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The foreign policy of the republic of Uzbekistan on the international stage, based on peace and harmony

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Abstract: This article reviews the comparative path traversed by independent Uzbekistan's foreign policy from its inception to the present day. It provides a detailed analysis and explains the significance of the "open doors and pragmatic, people-centric diplomacy" currently being implemented under the leadership and initiative of President Sh. Mirziyoyev. Within the framework of Uzbekistan's foreign policy, the goals of sustainable economic development are being pursued by attracting substantial foreign investment of up to $50 billion annually. Reliable cooperation has been established with the United States, European Union nations, China, India, Russia, and other countries. The "open doors" policy and pragmatic diplomacy have become the trademark and everyday reality for Uzbekistan, positioning the country as a trusted and authoritative partner worldwide.

Keywords: Core principles of Uzbekistan's foreign policy, stages and current development of state foreign policy, cooperation with international organizations.

Introduction

Since gaining its independence in 1991, the Republic of Uzbekistan has elevated its foreign policy activities to an entirely new stage. Uzbekistan has formulated a foreign policy based on its national interests, norms of international law, and principles of maintaining peace and stability [1, pp. 152–154]. The primary objective of this course is to ensure the country's sovereignty and security, enhance its prestige in the international arena, strengthen regional peace, and create favorable external conditions for economic development. In its foreign policy, Uzbekistan chose an independent path—its foundation is formed by the principles of "non-alignment with any military-political blocs," "mutually beneficial cooperation," and a "peace-loving policy." Consequently, our country has been recognized within the international community as a reliable state that values peace. Today, under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Uzbekistan's foreign policy has entered a new phase based on the principles of openness, friendship, and cooperation. Initiatives such as strengthening mutual trust with neighboring states, activating integration processes in the region, peaceful resolution of the Afghanistan problem, and finding fair solutions to water and energy issues are practical manifestations of this very policy. Furthermore, by actively cooperating with the United Nations (UN), the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and other international structures, Uzbekistan promotes the ideas of peace, security, and sustainable development worldwide. In this regard, the essence of Uzbekistan's foreign policy is emerging as a strategic direction aimed at ensuring not only national interests, but also the stability and security of the entire Central Asian region [2, pp. 124–126].

Analysis and results: main principles of the foreign policy of the republic of Uzbekistan

On September 1, 1991, having achieved its independence, the Republic of Uzbekistan chose its path of development and declared itself a sovereign state in the international arena. From that day forward, one of the most critical tasks facing the country was to formulate an independent foreign policy, find its place in international relations, and protect national interests. From its earliest years, Uzbekistan's foreign policy has been pursued along the following directions based on peace-loving, open, and friendly relations:

Openness for cooperation regardless of ideological views, and commitment to maintaining security.

Respect for the sovereign equality of states and the inviolability of borders.

Non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.

Peaceful settlement of disputes.

Non-use of force or threat of force.

Respect for human rights and freedoms.

Priority of generally recognized principles and norms of international law over domestic national laws and legal norms.

The right to form alliances and withdraw from them in order to ensure the supreme interests and security of the state and the people.

Non-participation in aggressive military blocs and associations.

Equal rights and mutual benefit in interstate relations, and the supremacy of state and national interests.

Development of foreign relations on both bilateral and multilateral bases.

The Republic of Uzbekistan is a full-fledged subject of international relations. Its foreign policy is based on the rules of sovereign equality of 1991–2000 — The Period of Consolidating Independence: Uzbekistan integrated into the international community as a sovereign state. It became a member of the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The primary focus was directed toward establishing diplomatic relations and ensuring territorial security.

2001–2016 — Moderate Isolationist Diplomacy: Prudence and stability became priorities in foreign policy. Non-alignment with military blocs and internal political stability were preserved. Relations with Russia, China, and Asian countries deepened, though a policy of seclusion was noticeable.

2017–2025 — The Stage of Openness and Active Diplomacy: President Shavkat Mirziyoyev established active participation in foreign policy. Proactive foreign policy, regional integration, a multi-vector orientation, investment diplomacy, and transport diplomacy beame the main directions.

Methods and materials

Stages of Formation of Foreign Policy

In the early years of independence, Uzbekistan's foreign policy was formed in three main directions:

1. **Consolidating state sovereignty:** achieving international recognition of the sovereign state of Uzbekistan by the international community;
2. **Ensuring security and stability:** active participation in the regional and global security system;
3. **Expanding economic and diplomatic relations:** establishing mutually beneficial cooperation with foreign countries.

