self governance, contributes considerably to the HIV/AIDS prevention. This Fund is an instrument for promotion of healthy life as a measure to prevent AIDS.

Effective implementation of HIV/AIDS program also depends on close cooperation with civil society and other non-governmental organizations.

Along with most UN members, in 2001 the Republic of Uzbekistan joined the International Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, according to which it is associated with common international policy, strategies and approaches to curbing the epidemic.

The Republic of Uzbekistan is also guided by the UN «Three Ones» principles concept, which includes one unified coordination system, one unified program and one unified national monitoring and evaluation system.

At the same time, I would like to note that experience learned during the implementation of the national program within the «Three Ones» does not fully involve a number of other important directions. It should be specially noted that funding of some activities does not always meet the main HIV/AIDS priorities of the country.

Under this context, I would like to note that in his report «Midway to the Millennium Development Goals» from April 2008, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General, rightly said that in many regions the progress in response to HIV has been caused by the efficient use of considerable funds invested for these purposes. But he believes that «this process is not very well balanced and often the epidemic spreads quicker than scope of respective services». This brings to «primary need for more stable adherence to HIV prevention».

Taking into account the Secretary General's view on necessity to strengthen effective management of financial flow from various sources in order to purposefully promote activities aimed at HIV prevention, we propose to add to the existing three UN principles the fourth principle – *One unified financial mechanism*.

This forum once again confirms that national strategies to fight against HIV/AIDS are on the right track as they prevent further spread of the epidemic, improve quality of life and life expectancy of PLWHA in Uzbekistan. Approval of our strategy is the appreciation of our activities on the international level.

I would once again like to note that Uzbekistan has created favorable conditions for implementation of the planned activities to fight against HIV, and I believe that we will succeed not only in stabilizing but in reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Finally, I would like to wish all participants and organizers of this forum fruitful work and further success in achieving the planned endeavors.

Thank you for your attention.