

## UZBEKISTAN'S COOPERATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

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**Abstract.** This article addresses various problems that come up while trying to fight terrorism and extremism effectively in today's world of globalization and the changing nature of international and regional conflicts. It examines Uzbekistan's evolving approach to international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and explores the country's national strategies and regional partnerships with global organizations such as the United Nations and the OSCE.

**Key factors:** Uzbekistan, extremism, terrorism, regional security and international cooperation.

## СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО УЗБЕКИСТАНА В БОРЬБЕ С МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫМ ТЕРРОРИЗМОМ

**Аннотация.** В статье рассматриваются различные проблемы, возникающие при попытках эффективной борьбы с терроризмом и экстремизмом в современном мире глобализации и меняющемся характере международных и региональных конфликтов. В статье рассматривается меняющийся подход Узбекистана к международному сотрудничеству в борьбе с терроризмом, а также национальные стратегии и региональное партнерство страны с такими международными организациями, как Организация Объединенных Наций и ОБСЕ.

**Ключевые факторы:** Узбекистан, экстремизм, терроризм, региональная безопасность и международное сотрудничество.

### Introduction:

In the 21st century, terrorism remains one of the most complex and global threats. For Uzbekistan, located at the geopolitical crossroads of Central Asia and its proximity to Afghanistan has made it a significant issue and highly sensitive to global security dynamics.

After gaining independence in 1991, Uzbekistan decided to prioritize national security and stability, with strong requirements for cooperation from regional and global partners. This article analyzes Uzbekistan's international cooperation in combating terrorism and its impact on maintaining peace in Central Asia.

### National Policy and Legal Framework:

Central Asia is distinguished by its complex history and diverse nature. This region is important not only geographically, but also politically, economically, and culturally. Uzbekistan, as the heart of this region, plays an important role in ensuring peace and stability.

Uzbekistan's role in ensuring peace and stability is determined by several key aspects:

1. Diplomatic initiatives: Uzbekistan actively participates in resolving regional conflicts.

An example of this is the decisions taken since 2017 at the initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, aimed at establishing new diplomatic relations in the region and peacefully resolving existing conflicts.

2. Economic cooperation: Uzbekistan pays great attention to developing economic relations with the countries of Central Asia through trade, investment, and the use of energy resources. Uzbekistan's "Green Economy" concept is of great importance in ensuring stability in the region.

3. Cultural and humanitarian ties: Uzbekistan pays great attention to the development of cultural ties between the peoples of the region and the implementation of humanitarian programs, which strengthen dialogue with the international community and ensure social stability in the region.

Uzbekistan's counterterrorism policy is based on the "National Strategy for Combating Extremism and Terrorism for 2021–2026"

The following priority areas of the Strategy should be identified:

1. Promoting the ideology of patriotism, traditional values, and tolerance in order to prevent the spread of extremism and terrorist ideas;
2. Preventing the spread of extremism and terrorist ideas among minors and youth;
3. Protecting women's rights and strengthening their role in combating extremism and terrorism;
4. Protecting citizens who are abroad for a long time from the influence of extremist and terrorist ideas;
5. Combating the use of the Internet for extremist and terrorist purposes;
6. Broadly involving civil society institutions and the media in combating extremism and terrorism;
7. Improving legal prosecution and accountability measures for committing and financing extremist and terrorist acts;
8. Improving the regulatory framework in the field of combating extremism and terrorism;
9. International and regional cooperation in this area.

#### **Regional Cooperation:**

Uzbekistan's role as a regional security partner is particularly evident in Central Asia.

That is why the state contributes to maintaining peace in all areas and conducts international cooperation.

A high-level international conference on regional cooperation among Central Asian states within the framework of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was also held in Tashkent (2022) in Uzbekistan. This event strengthened information exchange, joint operations, and collective prevention mechanisms among the countries of the region.

In 2024, the first large-scale anti-terrorism forum was held in Tashkent, bringing together specialized conferences of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure, which confirmed the interest in deepening professional dialogue and became an important step towards unifying the fight against terrorism in ensuring security in the CIS and SCO regions.

An important element of the system of anti-terrorism cooperation established between security agencies are joint anti-terrorist exercises coordinated by the CIS ATK.

