

35th Independence Anniversary

Uzbekistan aspires to develop amid national unity

By Mukhsinkhuja Abdurakhmonov
Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Japan

On Aug. 31, 1991, Uzbekistan became an independent state, opening a new chapter in the history of our people. Thirty-five years later, independence remains the foundation of our national unity and our determination to build a prosperous, modern and open country.

This year, we celebrate the 35th anniversary of independence under the slogan, “One Homeland, One People — Together We Build a New Life and a Bright Future!” The slogan reflects our shared aspiration to create a New Uzbekistan where economic development, human potential and international cooperation go hand in hand.

Over the past 10 years, Uzbekistan has undergone profound reforms under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The country is opening its economy, expanding opportunities for investment and entrepreneurship, and strengthening cooperation with international partners. In 2025, Uzbekistan's economy grew by 7.7%, while GDP exceeded \$145 billion. Gold and foreign-exchange reserves, which underpin our reform program, topped \$60 billion for the first time.

Investment and exports are also growing steadily. In 2025, investment reached \$43.1 billion, while exports totaled \$33.4 billion. Total investment accounted for 31.9% of GDP, laying the groundwork for sustained and robust economic growth in the years ahead.

Uzbekistan's standing in the international community is also strengthening. Leading international rating agencies have upgraded the country's sovereign rating from “BB-” to “BB.” In 2025, Uzbekistan climbed 71 places in the World Bank's GovTech Maturity Index (GTMI), placing it among the world's top 10 countries.

Uzbekistan is also becoming an increasingly attractive destination for international travelers. Nearly 12 million tourists visited the country in 2025, an increase of about 3.7 million, or 46.8%, from the previous year. We expect to set a new record this year.

Uzbekistan has achieved historic successes in sports as well. For the first time, our national football team competed in the FIFA World Cup, held in the United States, Canada and Mexico this year. Our young chess grandmaster Javokhir Sindarov became the youngest-ever winner of the FIDE World Cup, while Uzbek athletes achieved the strongest overall results among participating nations at the Asian Youth Para Games.

Uzbekistan is scheduled to host the 46th World Chess Olympiad in September 2026, the FIFA U-20 World Cup in 2027 and the Asian Youth Games in 2029. In the coming days, a large Uzbek delegation will compete at the 20th Asian Games and the 5th Asian Para Games Aichi-Nagoya 2026.

Uzbekistan's foreign policy is based on openness, mutual respect and equal partnership, and relations with Japan hold a special place in this policy.

Japan was among the first countries to recognize Uzbekistan's independence in December 1991. Since diplomatic relations were established in January 1992, ties between our two countries have developed steadily and expanded into a broad-based partnership.

President Mirziyoyev's official visit to Japan from Dec. 18 to 20, 2025, was a milestone in the further development of our strategic partnership.

During the visit, President Mirziyoyev held meetings and talks with His Majesty the Emperor, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, the leaders of both houses of the Diet, members of the Japan-Uzbekistan Parliamentary League



Mukhsinkhuja
Abdurakhmonov



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Shavkat Mirziyoyev, president of the Republic of Uzbekistan

of Friendship, government officials, the mayor of Nara and the heads of leading universities. A business forum and bilateral meetings were also held with executives of major Japanese companies and financial institutions.

The two leaders signed a Joint Statement on Expanded Strategic Partnership between Japan and the Republic of Uzbekistan for future generations, taking Uzbekistan-Japan relations to a new level. The visit also saw the first summit of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue, where important initiatives for advancing cooperation were put forward and the Tokyo Declaration was adopted. Nearly 100 economic agreements were reached in preparation for the summit.

Today, our two countries cooperate closely in trade, investment, industry, energy, infrastructure, education and cultural exchange. Bilateral trade reached \$383 million in 2025, while the portfolio of projects involving Japanese companies and financial institutions exceeded \$12 billion. More than 120 joint ventures and organizations, including the Uzbekistan-Japan Center for Human Development, are operating successfully in Uzbekistan.

Interregional ties are also expanding. Partnerships



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The Center of Islamic Civilization in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, connects the country's rich heritage with its modern aspirations.

have been established between Tashkent and Nagoya; Samarkand and Gifu; Samarkand and Nara; Namangan and Hiroshima; Namangan and Dzaifu; Syrdarya and Saitama; Fergana and Tochigi; Fergana and Chiba; Rishton and Maizuru; and Khorezm and Ishikawa.

Education and human resource development remain important pillars of our bilateral relationship. Nagaoka University of Technology has opened a representative office in Uzbekistan, while in July this year an agreement was signed to establish a joint university in Tashkent with the University of Tsukuba. A joint research center with Tottori University is also scheduled to open in Samarkand in October.

The Uzbekistan-Japan Center for Human Development continues to play an important role in strengthening people-to-people ties. Japanese is taught at seven Uzbek universities, while Uzbek has been taught at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies for the past decade.

Our cultural ties are equally vibrant. The two countries

regularly hold cultural festivals, exhibitions, youth forums and film festivals. At the 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo, Uzbekistan's national pavilion, themed around “The Garden of Knowledge: A Laboratory for the Society of the Future,” received a gold medal in the “Best Presentation of Theme” category, the Expo's highest honor.

Uzbekistan is also expected to participate with a national stand at Tourism Expo Japan 2026, which will be held in Tokyo from Sept. 24 to 27.

In 2027, Uzbekistan and Japan will celebrate the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Looking ahead, I am confident that our two countries will continue to deepen our expanded strategic partnership, strengthen exchanges between our peoples and create new opportunities for cooperation.

As we celebrate 35 years of Uzbekistan's independence, we do so with optimism about the future — a future in which Uzbekistan and Japan will continue to stand together as trusted partners and friends.

Congratulations

to the People of
the Republic of Uzbekistan
on the Occasion of
the Anniversary of
Their Independence



JAPAN TOBACCO INC.

Kamiyacho Trust Tower, 1-1, Toranomon 4-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-6927 JAPAN
Phone: +81-3-6636-2914 FAX: +81-3-6772-0495 URL:https://www.jt.com

Kibi International University will open a campus in Tashkent In addition, a new institution will be founded in Uzbekistan.

Kibi International University

School of Social Science

- Department of Foreign Studies
- Department of Business Management and Sociology
- Department of Sport Social Management

School of Nursing

- Department of Nursing

School of Human Sciences, Department of Human Sciences

- Majors: Psychology, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy

School of Animation

- Department of Animation

School of Agriculture

- Department of Agricultural Resource Biology
- Department of Marine and Fisheries Biology
- Department of Field Sciences of Marine and Watershed



Japan Campuses : Okayama City, Takahashi City, Minamiwaji City

