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## COOPERATION BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN AND UNESCO ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL AND HUMANITARIAN RELATIONS

**Abstract:** This article explores the cooperation between the Republic of Uzbekistan and UNESCO in the development of cultural and humanitarian relations. The article examines international cooperation in the field of preserving national and world cultural heritage, the activities of the International Institute of Central Asian Studies, as well as interaction in the field of education.

**Key words:** Republic of Uzbekistan, UNESCO, culture, world heritage, interaction, education.

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### Introduction

The Republic of Uzbekistan, in ensuring its sustainable development, along with cooperation in the political, trade and economic spheres, is of the greatest interest in international relations to cultural and humanitarian interaction. Cooperation in this field is one of the most important and qualitative indicators of the level of relations between states in the modern world, contributing to the development of relations between countries, the preservation of national cultural and spiritual values, the development of scientific and educational opportunities [1, p.79].

In the development of international cultural and humanitarian relations, Uzbekistan attaches great importance to cooperation with the UN specialized agency for Education, Science and Culture - UNESCO. The Republic of Uzbekistan became a full member of UNESCO in October 1993 in Paris. Since December 1994, the National Commission for UNESCO has been operating in the republic, and in 1996 a UNESCO representative office in Uzbekistan was opened in Tashkent.

The main directions of humanitarian cooperation of the Republic of Uzbekistan with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, including, first of all,

UNESCO, are the establishment of international cultural and information exchange, the development of science and education, the study and preservation of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of mankind.

### International cooperation for the preservation of national and world cultural heritage

In order to ensure the preservation of cultural and historical values, Uzbekistan, along with the creation of the necessary regulatory framework in national legislation, has also ratified a number of UNESCO international acts on the preservation of cultural heritage. In particular, the Republic has ratified the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Convention on Measures Aimed at Prohibiting and Preventing the Illegal Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Forms self-expression, etc.

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Historical and cultural centers from Uzbekistan have been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, which has been maintained since 1978 and is designed to preserve and popularize sites of special cultural, historical and environmental significance: Itchan Kala in Khiva (1990), historic centre of Bukhara (1993) and Historic centre of Shakhrisabz (2000), Samarkand – the Crossroad of Cultures (2001), the Western Tien-Shan Mountains (2016), the Cold Winter Deserts of Turan (2023) and Silk Roads Zarafshan-Karakum Corridor of the Great Silk Road (2023) [2]. And such varieties of Uzbek art as music "Shashmaqom"; "Katta Ashula"; National holiday "Navruz"; The art of wit "Askiya"; Cultural space of Boysun region; Culture and tradition of plov; Khorezm dance "Lazgi"; Miniature art; Art "Bakhshi"; Sericulture and traditional silk production for weaving; Traditional stories and anecdotes about Hodja Nesreddin; The art of illumination: Tazhib; Iftar and its socio-cultural traditions; The art of ceramics in Uzbekistan are included in The UNESCO list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

Festive events dedicated to the anniversaries of great scientists and statesmen and ancient cities are held in Uzbekistan under the auspices of UNESCO, various conferences and public events are organized. Thus, significant events of cooperation were the celebration of significant anniversaries for the people of Uzbekistan of such prominent figures and scientists who made a huge contribution to history, science and culture on a global scale, such as the 600th anniversary of astronomer Mirzo Ulugbek, the 660th anniversary of statesman and commander Amir Temur, the 1200th anniversary of scientist al-Fergoni and the 1225th anniversary of the theologian Imam al-Bukhari, the 545th anniversary of the scientist and miniature painter Kamoliddin Behzod, as well as the 1000th anniversary of the creation of the national ethnos "Alpomish", the 2700th anniversary of the creation of the book "Avesta" and the 1000th anniversary of the Academy of Mamun Khorezm. With the participation of UNESCO, celebrations of the anniversaries of the most ancient cities were held: Margilan (2000th anniversary), Tashkent (2200th anniversary), Bukhara, Termez and Khiva (2500th anniversary), Shakhrisabz and Karshi (2700th anniversary), Samarkand (2750th anniversary). The holding of these events at the international level was another proof of the widespread recognition of Uzbekistan's contribution to the development of world civilization.

In cooperation with UNESCO, various international conferences, cultural and educational events are held, expert analyses are compiled and project recommendations are formed aimed at solving urgent problems of scientific, educational and socio-cultural development of Central Asian states. In particular, in Uzbekistan, under the auspices of UNESCO, the International Conference "Central

Asian Renaissance in the History of World Civilization" was held in Samarkand (2017), the Atlas Festival in Margilan (2017), and the International Forum "Art of Maqom" in Shakhrisabz (2018), International Festival "The Art of Bakhshi" in Termez (2019), International Forum "Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations" in Khiva (2021), World Conference on the Care and Education of Preschool Children in Tashkent (2022). The above-mentioned international and regional events in cooperation with UNESCO and other international structures contribute to the preservation and revival of traditional crafts, popularize Uzbek culture and art abroad, improve the quality of education, and ensure equal and inclusive educational services for all children.

In one of the major fundamental research projects of UNESCO, carried out in the period 1987-1997. within the framework of the main project of the decade on cultural development - "Comprehensive study of the Silk Road-Road of Dialogue", the main attention was paid to Central Asia, as a region with a rich cultural heritage, which played a crucial role in the interaction and mutual enrichment of scientific, cultural, educational and religious ideas between the East and West, North and South

In this regard, UNESCO pays great attention to the study and wide popularization of Central Asian civilization, a vivid confirmation of which is the publication of the fundamental "History of the Civilization of Central Asia" (in 6 volumes), revealing a broad picture of historical and cultural processes in the Central Asian region [3, p.142].