On March 2, 1992, the Republic of Uzbekistan was admitted as a full member of the United Nations. This historical event played a crucial role in establishing an independent and legitimate foundation for the country's foreign policy.

Content of the Policy of Peacekeeping and Regional Security: Friendship and Harmony with Neighbors.

One of the most important directions of Uzbekistan's foreign policy is the development of friendly relations with neighboring states. Strengthening peace, trust, and cooperation in Central Asia is a priority objective of the country's foreign policy. Beginning in the 1990s, Uzbekistan established diplomatic relations with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. In subsequent years, these relations expanded further in political, economic, and cultural spheres. On January 4, 1993, at the initiative of Islam Karimov, a meeting of the heads of Central Asian states

was organized in Tashkent. During the meeting, the Central Asian Commonwealth was founded, and the heads of the five states signed the Agreement on the Commonwealth. Under the leadership of Shavkat Mirziyoyev, this principle was elevated to a new stage as the "policy of friendship with close neighbors."

This principle has yielded the following practical results:

1. It created an environment of peace and trust in the region;
2. It strengthened friendly relations with neighboring states;
3. It transformed Uzbekistan into a respected and reliable partner in the international arena;
4. It enhanced Uzbekistan's prestige as a peace-loving state within the global community.

Therefore, in Uzbekistan's foreign policy, the principles of friendship and solidarity serve not only as a diplomatic direction, but also as a primary guarantee for the peaceful and prosperous life of the people [4, p. 32].

The Principle of Equal Rights and Mutual Benefit: Uzbekistan establishes cooperation with all states on an equal basis. Any international agreement or treaty is concluded on the basis of mutual benefit. This policy has introduced Uzbekistan to the world community as a reliable partner.

Commitment to the Norms of International Law: The country conducts its foreign policy based on the norms of international law, the UN Charter, and international treaties. Uzbekistan treats the territorial integrity and sovereignty of other states with respect.

Prioritizing National Interests: The most crucial principle of Uzbekistan's foreign policy is to place national interests above all else. Any international agreement or diplomatic initiative must serve the country's security, economic development, and public welfare.

Uzbekistan's International Successes: Over the years of independence, Uzbekistan has established diplomatic relations with more than 160 countries. Embassies of numerous states have opened in Tashkent, and Uzbekistan's embassies also operate abroad. The country has expanded cooperation with influential international structures such as the UN, the OSCE, the SCO, the CIS, and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. Representative offices of these and other prestigious international organizations have been operating in Tashkent for many years. Thanks to this active foreign policy, Uzbekistan is recognized as a peace-loving, reliable, and stable state in the region and throughout the world. In conclusion, the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan is a policy relying on independence, peace, cooperation, and national interests. It stands out in the international arena with its clear position and active initiatives. In a word, Uzbekistan's foreign policy is a policy that serves the peace and well-being of the people, expressing national pride and independence. Uzbekistan consistently supports programs aimed at ensuring security within the framework of the UN, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Results and their discussion

At the initiative of Uzbekistan, a number of important proposals were put forward to strengthen an environment of peace and trust in Central Asia. In the 1990s, Islam Karimov advanced the principle of an "open-door policy" in the region, aiming to develop friendly relations with all neighboring states. In subsequent years, Uzbekistan's regional policy was elevated to a new stage under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Speaking at the UN General Assembly

in 2017, he advanced the concept of a "New Central Asia" aimed at strengthening peace and trust in the region. Today, thanks to this policy pursued by Uzbekistan:

- Border disputes with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan have been resolved peacefully;
- Cooperation in the use of water and energy resources has intensified;
- Collaboration among the states of the region in trade, transport, cultural, and scientific spheres has been strengthened.

Uzbekistan's Peacekeeping Position on the Afghan Issue

Since Afghanistan shares a direct border with Uzbekistan, the political situation there directly impacts the country's security. Therefore, Uzbekistan has pursued active and consistent diplomatic efforts aimed at establishing peace in Afghanistan [5].

