



**THE EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN
TO THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM
MISSIONS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION AND NATO**

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**INFORMATION DIGEST OF
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ENERGETICS.....	2
Project on expanding the Talimarjan TPP is underway in Uzbekistan	2
INTER-AGENCY CONFERENCE, DEVOTED TO THE RESULTS OF ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTRAL ASIAN NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE.....	2
An inter-agency conference, devoted to the results of establishment of Central Asian Nuclear weapon free zone has been held in Tashkent	2
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION.....	3
Japanese parliamentary delegation received at the Oliy Majlis	3
Jacek Michalski: Uzbekistan is one of the most important partners of Poland in Central Asia	4
LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER OF OLIY MAJLIS OF REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN.....	5
MPs consider the state and prospects of introduction of modern technologies in agriculture and water resources management	5
SOCIETY.....	6
Commitment to the Prosperity of the Homeland.....	6

ENERGETICS

Project on expanding the Talimarjan TPP is underway in Uzbekistan

A project on expanding the Talimarjan thermal power plant (TPP) with the construction of two combined-cycle plants with a capacity of 450 MW each is underway in Uzbekistan. The progress of work was in the focus of a seminar organized by the JSC "Uzbekenergo" jointly with consulting companies.

As was noted at the event, the Talimarjan TPP with the sole in the Central Asian region the unit capacity of 800 megawatts is one of the largest enterprises of power industry of our country. The volume of electrical energy that is produced here on a daily basis is more than 18.5 million kilowatt-hours, per month this figure reaches 555 million and for the year – 6 billion kilowatt-hours.

The investment project on expansion of Talimarjan thermal power plant, which is financed through the loans of the Asian Development Bank, concessional loan from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency and the Fund for reconstruction and development of Uzbekistan, will allow to raise reliability of power supply in the Republic, to implement modern highly effective technologies of electricity production and further development of generating capacities.

Special attention during the seminar was paid to the fact that the project comprises 2 components. First, physical - the immediate construction of two steam gas units with a capacity of 450 MW each and social center in the city of Nuristan of Kashkadarya region. And the second component, non-physical, which includes capacity building of JSC "Uzbekenergo" in the field of improved management, financial and operating activities.

The event studied the comparative analysis of the requirements of the international financial institutions (IFIs), discussed the results of the assessment of environmental, social and gender aspects and adopted recommendations.

(Source: UzReport.uz)

INTER-AGENCY CONFERENCE, DEVOTED TO THE RESULTS OF ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTRAL ASIAN NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE

An inter-agency conference, devoted to the results of establishment of Central Asian Nuclear weapon free zone has been held in Tashkent

The event was organized by the Ministries of foreign affairs, foreign economic relations, investments and trade, health, and emergency situations of the Republic of Uzbekistan, State committee on environmental protection, "Sanoatgeokontehnazorat" state inspection and the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan.

Deputy foreign minister D.Khakimov and others noted that, the initiative, put forward by the President Islam Karimov on establishing nuclear weapon free zone in Central Asia helps to strengthen regional and international security.

Under the guidance of its President, Uzbekistan has conducted well thought-out peaceful policy since the first years of independence. Launched in 1993, President Islam Karimov's initiative to create in Central Asia a zone free of nuclear weapons, has been widely supported by the international community, the United Nations and such authoritative organizations as the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and others. The initiative of the head of our state was a great contribution to the strengthening of global security.

In 2006 the countries of the region signed the Agreement on the establishment of the Central Asian nuclear weapons free zone (CANWFZ), in 2014 at a meeting of the UN Security Council unanimously signed a protocol on security assurances to the Agreement.

The role and significance of the Central Asian nuclear weapons free zone (CANWFZ) in ensuring regional and international security have been discussed at the conference.

It was noted that all efforts of Uzbekistan, targeted at maintaining peace and security in the region have been yielding high results. The proposals and initiatives of the head of our state on peaceful regulation of the situation in Afghanistan, liquidation of the consequences of Aral crisis, countering international terrorism, religious extremism, narcotics and weapons trafficking have an important significance not only for the region, but also for the whole international community, it was highlighted.

- I am very glad to take part at this conference, the agenda of which has an extraordinary significance today, said the UN Resident coordinator, UNDP Resident representative in our country Stephen Priesner. –Ensuring peace and security in the world is one of the main spheres of activity of the UN. Stability and security support development of international cooperation. The UN actively cooperates with Uzbekistan in this area.

