



Research Article

THE STATUS AND DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS OF UZBEKISTAN'S FOREIGN POLITICAL IMAGE IN INTERNATIONAL RATINGS AND INDEXES

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the state of our country's image in the world is analyzed based on several international ratings and indices. Over the past 30 years, the image of our country in the world has been taking shape. The ranking of our country in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres of the past few years has been compared with the countries of Central Asia. It is proposed to carry out tasks in systematic ways to improve the image of our country in the world.

KEYWORDS

Uzbekistan, rating, index, image of country, foreign political image, Central Asia.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the positive foreign political image of the state serves as the main factor in the effective promotion of the national interests of the state at the international level. For this reason, it has become an urgent task for countries to create a positive image of themselves in international relations.

The image of the state consists of a complex of stable, interrelated objective perceptions of the state within and outside the state, target audiences, general public: geographical, historical, economic, political, national, cultural, demographic and other perceptions (stereotypes).

A positive image of the state is the political structure and system of the state, financial, economic, natural resources and demographic potential, the standard of living of the population, the rule of law in the state, the protection of human rights and freedoms, guaranteed democratic values and freedom of conscience, freedom of speech and the press, in the life of the state it is formed through the level of security and stability, the uniqueness of national traditions and values, the characteristics of the state's natural climate, and the positive characteristics of other elements.

Creating a positive image of the state is an important tool for protecting national interests, attracting foreign investments, and strengthening the state's influence in the world.

In order to objectively evaluate the external political image of the state, international ratings and indexes are often used. Currently, various international organizations, research institutes, scientific associations, mass media, auditing and consulting organizations of the world compile ratings and indexes covering various areas of state and community life. Of course, we can not say that these indices give 100% accurate conclusions, but it is clear that they have a great influence on the opinion of the world public.

MAIN PART

Strengthening the independence and sovereignty of the state, increasing the place and role of the state as an equal subject of international relations, joining the ranks of developed democratic states, defined in the Action Strategy for the five priority directions of the development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021. Such tasks as creating an environment of security, stability and harmonious neighborhood around Uzbekistan, strengthening the international reputation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and

providing unbiased information to the world community about the reforms being carried out in the country were set. Within the framework of the implementation of these tasks, in order to form a positive reputation of our country in the international arena, to carry out specific goal-oriented work on ensuring an impartial and honest assessment of the position of the Republic of Uzbekistan in international rankings, No. 4210 the Resolution of President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to improve the position of the Republic of Uzbekistan in international ratings and indexes" was adopted in February 25 of 2019.

In this decision, in order to form a comprehensive and independent system of evaluation of the reforms implemented in our country, as well as to ensure the improvement of the republic's position in international rankings,

- to create and organize the activities of a national system for monitoring and evaluating Uzbekistan's position in international rankings (National Monitoring System) reach;
- introduction of the "mystery client of state services" institute in order to improve the quality of the provided state services, increase the level of satisfaction of the population with the activities of state bodies and the professional skills of their employees;
- to create a single portal "Republic of Uzbekistan in international rankings" on the Internet by April 1, 2019;
- Systematic analysis of the public fund for support of non-governmental non-profit organizations and other institutions of civil society under the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the nationwide movement "Yuksalish" of the problems that prevent the Republic of Uzbekistan from increasing its position in the main



international rankings, tasks such as developing proposals for elimination, as well as actively involving civil society institutions in the work of providing information about the results of large-scale reforms implemented in the state, including providing subsidies, grants and social orders to the compilers of international ratings was fixed.

Taking into account the above, in order to evaluate the foreign political image of Uzbekistan, the internationally recognized international standards presented in the Decision of the President of the

Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to improve the position of the Republic of Uzbekistan in international ratings and indexes" We will compare the situation of Uzbekistan in the last 6 years with the countries of Central Asia in the rankings and indexes.

The most important rating and index analyzing economic indicators is undoubtedly the GDP per capita indicator. According to the World Bank, GDP per capita in Uzbekistan was 2,615 in 2015, 2,567 in 2016, 1,826 in 2017, and 1,533 in 2018 (in USD).

