

UZBEKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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ADDRESS

by

**H.E. MR. VLADIMIR NOROV
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN**

**AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 62ND SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**2 October 2007
New York**

**Dear Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Heads of Delegations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me on behalf of the Republic of Uzbekistan to welcome the participants of the 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly and wish the forum a successful work.

I shall not be mistaken if I say that the world community is looking forward to the concrete results from the realization of development goals formulated in the Millennium Declaration. A special role is being laid with the United Nations in achieving the set objectives, including shaping the fair and acceptable approaches to the issues of access, use and distribution of natural resources, maintaining the environmental sustainability, fight against transnational threats, and also establishing free, tolerant and stably developing world in the conditions of globalization.

Mr. Chairman,

1. One of the most serious problems of the present day is the reasonable use of natural resources, above all, the water and energy resources. Various and ambiguous approaches in this sphere hamper the process of development, lead to conflict situations, and sometimes, to ecological catastrophes. The fate of the Aral Sea may serve as an example. Diminishing of the sea has tragic consequences not only for the peoples of Central Asia but also for the large sub-region and even entire Eurasia.

It is necessary to underscore that the point is about the use of resources and watercourses of transboundary rivers, which for over the span of centuries have been maintaining the vitally important needs of states and peoples living along the stream of these rivers.

The Republic of Uzbekistan believes that all decisions on the use of watercourses of transboundary rivers, including in constructing the hydro-energy facilities, must in no way inflict damage to the ecology and infringe upon the interests of the population of countries on the neighboring territories.

The UN Conventions on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context of February 25, 1991, on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes of September 18, 1992, and on the law of the non-navigational uses of international watercourses of May 21, 1997 directly point to the reasonable use of resources of transboundary rivers. These Conventions obligate to "ensuring that transboundary waters are used in a reasonable and equitable way, taking into particular account their transboundary character, in the case of activities which cause or are likely to cause transboundary impact".

In the case of infliction of damage all measures must be taken to liquidate or abate such damage, and if needed the issue of compensation is put forward.

It is underscored in the UN decisions that "the watercourse States shall cooperate on the basis of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, mutual benefit and good faith".

According to these fundamental requirements of the UN conventions, the authoritative international experts must give the guarantees that the construction of the hydro-technical facilities will not have the irremediable ecological consequences and will not break the established balance of the use of watercourse of transboundary rivers by all states, which are located in the basin of those rivers.

We are convinced that the fulfillment of these requirements must be mandatory in implementing various projects on building the hydro-energy facilities in Central Asia with participation of both national and transnational companies so that not to allow for the catastrophic deterioration of ecological situation in the region.

About observance of these conditions we would like to remind also to the investor countries, who express their wish to participate in implementing such projects.

Ladies and gentlemen,

2. The current situation in Central Asia demonstrates the interlacing of many contradictory processes which are able to negatively influence the security not only in our region, but also far beyond its limits.

Uzbekistan consistently stands for the effective postwar recovery of Afghanistan. We strongly believe that the ways of stabilizing the situation in Afghanistan should be looked for not in militarization, but in demilitarization, resolution of the outstanding social and economic problems and support of the country's population through the active participation and assistance of the world community.

Certainly, the most important condition for this becomes the achievement of consensus and coordinated measures of all parties interested in stabilization and revival of Afghanistan and seizing the ever threatening drug aggression, which emanates from this country.

Distinguished Assembly,

3. The problem of shaping and promoting the ideology of tolerance, mutual understanding and cultural diversity has taken on a special urgency to maintain peace and security at the regional and global levels.

The Republic of Uzbekistan makes its own contribution to the support of the dialogue among cultures and civilizations, which must be maintained in the framework of international law without a strain and pressure, without the attempts of imposing the unacceptable values and moral norms, and by preserving respect for the mentality of peoples, which is shaped for over the span of many centuries and millennia. The correctness of such an approach was particularly stressed during the international conference "Uzbekistan's contribution to the development of Islamic civilization" held in Uzbekistan in August this year and was attended by prominent scholars, theologians as well as government and public figures from different parts of the world.

The announcement by the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) the capital of Uzbekistan – the city of Tashkent as the World Capital of Islamic Culture has become the recognition of the role and significance of Uzbekistan in Islamic civilization.

For over the span of centuries Uzbekistan has been one of the centers of enlightened Islam, which stands for strengthening in the consciousness of people such eternal values as the aspiration towards kindness and peace, tolerance in interethnic and interfaith relations, mutual respect and accord among the peoples regardless of color of skin and beliefs.

Indeed, this is why we are seriously concerned about some negative interpretations of the historical role of Islam and the deliberate distortion of historical facts. We resolutely stand against that the counterterrorism transforms into Islamophobia and acquires the form of open or hidden standoff with the Islamic world.

Under the current circumstances the role of the United Nations is more important than ever before in encouraging and promoting cultural diversity, tolerance and mutual understanding among religions. In this context Uzbekistan welcomes the High Level Dialogue on Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding and Cooperation for Peace to be held on 4 and 5 October.

**Dear Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In conclusion, I would like to express sincere hope that the results of the work of the UN General Assembly's 62nd Session will promote the successful realization of the joint efforts by the Member-States in addressing challenges and threats to the global security, as well as further peaceful development of the world nations.

Thank you.