In March 2018, an international conference titled "Peace Process, Security Cooperation and Regional Connectivity" (or "The Peace Process in Afghanistan: Cooperation and Solidarity") was held in Tashkent. Representatives from the United Nations, the European Union, the USA, Russia, China, Pakistan, and other countries participated in it. This initiative once again demonstrated Uzbekistan's leading role in ensuring regional peace. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev stated regarding this matter: "The people of Afghanistan need peace and stability. We view this country as an integral part of our region" [6, p. 15].

Uzbekistan is recognized as an active participant in international security issues. In the 2000s, the country strengthened its cooperation with the UN and the SCO in combating international terrorism. Starting from the 2010s, Uzbekistan firmly supported the policy of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and advanced the initiative to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. In 2020, Uzbekistan received the status of a "State Supporting Peacekeeping Initiatives" from the UN. These results further enhanced Uzbekistan's prestige in the international arena. The National Security Concept of the Republic of Uzbekistan is a document aimed at ensuring the country's independence, territorial integrity, political stability, and economic resilience. It outlines the following priority directions:

1. Maintaining internal political stability;
2. Strengthening international cooperation in combating external threats;
3. Ensuring information security;
4. Strengthening state borders;
5. Ensuring water, food, and environmental security.

This concept practically reinforces Uzbekistan's peace-loving foreign policy.

3. Uzbekistan's Cooperation with International Organizations and Its Significance

From the very first days of gaining its independence, the Republic of Uzbekistan has pursued a policy of establishing active relations with the international community and building cooperation with various international organizations. This cooperation occupies an important place in the country's foreign policy, as through partnership with international organizations, Uzbekistan protects its interests globally and contributes to the peaceful resolution of regional and global problems.

Cooperation with the United Nations (UN): On March 2, 1992, the Republic of Uzbekistan was recognized as a full member of the United Nations (UN). This historical event reinforced Uzbekistan's independence in the international arena and transformed the country into an equal member of the global community. Cooperation with the UN is one of the most crucial directions of Uzbekistan's foreign policy. Our country has put forward a number of initiatives within the framework of the UN:

In 2000, President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov advanced the initiative to "Declare Central Asia a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone." This initiative was realized in 2006, and an international treaty banning nuclear weapons in Central Asia was signed.

In 2017, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev delivered a speech at the UN General Assembly, putting forward the concept of "Central Asia: Sustainable Development through Mutual Trust and Cooperation." This initiative became an important step toward preserving peace in the region.

Uzbekistan carries out effective projects with structures such as the UN Human Rights Council, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UNESCO, UNICEF, and FAO. For instance, in cooperation with UNESCO, historic cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, and Shakhrisabz were inscribed on the World Heritage List. This represents not only international recognition, but also a major achievement in introducing Uzbekistan's rich cultural heritage to the world [7].

Cooperation with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Uzbekistan became a member of the OSCE in 1992. Cooperation with the organization is implemented primarily in three dimensions:

1. Ensuring security;
2. Developing democratic institutions;
3. Protecting human rights.

Within the framework of cooperation with the OSCE, a number of programs have been implemented in Uzbekistan regarding the observation of election processes, the development of civil society, the fight against corruption, and the ensuring of gender equality. The OSCE projects in Uzbekistan serve to strengthen political stability in the region, develop the rule of law, and improve public administration.

Cooperation with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

Uzbekistan is one of the founding members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), having joined the organization in 2001. Cooperation within the framework of the SCO primarily encompasses the spheres of security, trade, transport, energy, and culture. Through the SCO, Uzbekistan:

Participates actively in combating terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking;

Plays a leading role in the activities of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS);

Puts forward initiatives to expand regional economic cooperation.

Within the framework of SCO summits, Uzbekistan has put forward numerous initiatives; in particular, ideas such as "Developing Transport and Logistics Infrastructure" and "Establishing the Youth Diplomacy Council" are being implemented.

At the anniversary meeting of the SCO held in Beijing on August 31 – September 1, 2025, heads of more than 20 states and 10 international organizations participated. Participating in this summit, President Sh. Mirziyoyev put forward more than 20 initiatives aimed at further elevating the organization's activities. These initiatives were in the spotlight of the global community and were received with satisfaction [8].

Cooperation with the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

Uzbekistan joined the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 1996. Within the framework of this organization, the country has advanced active initiatives in the fields of religious tolerance, peace, combating terrorism, education, and science.

