

CONSTITUTION AND THE GOALS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF NEW UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: The article discusses issues related to modern perspectives on ensuring human dignity and its personal, political, social, economic, cultural, ecological, and development rights in the Constitution and the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan. It also explores the solutions to these issues in the context of sustainable development goals.

Keywords: Constitution, New Uzbekistan, development, prosperity, poverty, deprivation, Sustainable Development Goals, human dignity, personal, political, social, economic, cultural, ecological rights.

Introduction. Historically, in a short period, significant efforts have been made in our country to ensure consistent economic growth and achieve economic development to improve the living standards and quality of life of our people. Notably, reforms in the tax and banking-financial systems, including the liberalization of the currency market, the elimination of cash-related problems, the implementation of international financial operations based on global standards, the establishment of new innovative and high-tech enterprises, the rapid integration of modern communication systems, and digital technologies into our lives, as well as the expansion of opportunities for entrepreneurship, deserve special mention.

Today, the results achieved are being summarized, and attention is being given to what economic plans and strategic goals lie ahead in the near future, and what needs to be done to achieve them. These issues are being thoroughly addressed through topics such as "Ensuring macroeconomic stability," "Developing entrepreneurship and small business," "Prospects for the rapid development of industry," "New Uzbekistan – towards a digital economy," "Developing the agricultural sector and ensuring food security," "New Uzbekistan: sustainable and resilient tourism," "Green energy – the guarantee of sustainable development," "Strong regions – a strong Uzbekistan," and are being deeply ingrained in the consciousness of our people.

Analysis. The United Nations Millennium Development Declaration, later referred to as the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," is significant for encompassing "modern views" related to human dignity and ensuring its personal, political, social, economic, cultural, and environmental rights within the context of sustainable development goals.

In 2016, when Shavkat Mirziyoyev took office as President, from the very first days of his tenure, he laid the foundation for radical reforms based on the following great idea: "From the first day of our reforms, we recognized honoring human dignity as the highest value, and we began significant changes in this regard. Our sole goal is to make our people happy by ensuring justice and the rule of law" [1].

In the newly revised Constitution, the principle of "Uzbekistan is a social state" has been established. So, what is a social state? First and foremost, the idea of honoring human dignity lies at the core of a social state. On January 26, 2022, under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, a video conference meeting was held to discuss Uzbekistan's development strategy for 2022-2026 and the issues related to its implementation in 2022. It is worth recalling that President Mirziyoyev emphasized: "Human dignity is not some abstract, lofty concept for us. When we talk about human dignity, we primarily mean ensuring that every citizen lives a peaceful and secure life, and protecting their fundamental rights and freedoms" [2].

Indeed, "Humanity's eternal dream is to create the necessary conditions for the realization of human dignity, rights, and freedoms, where prosperity and development, opportunities and good intentions come to life, where democratic principles such as justice, cooperation, equality, and the rule of law are firmly established, where peace, harmony, and stability prevail, and where we strive for a stable and developed world" [3].

The Sustainable Development Goals are of significant importance as they are aimed at improving human life, living standards, and quality of life. The tasks set by the SDGs have been implemented in Uzbekistan through three comprehensive development strategies adopted over the past 8 years: the Action Strategy for 2017-2021 and its logical continuation, the Development Strategy for 2022-2026 [4], as well as the "Uzbekistan – 2030" Strategy [5]. These strategies align with large-scale reforms being carried out and are reflected in laws and other normative-legal documents.

As clearly stated in our Constitution, the dignity and worth of the individual are inviolable, and the struggle against any actions that violate human rights and legal interests is undoubtedly one of our most urgent tasks.

In this direction, the main focus is on implementing effective legal mechanisms aimed at preventing such situations, as well as improving the activities of national institutions such as the Human Rights Commissioner of the Oliy Majlis, the Children's Ombudsman, and other human rights institutions.

Judicial and legal reforms are being harmonized with the new constitutional framework. In this process, the protection of human rights, freedoms, and legal interests by the judiciary and law enforcement agencies is prioritized as a key task.