Conference participants discussed the factors that determine the current state of the nuclear nonproliferation regime in the world. Attention was drawn to topical issues such as the illegal movement of nuclear technologies and material, preventing their falling into the hands of non-state actors, as well as the radioactive contamination of the territories. The need for strict adherence to the norms and principles of international law in the field of nuclear non-proliferation has been underlined. It was noted that Uzbekistan's concrete steps to reduce weapons of mass destruction and strengthening the nuclear nonproliferation regime is an unconditional contribution of our country to the world stability, order and security. The participants exchanged views on the prospects of strengthening cooperation between the countries of the region in establishing the Central Asian nuclear weapons free zone and the need to further intensify consultations and practical cooperation in the fight against modern threats and challenges.

- We cooperate with Uzbekistan through the implementation of various projects in the field of security, said OSCE project coordinator György Szabó. - We support the very important initiative and the efforts of Uzbekistan on creation in Central Asia of a zone free from nuclear weapons.

Reports on topics such as the importance of the efforts of regional and international organizations in the process of establishing in Central Asia a zone free of nuclear weapons, the role of the Central Asian nuclear weapons free zone Treaty to provide security to the region, Uzbekistan's contribution to ensuring nuclear and radiation safety, strengthening the ecological security of the region and others have been presented and discussed at the conference.

(Source: UzA)

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Japanese parliamentary delegation received at the Oliy Majlis

A Japanese parliamentary delegation, headed by the member of the House of Representatives, director of the international relations department of the Liberal democratic party of Japan Kazunori Tanaka was received at the Legislative Chamber of Oliy Majlis of Uzbekistan.

During the meeting with the Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of Uzbekistan S.Otamuratov it has been highlighted that the relations between Uzbekistan and Japan are consistently developing in all spheres, particularly in the field of parliamentary relations, an important legal basis for which have been the agreements, reached during meetings of heads of two states . In particular, the official visit of President Islam Karimov in February 2011 in Japan, the official visit of Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe in October 2015 to our country gave new impetus to the mutual relations.

Japan is one of the strategic partners of Uzbekistan. Relations between our countries have been developing on the basis of more than 140 documents, including the Joint Statement

on Friendship, Strategic Partnership and Cooperation, as well as the joint statement on deepening and expanding strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and Japan.

Consistent cooperation has been established between the parliaments of our countries. Regular visits of delegations at various levels are organized, fruitful meetings are held. The League of Friendship with Uzbekistan at the Japanese parliament, Leagues of Friendship "Democratic Party of Japan - Uzbekistan", "Liberal Democratic Party of Japan - Uzbekistan", as well as inter-parliamentary group "Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan - Japan's parliament" at the Uzbek parliament serve the further development of active and effective cooperation in this direction.

Members of the parliamentary delegation of Japan commended the peaceful policy of Uzbekistan, aimed at ensuring security and stability in the region and stressed that they are interested in further development of the relations with Uzbekistan in the areas of parliamentary, trade, economy and other fields.

- Uzbekistan is a leading country in Central Asia, Kazunori Tanaka said. - It is gratifying that the mutual cooperation between our countries is developing dynamically in all spheres. The parliamentary reforms, implemented in Uzbekistan, and achieved successes are noteworthy. I would like to emphasize the activity of MPs. We support the further strengthening of mutually beneficial cooperation and friendly ties between Uzbekistan and Japan.

Members of the Japanese delegation were briefed on the activities of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis.

During the meeting the sides exchanged views on the current state and prospects of cooperation between the legislative bodies of Uzbekistan and Japan.

The Japanese delegation also held talks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

(Source: UzA)

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On 18 December 2015, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov received the delegation of the House of Representatives of Japanese Parliament headed by Director of the Department for International Relations of the Liberal Democratic Party, deputy Kazunori Tanaka.

The delegation also includes deputies of the House of Representatives Mineyuki Fukuda, Yoichi Anami, Yayoi Kimura, the press service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

During the meeting, the sides exchanged opinion on issues of Uzbek-Japanese relations, particularly at the parliamentary level.

The sides paid special attention to the results of the Uzbek-Japanese dialogue at the highest level during the official visit of Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe to our country in October 2015, implementing the agreements reached.

The talks the leaders of Uzbekistan and Japan have given a new impetus to bilateral cooperation in almost all fields of cooperation, raised strategic partnership between two countries to a higher level.

Ambassador of Japan Fumihiko Kato attended the meeting.