In 2016, Tashkent was declared the "Capital of Islamic Culture" by the OIC. Furthermore, in 2018, the "Youth Forum of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation" was held in the city of Samarkand. These events further enhanced Uzbekistan's prestige in the Islamic world. In addition, within the framework of the OIC, Uzbekistan's initiative on "Islamic Solidarity and Tolerance" has been advanced and actively promoted to strengthen religious harmony worldwide.

Cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

Uzbekistan is one of the founding states of the CIS in 1991. Within the framework of the Commonwealth, large-scale cooperation has been established in political, economic, cultural, and humanitarian spheres. Uzbekistan actively participates in economic integration processes within the CIS; cooperates on issues of security and border protection; and supports exchange programs in the fields of culture, sports, science, and education. In 2020, Uzbekistan chaired the CIS and put forward a number of initiatives during this period aimed at revitalizing the organization's activities, expanding regional economic projects, and strengthening mutual assistance in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

Cooperation with the European Union (EU) and Other Organizations

Uzbekistan is also developing effective economic cooperation with the European Union, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Through these organizations:

- Financing economic reforms is being implemented;
- Infrastructure projects are being carried out;
- Social sectors are being developed;
- International programs to solve environmental problems are being executed.

For instance, in cooperation with the EBRD, new lines of the Tashkent Metro are being constructed, while programs for water supply and agricultural modernization are being implemented with the ADB.

On April 3–4, 2025, the first summit between Uzbekistan and the European Union took place in Samarkand. The summit was attended by the top leadership of the European Union, Antonio Costa and Ursula von der Leyen, as well as presidents of major banks and companies. As a result of the meeting, agreements were reached on investments totaling 40 billion euros based on comprehensive economic and humanitarian projects.

On October 24, 2025, a solemn ceremony dedicated to the signing of the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the European Union was held in Brussels, with the participation of President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the European Council Antonio Costa, and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen. The document updates and significantly expands the legal framework of Uzbekistan-Europe cooperation, which had been based on the 1996 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. Negotiations on the new agreement project began in February 2019 and were concluded in July 2022. The document was initialed on July 6, 2022, in Brussels. The agreement consists of 9 sections, 356 articles, and 14 annexes. It covers virtually all areas of bilateral relations and forms a comprehensive legal framework for developing cooperation in all mutually beneficial directions, with a special focus on strengthening political dialogue, trade and investments, sustainable development, science and education, innovations and high technologies, as well as the environment and climate change. During this meeting, the European Union additionally brought 10 billion euros of investments into Uzbekistan. The signing of the agreement inaugurates a new phase in Uzbekistan-EU relations and elevates multifaceted partnership to an unprecedentedly high level [9, p. 32].

The rise of comprehensive relations between Uzbekistan and the United States

On September 23, 2025, at the UN headquarters, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev met with U.S. President Donald Trump. During the brief conversation, Trump commented with satisfaction on the signed agreements worth 105 billion dollars between Uzbek and U.S. companies. At this meeting, Uzbekistan emerged as a major purchaser of modern U.S. equipment and machinery. The 105 billion dollar agreements signed between Uzbek and U.S. companies

astonished the world. Both sides expressed their desire to continue mutual dialogues in the future [10].

Furthermore, on November 5–6, 2025, a summit of the heads of the five Central Asian states and the United States took place in Washington at the initiative of President D. Trump. Possessing rare underground mineral resources, Central Asia—and Uzbekistan in particular—has been generating significant interest among advanced industrial nations. Our state possesses critical mineral resources such as copper, lithium, lead, silver, gold, and uranium. The two countries are expanding cooperation on exploring and processing mining resources to the level of finished products, as well as launching new oil and gas fields. Important contracts are being implemented to import and utilize modern heavy geological machinery and technologies from the U.S. to Uzbekistan [11].