Table 1

GDP indicator per capita (USD)	2015	+-	2016	+-	2017	+-	2018	+-	2019	+-	2020	+-
Uzbekistan	2615	-	2567	-48	1826	-741	1533	-293	1741	+208	1763	+22
Kazakhstan	10510	-	7714	-2796	9247	+1533	9812	+565	9750	-62	8782	-968
Kyrgyzstan	1121	-	1121	0	1243	+122	1281	+38	1323	+42	1148	-175
Tajikistan	929	-	802	+127	806	+4	826	+20	873	+47	834	-39
Turkmenistan	6432	-	6389	-43	6587	+198	6966	+379	7724	+758	8074	+350

At the end of 2019, the growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Uzbekistan was 5.5 percent, and the forecast was at the level of 5.4 percent. The GDP growth rate was 5.1 percent higher than the level of this indicator in 2018. The GDP per capita was 1,741 dollars and increased by 13.6% compared to 2018. In 2020, even in the conditions of the pandemic, the GDP

indicator per capita in Uzbekistan recorded a positive indicator and equaled 1763 US dollars.

In the Index of economic freedom, Uzbekistan ranked among 186 countries 160th place in 2015 , 166th in 2016 , 148th in 2017 , 152nd in 2018 , 140th in 2019 , 114th in 2020 .

Table 2



Index of Economic Freedom	2015 (186)	+-	2016 (186)	+-	2017 (186)	+-	2018 (186)	+-	2019 (186)	+-	2020	+-
Uzbekistan	160	-	166	-6	148	+18	152	-4	140	+12	114	+26
Kazakhstan	69	-	68	+1	42	+26	41	+1	59	-18	39	+20
Kyrgyzstan	82	-	96	-14	89	+7	78	+11	79	-1	81	-2
Tajikistan	140	-	149	-9	109	+40	106	+3	122	-16	155	-23
Turkmenistan	172	-	174	-2	170	+4	169	+1	164	+5	170	-6

Doing business ranking is an indicator that positively affects the image of the state and attracts foreign businessmen and investors. According to this indicator, in 2015, Uzbekistan was ranked 141st out of 189 countries , and in 2019, it achieved a very positive growth and ranked 76th out of 190 countries . In 2020,

it was ranked 69th out of 190 countries . These indicators are the result of the economic policy aimed at entrepreneurship and small business in our country in recent years, as well as attracting foreign businessmen and investors.

Table 3

Doing business ranking	2015 (189)	+-	2016 (189)	+-	2017 (190)	+-	2018 (190)	+-	2019 (190)	+-	2020 (190)	+-
Uzbekistan	141	-	87	+54	87	0	74	+13	76	-2	69	+7
Kazakhstan	77	-	41	+36	35	+6	36	-1	28	+8	25	+3
Kyrgyzstan	102	-	67	+35	75	-8	77	-2	70	+7	80	-10
Tajikistan	166	-	132	+34	128	+4	123	+5	126	-3	106	+20
Turkmenistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



Of course, corruption is considered one of the most serious crimes of all time. Humanity has been struggling with this disease throughout history. According to the Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International, the global coalition against corruption, Uzbekistan was ranked 158th out

of 180 countries . According to the indicators of 2019, Uzbekistan was ranked 153 out of 180 countries , and in 2020, it was ranked 146 out of 180 countries . A scale of 0 to 100 was used to determine the level of corruption in 190 countries, where 0 is the worst and 100 is the best.

Table 4

Corruption Perceptions Index	2015 (180)	+-	2016 (180)	+-	2017 (180)	+-	2018 (180)	+-	2019 (180)	+-	2020 (180)	+-
Uzbekistan	153 (100/19)	-	156 (100/21)	-3	157 (100/22)	-1	158 (100/23)	-1	153 (100/25)	+5	146 (100/26)	+7
Kazakhstan	123 (100/28)	-	131 (100/29)	-8	122 (100/31)	+9	124 (100/31)	-2	113 (100/34)	+11	94 (100/38)	+19
Kyrgyzstan	123 (100/28)	-	136 (100/28)	-13	135 (100/29)	-2	132 (100/29)	+3	126 (100/30)	+6	124 (100/31)	+2
Tajikistan	136 (100/26)	-	151 (100/25)	-15	136 (100/26)	+15	152 (100/25)	-16	153 (100/25)	-1	149 (100/25)	+4
Turkmenistan	154 (100/18)	-	154 (100/22)	0	161 (100/21)	-7	161 (100/20)	0	165 (100/19)	-4	165 (100/19)	0

In 2018, Uzbekistan was ranked 91st out of 123 countries in the Rule of Law Index , 94th out of 126

countries in 2019 , and 92nd out of 128 countries in 2020 .