(Source: UzDaily.com)

Jacek Michalski: Uzbekistan is one of the most important partners of Poland in Central Asia

Uzbekistan is one of the most important economic partners of Poland in Central Asia and 2015 was marked by increased business dialogue, mutual contacts between entrepreneurs of the two friendly countries.

This was said by the adviser of Embassy of Poland in Uzbekistan, head of Department for promotion of trade and investment Jacek Michalski during a meeting with journalists at Le Grande Plaza Hotel.

An important event of this year was the visit of the delegation headed by Deputy Minister of economy of Poland Grażyna Henclewska, - said the diplomat. Members of the delegation took part in the work of the Tashkent International Investment Forum, held a series of constructive meetings in various ministries and departments, discussed a wide range of issues of bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

J. Michalski also commended the results achieved in the course of business forums held in Tashkent and Lublin with the participation of representatives of Uzbek and Polish business circles. According to him, these meetings contributed to the further strengthening of bilateral trade and economic cooperation and expanding trade between our countries.

- I also want to emphasize that Polish companies have become regular participants of leading international exhibitions held in Tashkent, - said J. Michalski. - A contribution to this makes the Department for promotion of trade and investment of the Embassy of Poland in Uzbekistan, which organized its participation at seven international exhibitions and fairs this year.

At the end, the Polish diplomat congratulated the people of Uzbekistan with coming New 2016 year and wished everyone good health, prosperity and peace, and for businessmen, more success in the implementation of their new ideas and plans.

In January-October of the current year, the mutual trade turnover between Uzbekistan and Poland amounted to about 113.5 million dollars. Important positions of Polish imports from our country were the products of processed cotton, textile and chemical industry, mineral products.

(Source: UzReport.uz)

LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER OF OLIY MAJLIS OF REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

MPs consider the state and prospects of introduction of modern technologies in agriculture and water resources management

A regular meeting of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan was held on December 17.

Deputies, within the framework of the parliamentary inquiry, directed at the initiative of the faction of the Social-Democratic Party of Uzbekistan “Adolat” to the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, heard the information “On the state of use of water-saving technologies and prospects for increasing its effectiveness in Uzbekistan, introduction of modern techniques and technologies in agricultural enterprises”.

The event was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources and other ministries, departments and agencies, representatives of the mass media.

In the parliamentary inquiry of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis information is requested from the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the status of implementation of the Law “On water and water use”, aimed at improving used facilities in irrigation and equipment through the introduction of water-saving technologies and advanced irrigation techniques, implementation of the Decree DP-1958 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated from April 19, 2013 “On measures on further improving reclamation of irrigated lands and rational use of water resources for the period of 2013-2017”, as well as measures on further improving the existing normative-legal acts in order to effectively use the country’s water-saving technologies and to accelerate their implementation.

It was noted that over the years, the Ministry has carried out works in this direction. In particular, hydraulic and other engineering structures of water management, systems of automatic control of water resources are widely used in order to meet the challenges on

organization of effective use of water resources, their protection, storage and delivery to consumers.

Water resources system of the republic covers irrigation network of 180 thousand kilometers, 160 thousand facilities of water resources management, 800 major facilities, 1496 pumping stations with capacity of 8.2 bln kWh per year, 55 water reservoirs with the volume of more than 19 billion cubic meters, 4124 irrigation vertical wells.

In 2013-2015 collector networks with length of 2575 km were reconstructed and constructed in order to fulfill the above-mentioned Decree. Horizontal open and closed drainage networks with length respectively of 36 thousand 957 km and 1564 km were renovated and restored. 477 units of reclamation equipment and machinery through the state leasing company “Uzmeliomashlizing” have been purchased.

Besides, in 2013-2015 works on construction and reconstruction of channels with the length of 890 km, the network gutter with length of 193 km, 42 hydraulic structures, pumping stations with a total capacity of 32,9 m³/s, reservoirs with volume of 323 million m³ have been carried out.

In the information of the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, it is noted that a drip irrigation system on an area of 18,5 thousand hectares, irrigation system with flexible tubes – on an area of 18,4 thousand hectares, methods of membrane irrigation in the area of 16,3 thousand hectares has been introduced in the country.

Deputies noted the need for the greater use of the existing opportunities in the activities of the Ministry in this sphere, increasing responsibilities of relevant departments in the structure of the ministry, achieving full and effective use of funds allocated from the state budget, attracting foreign investment to the sphere, as well as further strengthening practical work in the country on localization of production of other modern water-saving technologies and supporting manufacturers, further improving the legal framework in this sphere.

Taking into account the views and comments made during the discussion, the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis took note of the information of the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources.