Within the framework of UNESCO's large-scale Silk Road project, the opening of the International Institute of Central Asian Studies (MICAI) in Samarkand in 1995 was also organized. The Institute was opened during an official visit to Uzbekistan by former UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor, who noted that Uzbekistan pays great attention to history and cultural heritage. He called Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva "the cradle of human civilization" and this was a recognition of the huge contribution of our region to the development of mankind. The full member States of the ICAI that have accepted the Agreement on the Establishment of the Institute are Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, China, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkey.

The main goal of this International Institute is to attract the attention of the world community to solving the problems of historical and cultural development of Central Asia and to strengthen cooperation between local scientists and their colleagues abroad through multidisciplinary study of the region. Since then, IICAS has published more than 60 scientific publications [4], which were the result of the research activities of the Institute, dozens of international and regional scientific conferences were organized, which contributed to the international level to conduct a

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multilateral study of the history and culture of the region. The International Institute has a wide network of associate members, including major universities, institutes, and research centers and non-governmental organizations specializing in the study of cultural heritage. Leading researchers and experts from France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom participate in the activities of the IICAS as corresponding members [5].

### Cooperation between Uzbekistan and UNESCO in the field of education

In recent years, the education sector has been one of the priority areas of cooperation in Uzbekistan's relations with UNESCO. In particular, since 2018, UNESCO has significantly increased its technical support in the field of education, launching new projects and increasing the portfolio of ongoing educational programs to 13 million US dollars. The projects included the training of teachers, youth support, the creation of an inclusive system for the development of science and vocational education, technology, etc.

The organization cooperates with Uzbekistan in all areas and stages of the development of continuing education. Since 1996, 46 educational institutions (41 general education schools and 5 professional colleges and an academic lyceum) have been functioning in our country [6] united in the UNESCO United Schools Network.

The priorities of the UNESCO School network are: education for sustainable development, education for global citizenship, intercultural learning and heritage studies.

UNESCO also cooperates closely in the development of higher education in Uzbekistan, exchanging academic experience in the field of science with students, research scientists, and teaching staff. With his support, students and researchers from Uzbekistan received international grants and scholarships for research work.

UNESCO chairs have been established in a number of higher educational institutions in Uzbekistan. These departments work in such areas as human rights, culture of peace, tolerance, preservation and popularization of historical sites, study of historical and cultural foundations of world religions, education of tolerance and respect for other religions, environmental culture, etc.

It should be noted that the Republic of Uzbekistan has made a significant contribution to UNESCO's efforts aimed at promoting preschool education. In November 2022, Tashkent hosted the Second UNESCO World Conference on the Upbringing and Education of Young Children, which was attended by more than 2,500 participants from 147 countries, including UNESCO Director-General, Audrey Azoulay, heads of State, heads of relevant ministries, educators and experts. The organizers of

this event were the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and UNESCO. The result of this conference was the Tashkent Declaration, adopted by representatives of about 150 countries, which defined the main international agenda in the field of preschool education until 2030. The Declaration established a number of guiding principles:

- improving the quality and relevance of educational programs and pedagogy;
- ensuring equal and inclusive educational services for all children;
- protection and guarantees of the rights of access to education in emergency situations [7].

UNESCO positively assessed Uzbekistan's efforts aimed at implementing large-scale socio-economic reforms in the educational sphere. In particular, a number of initiatives in this area have been implemented in the republic in recent years, such as the creation of a separate department for preschool education, the modernization of the school curriculum based on the best practices of developed countries, the introduction of a free school meals system, the organization of free bus service for secondary school students from remote areas, etc. The systematic measures implemented by the Government of Uzbekistan with the support of the international community, including UNESCO, have yielded significant positive results in a short period of time. In particular, access to preschool institutions increased from 27% to 70%, to higher education from 8% to 38%, and the number of schools and universities increased to 10,000 and 186, respectively [8].

In order to support comprehensive reforms in education, science, culture, information and communications in Uzbekistan, UNESCO regularly implements grants and technical assistance projects. Activities in this area have intensified in recent years, bringing the total cost of projects for 2020-2024 to \$ 13 million. In particular, in cooperation with UNESCO, such projects as "Skills Development for Employability in Rural Areas of Uzbekistan" "Pretashkent aquifers: Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan", "Creation of an inclusive system for the development of science, technology and innovation in Uzbekistan" [9] and others have been implemented.

In her speech at the opening of the exhibition, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences, Gabriela Ramos expressed sincere gratitude to the Government of Uzbekistan for its assistance in organizing the exhibition and noted that this event embodies the rich culture and historic heritage of Central Asia, which has been formed and developed over the centuries, thanks to dialogue and exchange on the Silk Road, as well as It indicates that the region has long played a key role in cultural, scientific and commercial exchange between East and West [10].

The exhibition featured 26 images by different authors, mainly devoted to the daily life of ordinary

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people, culture and traditions of peoples, the great ancestors of the Uzbek people [11, p.8].

It should be noted that in 2022, Uzbekistan was first elected a member of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage for 2022-2026, whose main tasks are development of recommendations on measures for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, assistance and promotion of international cooperation in the protection of cultural elements in need of protection.

### CONCLUSION

Thus, the interaction of the Republic of Uzbekistan with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, in particular with UNESCO, is important for

the sustainable development of the Central Asian region. Uzbekistan and UNESCO cooperate in the field of intercultural dialogue, education and science, study and preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of humanity. On the territory of Uzbekistan, a number of historical cultural centers, monuments, intangible values and traditions have been included in the World Heritage Register and the UNESCO list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Under the influence of globalization processes, international cultural and humanitarian cooperation within the framework of participation in UNESCO's program activities is one of the important factors of stability and sustainable development of the Central Asian region.

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