During the fifth Tashkent International Investment Forum held on June 16–18, 2026, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev held a meeting with a delegation of leading U.S. companies. The meeting was attended by John Jovanovic, President and Chair of the Export-Import Bank of the United States; Ben Black, Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC); Carolyn Lamm, Chairman of the USA-Uzbekistan Chamber of Commerce; as well as the heads and representatives of corporations such as Air Products, Cove Capital, Templeton Global Investments, Boeing, 77 Construction, BlackRock, FLS, Visa, JP Morgan, Meta, GULF, and a number of other companies. The Head of State noted with satisfaction that this meeting is a continuation of the positive tradition established in recent years and serves as confirmation of the growing interest of U.S. business circles in expanding their operations in Uzbekistan. It was particularly emphasized that economic cooperation is one of the main pillars of the strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and the United States. The country's leader outlined a number of pressing directions aimed at further developing trade and economic cooperation between the two states. Special attention is devoted to advancing specific projects in the exploration and processing of critical minerals, energy, metallurgy, finance, artificial intelligence, digital technologies, and many other fields. The heads of major U.S. companies expressed gratitude to the President of Uzbekistan for the favorable conditions created for the effective operation of investors, and outlined their specific proposals and plans. At the conclusion of the roundtable discussion, a ceremony for exchanging bilateral documents with leading U.S. companies took place. The package of signed agreements amounted to tens of billions of dollars [12].

Thanks to the energy, dedication, and active efforts of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, several prestigious international summits and conferences were hosted in Uzbekistan during 2025 alone. For instance, the city of Tashkent hosted the 150th anniversary Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (April 2025).

In the city of Samarkand, the first "Central Asia – European Union" summit was held on April 2–3, 2025, followed shortly thereafter by an International Climate Forum.

From October 31 to November 15, 2025, the city of Samarkand hosted the 43rd session of the UNESCO General Conference.-

The Head of State announced that in 2026, Uzbekistan's economy is projected to grow by 6.7%, with the gross domestic product reaching 167 billion dollars. Furthermore, it was stated that over the next 5 years, there are opportunities to expand the volume of the economy to exceed 240 billion dollars. "This is a forecast based on precise and thorough calculations," the President noted [14].

On October 15, 2025, and May 3, 2026, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev held meetings with the heads of leading companies from Saudi Arabia. The event was attended by the Kingdom's Minister of Investment Khalid Al-Falih, Chairman of ACWA Power Mohammad Abunayyan, as well as representatives from Al Muhaidib Group, Vision Invest, Data

Volt, Riyadh Cables, AlMajdiah, InterHealth, Saudi Tabreed, AlBawani Holding, Miahona, Pemco, and other leading companies and corporations. At the beginning of the meeting, our President specifically emphasized that thanks to the joint efforts of the leaders of the two states, multifaceted partnership relations between Uzbekistan and Saudi Arabia have risen to a high level in recent years. The total portfolio of joint projects has exceeded 30 billion dollars, and mutual trade volume is growing steadily. The number of flights between the two countries has surpassed 60 per week [15].

The Head of State highly praised the activities of ACWA Power, Uzbekistan's primary partner in the "green" energy sector. It was noted that new investment initiatives launched in December of last year—including projects for constructing solar and wind power plants—are being consistently implemented in accordance with established plans. During the conversation, special attention was paid to promising areas of cooperation. In particular, issues regarding the construction of the "New Tashkent" international airport, the establishment of a multidisciplinary medical institution in the city of Fergana, and the launch of a modern data processing center (data center) in the IT Park were discussed.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan is distinguished by its principles of peace, cooperation, and mutual respect. Every foreign policy step taken by our country serves to ensure national interests, regional security, and international peace. Formulated over the years of independence, this policy has strengthened Uzbekistan's position within the global community and established it as a reliable partner. The concept of "Central Asia Is Our Common Home," advanced by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, has further reinforced friendly, trusting, and mutually beneficial relations among the states of the region. Thanks to this approach, long-standing border and water-energy issues in the region have begun to be resolved peacefully, and trade and economic relations have expanded dramatically. Uzbekistan's cooperation with international organizations—in particular, its active participation within the framework of the UN, the SCO, the OIC, and other prestigious structures—along with its contribution to global peace and sustainable development, also demonstrates the effectiveness of its foreign policy. Most importantly, the ultimate goal of Uzbekistan's foreign policy is to establish friendly relations with the countries of the world, resolve conflicts exclusively through negotiations rather than the use of force, and ensure international security and peace. Thanks to this policy, our country is recognized today in the international arena as a "peace-loving, open, reliable, and stable partner." At the same time, this farsighted and just policy serves to adequately provide for the daily material life of our people and elevate social protection of the population to a high level. Thus, Uzbekistan's foreign policy is a policy that not only defends state interests, but also establishes solidarity, peace, and mutual trust in the region. Therefore, this policy serves as a guarantee of peace, stability, and prosperity for present and future generations.

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