According to the results of the parliamentary inquiry, a corresponding resolution of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan was adopted.

(Source: Information Service of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan)

SOCIETY

Commitment to the Prosperity of the Homeland

Relying on the principle ‘From a strong state to a strong civil society’, Uzbekistan has carried out major work in recent years to pave the way for independent and stable nongovernmental non-profit organizations and other civil society institutions.

The rights and powers of civil institutions, including NGOs, have been expanded in the context of protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of people, and ensuring their active involvement in public management. Provided by the government, favorable conditions, incentives and preferences have expanded the capacity of civil institutions in various spheres of life, contributing to enhancement of the public and socio-economic activity and legal culture.

That was emphasized at the opening of the national stage of the Fourth National Forum of NGOs of Uzbekistan. It took place in Tashkent under the motto ‘With a sense of belonging to the prosperity of the motherland’. The traditional annual platform for constructive dialogue between the government and civil society institutions was organized by the National Association of NGOs of Uzbekistan (NANGOUz), the Independent Institute for Monitoring the Formation of Civil Society Organizations, and other social institutions.

The national forum was preceded by regional stages in Karakalpakstan, all regions and the capital city in late November, which were attended by more than 2,500 representatives of NGOs and government agencies. They highlighted the contribution of nongovernmental organizations in the implementation of programs in education, health, environment, employment, women's rights, social support for vulnerable groups, and others.

The dialogue between government agencies and representatives of public organizations resulted in the elaboration of proposals on the further development of social partnership in the society.

BALANCE OF INTERESTS IN SOCIETY

As noted at the forum, Uzbekistan has been building the strong civil society, which would be capable of protecting human rights and freedoms, and creating conditions for people to implement their potential. The recent rapid and effective development of civil society institutions, including self-government bodies and NGOs, has been contributing to the balance of interests in the society.

The implementation of the principle 'From a strong state towards a strong civil society' was secured by a strong legal foundation, which incorporates more than 250 legislative documents that correspond to the highest democratic requirements and are aimed at free development of civil society institutions.

Initiated by the state's leader and approved by the parliament, the 'Concept of enhancing democratic reforms and building the civil society in the country' has marked a new stage in the revitalization and expansion of the scale of NGO activities, their capacity in public and state management. The implementation of the Concept has allowed quantitative and qualitative increase in the participation of civil society institutions in the state and public construction.

The concept has paved the way for the adoption of pivotal acts over the last five years, including the laws 'On environmental control', 'On transparency of state authorities and administration', 'On social partnership' and other legislative acts, which are essential for the dynamic development of NGOs.

For instance, the Law 'On transparency of state authorities and administration' has contributed to strengthening of positions of civil society institutions as it has provided a broad access for people and nongovernmental organizations to information about decision making, especially with regard to the decisions that affect the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of citizens.

The adoption of the Law 'On social partnership', which entered into force on January 1, 2015, was an important event. It has defined the forms and mechanisms of cooperation between state bodies and NGOs, as well as settled basic rights and obligations of the parties.

Public commissions on social partnership were organized under regional councils of people's representatives in different regions as part of practical implementation of the provisions of the legal act. They are called to promote the enhancement of cooperation between NGOs and local government agencies in the implementation of socially and publicly important programs and projects, development of proposals on priority areas of social partnership and monitoring its progress in addressing social and economic issues in certain territories. Along with members of councils of people's representatives, they involve representatives of regional administrations, judiciary and finance bodies, as well as government agencies, NGOs and other civil society institutions.

The recent regulatory and legal acts have significantly simplified the procedure of organization of NGOs. For instance, the registration fee for NGOs was reduced five times, and logo registration fees were cut by 2.5 times. The period of consideration of their appeals for state registration by judicial authorities was reduced from two to one month.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

In order to ensure the financial stability of NGOs, Uzbekistan has built a national infrastructure that provides them with real independence, material and financial support. The Public Fund for Support of NGOs and Other Civil Society Institutions, and the Parliamentary

Commission for Management of Assets of the Public Fund for Support of NGOs and Other Civil Society Institutions were instituted in 2008 under the country's highest legislative body. In 2008-2014, the Fund allocated over 47.7 billion soums to various civil society organizations in accordance with decisions of the Parliamentary Commission, which then were distributed through grant competitions, grants and social orders. (*currency rates of CB RU from 21.12.2015 1\$= 2780.05 soums*)

The number of holders of state grants has been growing year by year. In 2014, the Parliamentary Commission supported 176 NGO projects, and 279 - in 2015.

