

UZBEKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**59TH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
GENERAL DEBATE**

S T A T E M E N T

**by H.E. Mr. SODYQ SAFAEV
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF
THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN**

NEW YORK, 27 SEPTEMBER 2004

Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen!

Allow me, first of all, to congratulate H.E. Mr. Jean Ping, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Gabon on his election as the President of the General Assembly and wish him every success in this important position. I would also like to extend our words of appreciation to Mr. Julian Hunte for the excellent organization of the previous session.

Mr. President,

Serious challenges to global stability and sustainable development that the international community is facing vindicate the urgent need to further develop the legal and institutional foundations of multilateral cooperation. There is no doubt -- the central role in coordinating these efforts belongs to the United Nations. Today it is important as never before to define the directions of dynamic adaptation of the UN to the current realities based on the Organization's unique experience for over half a century, and to find adequate responses to the pressing issues of the contemporary world.

Developments in the Central Asian region provide for a vivid demonstration of the intermingling of those contradictory processes that are unfolding on the globe. Aspirations of the peoples of Central Asia to fully integrate into the world community, to create conditions for sustainable stability and economic development are exposed to serious trials. The region is encountering with a fusion of transnational threats, namely terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking. Similar patterns can be observed in other regions as well.

Not a single day passes by without terrorist acts taking place somewhere in the world. It is obvious and undeniable – international terrorism has challenged the civilized world. It makes no exceptions: it doesn't care about the place, nationality, religion or social system, it sows death and devastation in both affluent and developing nations. We need to admit that international terrorism, capable of quickly transforming and adapting to the changing circumstances of contemporary world, is trying to impose its conditions, keep whole regions in fright.

From the outset Uzbekistan has firmly and vigorously supported the efforts of the anti-terrorist coalition aimed at eradication of transnational threats. Political leadership of Uzbekistan is deeply committed to the fight with this "plague of the 21st century" and calls for consolidation of the efforts of international community in this area.

However, effective countering of international terrorism requires, above all, combating its ideological sources. It is vital to fight the ideology of extremism and fanaticism, to outlaw militant radical religious groups that nurture international terrorism.

At the same time, Uzbekistan strongly opposes any kind of allegations and assertions that link international terrorism with ever growing religion of Islam which has made an immense contribution in the history of humanity.

Uzbekistan - home of the greatest thinkers and philosophers of the East - is adamantly pursuing an all-out support to traditional enlightened Islam. Only by promoting and encouraging ideas of enlightened and tolerant Islam we can effectively withstand militant, politicized extremist factions and avert further confrontations in the world.

Mr. President,

Uzbekistan holds that the regional agenda should be given a priority status in reviewing the urgent issues of global security. Only by means of secure and stable regions we can gradually move towards global security.

The establishing of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in Central Asia remains one of the priorities of our foreign policy. We again call upon the UN Security Council permanent members to work out in cooperation with the states of the region a consolidated position on the provisions of the Treaty and its Protocol. We trust that the establishment of this NWFZ would become an important element of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Many issues of regional development are directly linked to the processes taking place in Afghanistan. We believe that historically and geographically Afghanistan is a part of Central Asia. Uzbekistan has been rendering every possible assistance to the Afghan people in social and economic reconstruction of the country and its harmonious integration into the regional structures.

The Government of Uzbekistan in cooperation with the UN agencies has set up and is successfully implementing the mechanism of delivery of international humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan via Uzbekistan. To date, over 2.5 million tons of such cargo passed through our territory. On top of it, we are doing all we can to reduce the transit costs and improve the service infrastructure.

In light of the continuous threat of narcotics proliferation from Afghanistan, Central Asia, being on the front-line of combating narcoaggression, is facing the problem of effectively countering this global menace. We look forward to international community's firm and continuous support to Uzbekistan's initiative on establishing Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Center (CARICC) to combat trans-border crime related to illegal drug trafficking.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations has been present in Uzbekistan for over a decade. During this period the UN Development Programme carried out numerous important projects aimed at strengthening the country's potential in implementing reforms, protecting the environment and creating sustainable sources of income. We truly appreciate that.

In this regard, we look forward for the assistance of the UNDP and other UN agencies in implementing the Uzbekistan's initiative to establish the Central Asian Common Market. This would contribute not only to creating large and robust regional market, attracting more foreign investments and modern technologies, but also to properly addressing social and environmental problems of Central Asia, ensuring its sustainable development and economic prosperity.

Overcoming the transport and communicational isolation of the region is another top priority. In this context, I would like to attract your attention to multilateral initiative on establishing the Trans-Afghan transport corridor that would link Central Asia with the Persian Gulf. Implementation of this project would significantly expand trade and economic relations and fundamentally improve the region's economic prospects.

Distinguished Assembly,

We agree with the view of the UN Secretary General Mr. Kofi Annan that the present juncture is of crucial importance for the UN.

There is no other multilateral forum similar to the UN where countries differing from each other in terms of cultural and historical heritage, economic potential and geographic location could work together as equal partners.

In the context of increasingly complex globalization processes, the strengthening of the UN Security Council is of paramount significance.

Uzbekistan supports the enlargement of the Security Council in both categories of membership, taking into account the political and economic capabilities of countries, geographical representation and other criteria. We reiterate our support for the inclusion of Germany and Japan to the Security Council as permanent members.

In conclusion, once again I would like to underscore – Uzbekistan is confident that the UN will retain its role as the main element of international security and cooperation architecture. We do believe that the invaluable potential of the UN that withstood all the upheavals of the previous century will long serve the cause of consolidating our efforts in the face of global challenges.

Thank you for your attention.