In all our reforms, the central focus should be on the individual and their interests, and ensuring the well-being and quality of life of our people must be the primary goal of state authorities.

In recent years, around 300 state services have been fully digitized, and more than 50 million services have been provided to the population [6].

Therefore, we must continue to consistently work on drastically reducing bureaucratic obstacles in the relationship between the citizen and the state, as well as eliminating corrupt factors in these processes.

It is known from global experience that the Constitution simplifies the governance of the state, meaning the mutual rights and obligations between individuals, society, and the state are generalized and regulated by law. In the era of globalization, life is changing rapidly. It is no secret that living conditions are becoming more complex. Therefore, the country's fundamental law must be constantly evolving and renewing. If it falls behind vital relationships, it loses its legal force and impact.

To ensure that the reforms we have started are irreversible, April 30, 2023, became a very important period in our country's constitutional development – the new edition of the Constitution was adopted through a national referendum.

Notably, the articles of our new Constitution have increased from 128 to 155, and the norms have expanded from 275 to 434. Sixty-five percent of the text of our fundamental law was updated based on the proposals of our people. If we look at the directions, in the areas of personal rights and freedoms, economic and social rights, the norms have almost tripled; human rights and freedoms guarantees have increased by more than 3.5 times; and those related to the family have doubled.

Three new chapters were added: children and youth in the existing Family Chapter, cultural and environmental rights in the Economic and Social Rights Chapter, and a separate chapter on advocacy. In 15 norms of the Constitution, it is clearly stated that the state must create conditions; in 16 norms, the state must guarantee, and in 4 norms, it must care. This clearly indicates that the goal of the state is to ensure human rights.

The norms related to human rights in our updated Constitution have increased by more than 3.5 times.

We would like to emphasize that the most important changes in the new edition of the Constitution in ten key areas are as follows:

Uzbekistan is a legal, social, and secular state, the Constitution directly applies, privileges must be written into law, all ambiguities must be resolved in favor of the individual, human rights can be limited in the interest of social morality and public order, teachers are given special recognition, land can be private property, and interference with media activities will be subject to legal responsibility. Changes in state governance and local government bodies, as well as the resignation of the head of local governments, have also been introduced.

What is the connection between the "New Uzbekistan – 2030" strategy and the Constitution? The point is that in the new constitutional and legal conditions, it is necessary to improve the main directions of our country's development and take the ongoing large-scale reforms to the next level. New Uzbekistan is revealing entirely new opportunities. The state is entering the veins of social life. The concept of a social state is becoming a real reality. Article 1 of the updated Constitution itself expresses the entire scope, content, and essence of the New Uzbekistan state. Indeed, "Uzbekistan is a sovereign, legal, democratic, social, and secular state with a republican form of government" [7].

Our goal is to turn the New Uzbekistan into a powerful and prosperous state where every citizen can realize their potential, nurture a healthy, educated, and spiritually developed generation, build a strong economy that has become a key part of global production, and guarantee justice, the rule of law, security, and stability. This is the path we have embarked on.

The main idea of this path is to do good for people, to mobilize the available resources to ensure that people are satisfied with their lives today, to implement new projects, and to create equal opportunities and conditions for everyone. Therefore, the Constitution has been defined as "the foundation of a people-centered state, stable development, and a prosperous life."

As emphasized in the preamble of our updated Constitution, the unity of the people's commitment to democracy, freedom, equality, social justice, and solidarity is clearly reflected. The face of our society is rejuvenating around these five ideas.

New Uzbekistan is no longer a weak country, but has become a mature state that approaches modern realities with calmness, can objectively assess its strengths and weaknesses, and is capable of independently determining its priorities and strategic goals.

We strive to turn New Uzbekistan into a powerful and capable state where free and happy people live, and to ensure that our country joins the list of 50 developed, economically stable, competitive democratic states with a high human capital by focusing on the development of the nation and the well-being of its people.

In line with this, we are implementing wide-ranging measures to consistently apply the key principles enshrined in our Fundamental Law related to honoring human dignity and ensuring rights and interests in our country.

It is estimated that the population of Uzbekistan will reach 50 million by 2040. Uzbekistan is becoming a large country, with more than half of its population being young.

