

## Speech at the event on Central Asia and Uzbekistan

Bonn, January 20, 2010

Dear Mr. Runge,  
Dear Mr. Bauer,  
Dear Ambassador Bindseil,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all I would like to express my appreciation to all guests of this event that you found the time and joined us at this evening. Your participation at this event we consider as an evidence of the interest of German society to Uzbekistan and ongoing processes in our country.

I express particular and sincere gratitude to the organizers of this event – Deutsche-Uzbekische Gesellschaft and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik – Forum Nordrhein-Westfalen.

Dear friends,

This kind of meetings gives a good opportunity to improve the knowledge about the modern Uzbekistan, its development, reforms and transformations in different spheres of social and political life of our country. This kind of events promotes the improving of understanding of processes ongoing in Uzbekistan, strengthening mutual confidence and cooperation.

In this regard I would like to inform you about some important events in Uzbekistan, current socio-economic development and approaches of our country to some regional and international issues.

But at the beginning let me make short historical excursus.

For 18 years of independence Uzbekistan made important steps on the path of strengthening its sovereignty, creation of democratic state, revival of national and spiritual values, transformation of the economy and gain prestige at the international scene.

I would like to draw your attention to the complicated situation in Central Asia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, to the threats and challenges that came down to our young country. In this regard let me inform you about specifics of the Uzbek Model of the reforms, contribution of our country to the peace and stability in our region.

Uzbekistan was forced to start reforms under difficult social and economic situation and crisis in many spheres of economy.

Three main priorities were proclaimed in the Constitution of Uzbekistan adopted in 1992:

- promoting of democratic values and creation of secular and civil society;
- defending of human rights and freedoms;
- creation of social oriented market economy.

These priorities were realised step by step under dominating role of government. Today we can say that principle of evolutionism and succession which was placed into basis of Uzbek Model of development have justified itself.

In this regard I would like to present you some figures and statistics that give the picture of achievements of Uzbekistan during the years of independence.

In last years in economic sphere annual growth rates of the Uzbek GDP was more than 7%. Thanks to timely taken measures on counter of global financial crisis our country minimised its influence to the national economy.

Growth rates of GDP for 9 months of 2009 was 8,1%, volume of attracted investments rose to 33%, growth of real incomes of population was 26,5%.

It should be noted that main sources and factors of sustainable economic growth of Uzbekistan are not external factors related to favourable conditions in the world markets but structural transformations and strengthening national economy in whole.

In short, current tendency which we have in Uzbekistan is a result of systematic and hard work on implementation of well considered model and long-term program of market reforms.

Stable growth of our economy served as favourable basis to promote of consistency in implementation of political, legal and democratic reforms.

In this regard it should be noted that Uzbekistan carries out the liberalisation of judicial system step by step and on the base of consistently.

As a result of reforms number of articles which provides criminal penalties, was decreased a twice. January 1, 2008 the Laws on abolition of capital punishment and introducing of institute of Habeas Corpus came into force.

Uzbekistan carries out reforms also in political sphere. In our country we have ongoing process of development of parliamentarism.

In this regard I would like to note that December 27, 2009 parliamentary elections were held in Uzbekistan and our country enters into second decade of 21 century with a new parliament.

And we can say that these elections have some features because they were held taking into account alterations and new norms have been introduced into the electoral system of the Republic of Uzbekistan year ago that meet the modern requirements, international norms and aimed at, firstly, further liberalization and democratization of the electoral legislation.

It should be noted, that as a part of the several alterations introduced into the electoral legislation, with an aim to expand the scope of participation of citizens in the elections the number of seats in the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan has been increased from 120 to 150. As a result, a new principle has been introduced, firstly, in terms of protecting environment, reasonably using natural resources and ensuring ecological safety of population.

In line with this principle, 15 parliamentary seats have been allocated for the deputies elected from the Ecological movement of Uzbekistan.

More than 280 representatives from 36 countries, including Germany (in particular Mr.Spari) and several authoritative international organizations: CIS, SCO, OIC, including ODIHR/OSCE, as well as more than 60 000 observers and representatives from political parties observed the elections.

All of them confirmed that elections in Uzbekistan were held on the base of transparency, freedom and fairness.

It should be noted that 506 candidates participated in the elections from four political parties – Social-Democratic Party Adolat (Justice), Democratic Party Milly tiklanish (National Revival), Liberally-Democratic Party and the People's Democratic Party.

As a result of elections Liberally-Democratic Party received 53 seats, People's Democratic Party – 32, National Revival – 31 and Social-Democratic Party – 19 seats at the Legislative Chamber of our Parliament. 15 parliamentarians are representatives of Ecologic movement of Uzbekistan.