“State support of social projects has not just been contributing to the stability of the society, but also in the increase of the number of enterprising people,” says the Director of Imkon nongovernmental non-profit organization of Navoi region Clara Bobokulova. “Our organization is engaged in the support of women and children, enhancement of their knowledge, capacity development, and contributes to strengthening of the NGO network in the region. We have 400 of them today.”

“We have repeatedly won grant competitions of the Public Fund under the Oliy Majlis,” says the head of the Mashkhur Center in O‘zbekiston district of Fergana region Aziza Yuldasheva. “Grants empowered us to carry out projects on support of women and the youth. For example, this year, we have taught 120 women sewing, baking and hairdressing in free courses. We actively cooperate with the local authorities, and self-government bodies. As a result, hundreds of residents of our district have got engaged in the home-based work, thus addressing the issues of employment.”

The indirect funding of public organizations through various benefits and preferences, full or partial exemption from some taxes ranks among the forms of governmental support.

612 NGOs have been involved in the implementation of the national program the Year of Attention and Care for the Senior Generation. Over the past three years, the number of national public organizations that are involved in the implementation of government programs has increased by 1.6 times, and regional – by 1.7 times.

The creation of the infrastructures that would comprehensively support NGOs and ensure their participation in the democratic renewal and modernization of the country has been an intent priority. For instance, the National Association of NGOs of Uzbekistan was founded in 2005. Today, it incorporates more than 500 members, and consolidates their efforts in the implementation of social projects and programs. The association has its resource centers in 12 regions and is regarded as a bridge between the government and NGOs.

The measures taken have contributed to the increase in the number of NGOs by 50% over the last four years. Today, there are more than 8,300 registered NGOs. Despite this growth, the direction of their work over the recent years has not changed much - the largest share has been retained by the organizations supporting entrepreneurship and farming (over 21%), development of democratic institutions (17.6%), sports (13%) and youth (7.6%).

BUSY AGENDA

The agenda of the republican stage of the national forum highlighted the issues of increasing the role of NGOs in promoting peace and concord in the society, growing healthy and comprehensively advanced young generation, expanding their involvement in the implementation of projects in environmental protection, as well as development of volunteer and charity activities of citizens is addressing social and humanitarian issues in the field, and others.

The participants drew attention to the study of practical results of involvement of regional public organizations in the development and implementation of national, sectoral and regional programs of social and economic development, in particular the national program the Year of Attention and Care for the Senior Generation, as well as in the development of proposals on addressing the future challenges of the Year of Mother and Child Health.

The forum included panel discussions on the ‘Development of social partnership in women's rights and their involvement in socio-political, socio-economic and cultural life of the

country’, ‘Participation of NGOs in the development and implementation of programs on environmental protection and rational use of natural resources, and making their environment protection activities more effective’, ‘Building the volunteering and charity capacity in citizens in addressing social and humanitarian issues in the field’. The discussions were accompanied by presentations and produced interesting proposals and recommendations.

The forum resulted in the development of Integrated Program of Strengthening Social Partnership between Government Agencies and NGOs, which is aimed at making their work more effective. It is also planned to develop proposals for the draft programs on the activity of public commissions for social partnership at Jokargy Kenes of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, Councils of People’s Representatives in regions and Tashkent city.

The winners of the grant competition of the public fund under the Oliy Majlis were awarded certificates for 1.5 billion soums. The best journalist and editor were awarded for covering the activities of NGOs in social, financial and moral support for the elderly and people with disabilities.

The forum agenda also included a charity fair ‘Mercy, Compassion and Protection’, which focused on the support of children with disabilities, and a photo presentation ‘The NGO World’. The participants were enthusiastic about samples of articles produced by entrepreneurs: costumes, handicrafts and jewelery, as well as photographs depicting social work of NGOs.

Representatives of a dozen of NGOs demonstrated projects on women employment, child health, support of people with disabilities, environmental protection. They concluded agreements with the employers on the practical implementation of the projects.

“We have presented a project on the organization of vocational training for women with disabilities,” shared the Director of Inter Bilim NGO of Khorezm region Rashida Masharipova. “Our recent activities in this field have helped 150 people with disabilities to find their place in the society. The forum is very helpful in every respect. We have reached an agreement with entrepreneurs on the implementation of the next project. Besides, our proposals on the development of resource centers of the region’s NGOs were awarded grants.

(Source: «Uzbekistan Today» newspaper)

Reference to the source is a must in reproducing materials