Since its inception, 20 such training exercises have been held in 9 countries, during which joint operational activities and combat coordination of special units to identify and eliminate

terrorist threats at border aviation, railway and sea transport facilities, rocket and space and fuel and energy industry facilities, including nuclear power plants, as well as the information infrastructure of large industrial enterprises and educational institutions were improved.

#### **Engagement with International Organizations:**

Uzbekistan's global engagement reflects its commitment to multilateralism. Uzbekistan cooperates with international organizations such as the UN, SCO, and OSCE through ratification of conventions, participation in regional bodies, and development of joint initiatives, including support for UN resolutions and committees, participation in the SCO MATT, and cooperation with the OSCE on counter-terrorism and cybersecurity. The country hosted the SCO MATT headquarters in Tashkent and held a major high-level conference on the development of regional cooperation in 2022. Uzbekistan is a party to all 13 UN conventions on counter-terrorism and has put forward a number of major initiatives to consolidate the efforts of the international community in this area.

Uzbekistan welcomes the activities of the Counter-Terrorism Committee established by UN Security Council Resolution 1373 of 2001. The Republic also fully supports the efforts of the member states to strengthen their capacity to combat this scourge. The establishment of the Committee is also an initiative of Uzbekistan. Accordingly, the country put forward a proposal to establish an International Counter-Terrorism Center at the UN Summit on Security and Cooperation in Istanbul in 1999.

As part of the implementation of the initiative put forward by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, a high-level international conference on “Regional cooperation of the Central Asian states within the framework of the Joint Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy” was held in Tashkent on March 22.

#### **Bilateral Cooperation:**

At a time when terrorist threats are growing, Uzbekistan has developed its own strategy, which prioritizes security and sustainable development.

As a result of Uzbekistan's active efforts in the field of foreign policy, a number of bilateral and multilateral treaties and agreements were concluded with countries interested in jointly combating terrorism and other destructive activities. In particular, in 2000, the Treaty “On Joint Combating Terrorism, Political and Religious Extremism, Transnational Organized Crime” was signed in Tashkent between Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

Uzbekistan, having seen the ugly face of terrorism, strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001. Tashkent was one of the first to accept Washington's offer to jointly fight terrorism and supported its counter-terrorism efforts, allowing countries and international organizations wishing to provide humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan to use its land, air, and water routes.

#### **Challenges and Prospects:**

Despite significant achievements, Uzbekistan continues to face a number of challenges. Radicalization among young people, online extremism, and socio-economic inequalities remain pressing issues.

For example, while international terrorist acts occurred in the country in 1999, the peak of terrorist activity occurred in 2004. Thus, from March 28 to April 1, 2004, terrorist acts were carried out in Tashkent, Bukhara, and Tashkent regions. On July 30, 2004, repeated terrorist attacks were carried out in Tashkent on the US and Israeli embassies, as well as on the premises of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In addition, some Uzbeks continue to join terrorist groups in neighboring Afghanistan, and while they are few in number, there is a possibility that they could later cross into Uzbekistan to destabilize the situation.

Balancing national security measures with the protection of human rights and religious freedoms also requires careful policy development.

In the future, Uzbekistan plans to deepen cooperation with its neighbors and global institutions, invest in cyber defense and raise public awareness, and develop education as a key tool for preventing extremism. The integration of soft power approaches culture and inclusion forms the country's long-term strategy.

Taking into account changes in the forms, objects, and goals of terrorism, the Republic of Uzbekistan is adapting its counterterrorism strategy to modern challenges and threats, relying on the struggle for the consciousness of people, primarily young people, through legal culture, spiritual and religious enlightenment, and the protection of rights. person.

With its counterterrorism policy, the state is trying to instill in citizens, on the one hand, immunity against radical understandings of Islam, tolerance, and, on the other hand, an instinct for self-defense against recruitment.

Collective mechanisms of international cooperation are being strengthened, special attention is being paid to the exchange of experience in the field of preventing terrorism, and despite the rejection of strict force measures, Uzbekistan is among the safest countries.

### **Conclusion:**

Uzbekistan's experience shows that successfully combating terrorism requires not only strong security measures but also inclusive, preventive, and cooperative strategies. This country has established itself as a key player in the global fight against terrorism, working closely with international organizations, regional structures, and bilateral partners.

Uzbekistan can serve as a valuable example for other countries seeking to balance security, development, and diplomacy in the world.

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