33 deputies or 22% of parliament are women.

One can say that these elections became a next demonstration of Uzbekistan's adherence to the evolutionary approach to the construction of democratic and constitutional state, strong civil society, further deepening of reforms in all spheres of social and political life.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

In assessing and analysing the real situation in Uzbekistan and the region in whole it is necessary to take into account that transformation processes in those countries going on against the background of rapid growth of new threats and trans-national crimes as an international terrorism, drug production and drug trafficking, illegal migration and others.

At present Central Asia and Uzbekistan located at the centre of the region turned into outpost of the struggle against the international terrorism and drug trafficking. Thereby, Uzbekistan contributes into defending of whole international community including European countries.

On the other hand Central Asia due to its favourable geographical location and rich natural resources becomes the place of clashes between different geopolitical and strategic interests including destructive ones.

Uzbekistan recognises the scale and potential of these threats to Central Asia and to World in whole and stands for strengthening the regional and global system of providing of security. In this regard I would like to note that one of the key elements of the Uzbek Foreign policy is an international cooperation in sphere of security at the regional and global level.

Just cooperation but not competition should to serve as a basis for resolution of many problems faced international community.

Therefore Uzbekistan chairing in Shanghai Cooperation Organisation at present, figure on support of initiative on developing of cooperation between European Union and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. We convinced that this kind of interrelation will promote of strengthening of confidence between member states of these two unions.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's clear to all of us that situation in Afghanistan continue to be threat to the regional and global security. Afghanistan remains the origin of threats as illegal drug trafficking, spread of weapon, international terrorism ant others.

In our view, it is particularly topical that without achieving a consensus within Afghanistan and leaning on neighboring countries it is impossible to ensure peace.

We are certain that the settlement of the Afghan problem could be facilitated by creation under the auspices of the United Nations of the Contact Group «6+3».

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov has repeatedly emphasized that implementation of this initiative involving neighboring countries would allow achievement of an accord both in and around Afghanistan.

Today, the threats for environmental security are on the rise. We mean not only the threats arising from the global warming, but also the serious problems and possible accidents and risks of technological character caused by the gigantic hydro-power installations in regions, which could seriously undermine the fragile ecological balance.

We speak about these problems having in mind the man-caused accidents at the largest world-known hydro-power stations and hydraulic installations caused by incompleteness in their design and operation (the example is the accident at the Sajano-Shushenskaya hydro-power station in Russia).

We, who live in Central Asia, are seriously concerned that similar large hydro-installations operate today on water-flows of the largest transboundary Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya Rivers providing water to the population of all countries in the region.

An active manipulation by the public opinion and attempts to attract the wide-scale investments for building of another two new largest hydro-power stations – Ragun on the Amu-Darya river and Kambarata on the Syr-Darya river, are made today without taking into account that glaciers on Pamir and Tien Shan mountains – the basic source of water for these rivers – reduce from year to year and, which is particularly important, without thinking about possible tragic consequences that might occur in case of technological accidents at these installations, knowing that these territories are under seismicity measuring 9-10 and are prone to strong earthquakes.

In this regard, Uzbekistan will continue to insist that all planned construction of largest hydro-power installations in Central Asia must be implemented only after impartial expertise made by international experts under auspices of the United Nations in order to avoid possible catastrophic consequences. Reevaluation of existing large hydro-power stations on Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya rivers that have been constructed in the Soviet period is also of an urgent need.

Uzbekistan supports activization of multilateral efforts in countering the new threats and challenges to security. Therefore our country is ready to further develop constructive cooperation with all countries around the world under strict adherence of the principals of international law which placed into the basis of its foreign policy.

In this context we pay particular importance to the further developing, strengthening and expanding of comprehensive and long-term relations with our one of the main partners – with Germany.

We highly appreciate the German efforts on supporting of Central Asian countries including Uzbekistan, developing and strengthening of constructive and mutually beneficial cooperation with them.

In this regard I would like to emphasise the German initiative on the EU Strategy on Central Asia which was adopted during the chairmanship of Germany in EU in 2007.

We hope that implementation of this Strategy will allow significantly strengthen and enlarge the interrelation between the countries of CA and EU. However in our opinion it is necessary to fill the Strategy by practical contents, activate then process of its implementation taking into account needs and interest of CA countries as well as long-term perspectives of interregional cooperation.

We convinced that cooperation between our countries meets our national interests, interests of prosperity of our people and securing the peace.

Thank you