Table 5



Rule of Law Index	2015 (102)	+-	2016 (113)	+-	2017 (113)	+-	2018 (113)	+-	2019 (126)	+-	2020 (128)	+-
Uzbekistan	81	-	93	-12	91	+2	91	0	94	-3	92	+2
Kazakhstan	65	-	73	-8	64	+9	64	0	65	-1	62	+3
Kyrgyzstan	74	-	83	-9	82	+1	82	0	85	-3	87	-2
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Turkmenistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		

The World Press Freedom Index has shown the positive progress in the field of freedom of speech and press in Uzbekistan in recent years. According to this rating, Uzbekistan was in 169th place among 180 countries in 2016, 166th in 2017, 165th in 2018, 160th in 2019, 156th in 2020 .

Table 6

World Press Freedom Index	2015 (180)	+-	2016 (180)	+-	2017 (180)	+-	2018 (180)	+-	2019 (180)	+-	2020 (180)	+-
Uzbekistan	166	-	169	-3	166	+3	165	+1	160	+5	156	+4
Kazakhstan	160	-	160	0	157	+3	158	-1	158	0	157	+1
Kyrgyzstan	88	-	85	+3	89	-4	98	-9	83	+15	82	+1
Tajikistan	116	-	150	-34	149	+1	149	0	161	-12	161	0
Turkmenistan	178	-	178	0	178	0	178	0	180	-2	179	+1

Of course, these figures cannot be called 100% objective data, in practice, more work has been done in the field of freedom of speech and press in Uzbekistan.

During the years of independence, more than 10 laws and more than 150 by-laws were adopted in our country regarding the development of mass media activities, freedom of speech and information, and despite the creation of a strong legal base in the field,



implementation of state policy in the field of press and information and issues related to the field The press and information agency of Uzbekistan, which was given the authority to solve the problem, did not fully and effectively fulfill the tasks assigned to it. Therefore, by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated August 11, 2017 No. 5148 "On further improvement of management in the field of press and information", the "Press and Information Agency of Uzbekistan" was established. The agency was designated as a state management body that implements a single state policy in the field of mass media, information exchange, press, publishing, printing, and information-library activities. The agency is responsible for ensuring the implementation of legislation on the activities of the mass media, monitoring and control over compliance with the guarantees of freedom of speech and information,

ensuring information security and implementing measures aimed at preventing attacks and threats in the field of information. important tasks such as

In addition, in May 2019, a number of sites were unblocked in Uzbekistan. Among them were "Voice of America", "BBC Uzbek", "Deutsche Welle", "Reporters sans frontières", "Eurasianet", "AsiaTerra", "Fergana.ru" and a number of others. Buzzfeed", "Lurkmore", "Wordpress" and a number of other sites were launched.

In the World Happiness Report - Ranking, Uzbekistan ranked 49th out of 157 countries in 2016 , 47th out of 155 countries in 2017 , 44th out of 156 countries in 2018 , 41st among 156 countries in 2019 , and 38th among 153 countries in 2020 .

Table 7

World Happiness Report - Ranking	2015 (157)	+-	2016 (157)	+-	2017 (155)	+-	2018 (156)	+-	2019 (156)	+-	2020 (153)	+-
Uzbekistan	44	-	49	-5	47	+2	44	+3	41	+3	38	+3
Kazakhstan	54	-	54	0	60	-6	60	0	60	0	50	+10
Kyrgyzstan	77	-	85	-8	98	-13	92	+6	86	+6	74	+12
Tajikistan	106	-	100	+6	96	+4	80	+16	74	+6	71	+3
Turkmenistan	70	-	65	+5	59	+6	68	-11	87	-19	95	-8

According to the rankings of the armed forces of the countries in the direction of peace and security (Military strength ranking, Global firepower ranking) in

2021, Uzbekistan took the 51st place among 140 countries included in the ranking of the power of the armed forces in the world.



Stability of peace and security of the state is another criterion that has a great positive impact on the state's image. The Global Terrorism Index is a rating that analyzes the indicators of the state's peace and

terrorism risk. In this rating, Uzbekistan ranks 136th out of 163 countries in 2019, and 134th out of 163 countries in 2020.

