

## UZBEKISTAN'S MEMBERSHIP IN ICESCO AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE REPUBLIC'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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The initial days when the Republic of Uzbekistan gained independence marked the beginning of striving towards a significant role in the global community. The country's contemporary foreign policy course is rapidly evolving in the world and region amidst changing circumstances, and is shaped by wide-ranging internal transformations.

The main goal of the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan is strengthening of the independence and sovereignty of the state, further enhancing the role and place of the country in international arena, joining the ranks of the developed democratic states, creating security, stability and good neighborliness belt around Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan since ancient times is famous as a cultural and spiritual center of the Islamic world. Great is the merit of our ancestors, world-famous theologians, philosophers and thinkers in the formation and development of Islamic civilization, systematization and dissemination of the canons of this sacred religion.

ICESCO is considered the specialized institution of the Islamic Cooperation Organization (OIC). The headquarters of the organization is located in the city of Rabat, Morocco. There are regional offices in Tehran (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Sharjah (UAE).

The working languages of ICESCO are Arabic, English, and French.

In the fast-evolving landscape of global cultural diplomacy, the Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) emerges as a beacon, reflecting the rich tapestry of the Islamic world. Integral to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) framework. The Statute of ICESCO was signed by the Republic of Uzbekistan on August 26, 2017. The said Statute consists of a preamble and 22 articles. According to Article 4 of the Statute, ICESCO's main objectives include:

Strengthening and supporting cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture, and communication among member states and beyond, promoting intercultural dialogue and achieving peace and security worldwide.

Promoting the true image of Islamic religion and culture, supporting the development of interactions between cultures, nations, and religions. Working towards ensuring justice, freedom, and human rights principles, and enhancing respect for cultural diversity.

Enhancing cultural cooperation among member states while preserving their cultural uniqueness and supporting diversity in cultural expressions.

Strengthening specialized institutions in the fields of education, science, culture, and communication among member states and enhancing cooperation between ICESCO and member states. Encouraging their compatibility and mutual support. Enhancing collaboration and partnership with both governmental and non-governmental institutions.

Establishing and strengthening mutual cooperation among member states' education systems and ensuring their mutual recognition and support of others.

The Statute also specifies the position, membership, and advisory positions of ICESCO organs, the powers of authorized persons, and the financial aspects of the organization's activities.

According to Article 6 of the Statute, each state that becomes a member of ICESCO becomes a member after the official signing of the Statute, completion of the legal and administrative formalities, and notification in writing to the ICESCO Directorate.

The ratification of the Statute by Uzbekistan undoubtedly opens up broad prospects for the further development of international cooperation in the fields of education, science, and culture. This document has created another legal basis for promoting Uzbekistan's achievements in the field of humanitarian culture. The Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences has also provided information on this matter.

Furthermore, endorsing our country's position in the development of Islamic civilization, introducing our ancient history and cultural heritage, and expanding Uzbekistan's relations within ICESCO's framework.

The ratification of the Statute has paved the way for the full functioning of the ICESCO special department at the Tashkent Islamic University. This, in turn, contributes to its development. The said department was established with the support of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the ICESCO member states during the 43rd session held in Tashkent. This initiative was strengthened during the upcoming session of the council.

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev received Salim Al-Malik, the Director-General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) during the climate summit in Bukhara. Discussions were held on expanding practical cooperation and implementing joint humanitarian projects. The importance of establishing a national commission for cooperation with ICESCO was emphasized.

The special department at the International Islamic Academy in Tashkent is actively engaged in studying Islamic civilization under the auspices of ICESCO. As part of expanding cooperation, it was outlined to preserve and restore manuscripts and other historical artifacts, implement projects, train Arabic language teachers, and enhance their skills, as well as organizing international scientific and cultural events. In 2007, Tashkent was declared the capital of Islamic culture, followed by Bukhara in 2020 and Samarkand in 2025.

Tashkent's announcement of the capital of Islamic culture is an event of great historical, cultural and political significance, and that the city really deserves this recognition, which can be cited by a lot of evidence. Tashkent is an ancient city that has always played an important role in the history of the region. Here, in the middle Ages, such famous personalities as Muhammad Shashi (10th century), Khoja Alambardor (10th century), Sheikh Havandi Takhur (13th century), Khoja Ahrar (15th century) and others lived.

In conclude, confirmation of the special role of Uzbekistan in the history of Islamic civilization, in particular its capital, is that the International Islamic Organization for Education, Science and Culture (ICESCO), which is one of the structures of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, declared Tashkent and Bukhara "The Capital of



Islamic Culture in 2007 and 2020." At the end of the 43rd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, express our deep appreciation to the people and the Government of Uzbekistan for a warm hospitality and excellent organization of this conference, which ensured the success of the 43rd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers titled «Education and Enlightenment – Path to Peace and Creativity».

Undoubtedly, ratification of the Charter by Uzbekistan opens wide opportunities for further development of international cooperation in the field of education, science and culture. This document has become one more legal basis for broad propaganda of Uzbekistan's achievements in cultural and humanitarian spheres.