In the coming years, the "Uzbekistan – 2030" strategy will guide the country's main development directions, creating the right conditions for every person to realize their potential, improving the living standards of the population through sustainable economic growth, saving water resources and protecting the environment, ensuring the rule of law, establishing government services in the interests of the people, and transforming the country into a peaceful and security-focused state.

For reference: In recent years, thanks to the selfless labor of our people, the economy has doubled, the income per capita has reached 3,000 dollars, the poverty rate has decreased from 23%

to 11%, the coverage of preschool education has increased from 74% to 43% in higher education, which are undoubtedly historic achievements. In 2024, Uzbekistan's GDP reached 115 billion dollars.

The figures provided in our work to serve socio-economic development will help maneuver along our path of progress. For example, according to the analysis by the Institute of Macroeconomic and Regional Studies, by 2030, the population of our country will exceed 41 million. This will require the development of urbanization, social infrastructure, and other social sectors (healthcare, social protection, education), and meeting the population's needs as outlined by the numbers.

All of the above contributes to creating the economic conditions necessary for transforming Uzbekistan into a social state where every citizen, regardless of their nationality, language, or religion, lives in peace, freedom, happiness, and prosperity. This includes the development of education, healthcare, science, culture, art, sports, the construction of new homes, reliable provision of drinking water and energy, and improvements in social infrastructure.

Uzbekistan's pragmatic policy is based on the universal idea that “whatever brings the most benefit to people in practice should be given more importance.”

Based on the social and economic development goals of our country, the "Uzbekistan – 2030" strategy is aimed at realizing the vital interests of individuals, society, and the state. By vital interests, we mean the needs that ensure the existence and development of society, the state, and the individual.

Simply put, our goal is one: to build a state in New Uzbekistan where our people work happily, are satisfied with life, and live in a flourishing state. This is the core direction of the "Uzbekistan – 2030" strategy, which embodies the noble idea of "first people – then state."

Today, we must recognize that systemic disruptions in the global economy, the emergence of new barriers to free exchange in trade, investment, and innovation, the breakdown of goods and services circulation, and increasing threats to energy security are becoming increasingly apparent. These threats will lead to socio-economic strain in international economic relations.

A closer look at the following information: Global economic growth has slowed over the past three years (from 6.2% in 2021 to 2.6% in 2023). Foreign direct investment has also decreased. In 2023, the total amount of investments in developing countries decreased by 9%.

Moreover, inequality between countries and within countries is increasing. According to specialists from the UN and international financial institutions, only 10% of the global population owns 52% of global income, 1.2 billion people live in poverty, and women occupy only 35% of available jobs. In wealthy countries, GDP per capita exceeds 130,000 dollars, while in poor countries, this figure is around 600 dollars. 53.1% of the world's population, 65% of children, and 78% of people with disabilities are not provided with relevant pensions.

Based on this analysis, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev stated: “In short, the disruption of the principles of justice and equality is negatively affecting the formation of inclusive societies based on the principle of achieving global sustainable development goals and leaving no one behind, and supporting vulnerable population groups in need of social assistance. As a result, social stability in societies is being undermined, and conflicts between different layers are intensifying.”

Conclusion: Therefore, the construction of New Uzbekistan is not a PR campaign, but an objective necessity that stems from deep historical foundations, the current political-legal, social-economic, and spiritual-educational situation in our country, and aligns with the timeless aspirations of our people, fully responding to its national interests.

New Uzbekistan, as defined in our renewed Constitution, is a state that is developing in strict adherence to universally recognized norms and principles regarding democracy, human rights, and freedoms, while maintaining friendly cooperation with the global community. The ultimate goal of this development is to create a free, prosperous, and comfortable life for our people.

Thus, every citizen must understand that the Constitution is the fundamental law that directly resolves any issues that may create obstacles in their life, guarantees their rights, freedoms, and legal interests, and truly protects them.

Moreover, all our fellow citizens must understand and consciously familiarize themselves with every article and provision of the Constitution, as this knowledge will help eliminate any uncertainties and assist in resolving potential challenges.

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