Table 8

Global Terrorism Index	2015 (162)	+-	2016 (162)	+-	2017 (163)	+-	2018 (163)	+-	2019 (163)	+-	2020 (163)	+-
Uzbekistan	160	-	118	-42	125	+7	134	+9	136	+2	134	-2
Kazakhstan	83	-	94	+11	67	-27	75	+8	85	+10	93	+8
Kyrgyzstan	86	-	84	-2	79	-5	80	+1	87	+7	92	+5
Tajikistan	84	-	56	-28	72	+16	74	+2	50	-24	45	-5
Turkmenistan	157	-	161	+4	160	-1	163	+3	154	-9	162	+8

For comparison, our next-door neighbor, Afghanistan, was ranked 1st in the ranking as the country with the highest risk of terrorism. The fact that our country is recognized as one of the most peaceful and safe countries in the world, despite being a neighbor to a hotbed of unrest like Afghanistan, shows that the state security policy is well established.

Here I will give a real example of the topic. When I talked with American professor Ruby Smetana about

the research, she said: "Uzbekistan is a peaceful and safe country, but I heard that it is a troubled country. Before I came here, when I asked a policeman friend about Uzbekistan, he told me that Uzbekistan He advised me to take weapons and other means of protection with me, that Uzbekistan is a troubled country. Now, having lived here for a long time, I witnessed that Uzbekistan is a peaceful and safe country."

Table 9



No	International ratings and indexes	2015	+-	2016	+-	2017	+-	2018	+-	2019	+-	2020	+-
1	GDP indicator per capita (USD)	2615	-	2567	-48	1826	-741	1533	-293	1741	+208	1763	+22
2	Index of Economic Freedom	160	-	166	-6	148	+18	152	-4	140	+12	114	+26
3	Doing business ranking	141	-	87	+54	87	0	74	+13	76	-2	69	+7
4	Corruption Perceptions Index	153	-	156	-3	157	-1	158	-1	153	+5	146	+7
5	Rule of Law Index	81	-	93	-12	91	+2	91	0	94	-3	92	+2
6	World Press Freedom Index	166	-	169	-3	166	+3	165	+1	160	+5	156	+4
7	World Happiness Report - Ranking	44	-	49	-5	47	+2	44	+3	41	+3	38	+3
8	Global Terrorism Index	160	-	118	-42	125	+7	134	+9	136	+2	134	-2

Uzbekistan is not included in the Global Gender Gap Index, but we can safely say that the issue of gender equality in our country is in a better position than in many developed countries. In 2019, Uzbekistan adopted two women-related laws, "On guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for women and men"

and "On protection of women from oppression and violence" and gained the attention of the international community. True, these laws have not yet begun to show their full force. However, the role of women in the state is increasing. This is due to the increasing share of women in the leading sectors of society, in



particular, in 2014, the number of female deputies of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis was 24, and in the 2019 parliamentary elections, this figure doubled to 48 women. In addition, in 2019, for the first time in the history of Uzbekistan, Tanzila Norboeva, the first person in the country after the President, the position of the Chairman of the Senate, was elected as a deputy of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, and in 2019, she was named "The Most Active Statesman" - Person of the Year in Uzbekistan. The recognition of the Chairman of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan Tanzila Norboeva can be a proof of our word.

Conclusion.

To conclude, if we look at the current situation of the task of creating a positive image of Uzbekistan in international ratings and indexes, we can see a big positive trend. This can be seen in the example of the positive position of Uzbekistan in international ratings and indices in recent years.

The formation of the state policy on strengthening the positive foreign political image of our country can be carried out conditionally in 3 directions.

The first direction is to create a base of regulatory and legal documents related to the creation of a positive foreign political image of our country;

The second direction is to form a positive foreign political image at the expense of strengthening the position of our country in international ratings and indexes;

The third direction is to raise the prestige of Uzbekistan by establishing better relations with the international community and international organizations.

Of course, we still have a lot of work to do. In order to further strengthen the positive image of Uzbekistan in foreign media, we believe that in addition to the positive changes mentioned above, it would be appropriate to implement the following tasks:

First, it is proposed to simplify and reform the obtaining of information from state agencies, ministries and local authorities;

Secondly, it is necessary to further liberalize legislation in the areas of freedom of journalistic activity and rights of media workers. Because journalists and media workers are being harassed by high-ranking officials, journalists and bloggers are being held criminally and administratively liable.

Thirdly, it is necessary to create more facilities for foreign media workers and journalists to receive information.

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