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## **STATEMENT**

by

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**of the Republic of Uzbekistan**

**at High Level Segment of the Seventh session**  
**of the United Nations Human Rights Council**

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**Geneva**

Distinguished Mr. President,  
Distinguished the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,  
Distinguished Members of the Human Rights Council,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

2008 is a year of 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which has paved the way for a modern era in the development of protection of human rights and freedoms and the international cooperation in this field.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights - the first international document, which Uzbekistan has joined after declaration of the state independence. Thus Uzbekistan has demonstrated its adherence to ideals and values of human rights in the state policy.

The celebration of 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Declaration has already started in Uzbekistan, which will continue throughout the year with wide participation of state bodies, educational establishments, mass media and civil society institutions.

Following significant steps in the field of human rights mark the year 2008 for Uzbekistan:

**Firstly**, since 1 January the death penalty was completely abolished;

**Secondly**, the democratic institute of justice known as *habeas corpus* was introduced;

**Thirdly**, the constitutional law about increase of a role of political parties in democratization of society and the law on guarantees of the rights of child came into force;

**Fourthly**, the current year in Uzbekistan is declared as the Year of Youth and the relevant State Programme has been adopted.

The state policy of Uzbekistan in the field of human rights is being carried out in the following directions consistently and systemic:

**First direction – the system of legislation on human rights has been established.** Parliament has passed over 300 laws regulating fundamental rights and freedoms. All provisions of the UDHR have been implemented in the Constitution and the national legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

**Second direction – the institutional system of protection of human rights, freedoms and legitimate interests has been created.** While implementing the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, the following national human rights institutions have been founded and function: Authorized Person of Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights (Ombudsman), National Centre for Human Rights, Institute of Monitoring of Current Legislation, and also special structures on protection of human rights at the Ministry of Justice, Prosecutor General's Office and Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

**Third direction – national monitoring of observance and protection of human rights and freedoms is being carried out.** It includes the procedures of parliamentary control over implementation of the laws passed by Oliy Majlis (Parliament), monitoring of the current legislation which is accomplished by special structure at the Ministry of Justice, preparation of national reports on implementation of international treaties on human rights to the UN Treaty Bodies. The institute of monitoring is becoming an effective tool for state bodies which as a result of this activity take decisions on various issues of protection of human rights and freedoms.

**Fourth direction – a continuous system of education in the field of human rights is functioning.** The system of education in the field of human rights has been created in Uzbekistan. A training course entitled "Human Rights" has been introduced at all schools and universities. Textbooks and manuals on human rights for schools and higher educational institutions have been published.

Advanced training program for officials of law enforcement bodies (judges, lawyers, policemen, prosecutors) includes topics on human rights. National Program for Raising the Legal Culture of the Society, adopted by the Parliament, is being successfully implemented.

**Fifth direction – the information and education system in the field of observance of human rights, freedoms and legitimate interests has been created.** In the framework of the UN worldwide campaign on public information in the sphere of human rights, wide information and education activities in sphere of human rights are being carried out. Thus, more than 100 basic international legal documents on human rights have been translated into state language and published in close cooperation with such international partners, as UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, OSCE and ICRC. More than 30 newspapers and magazines on human rights are published.

National Database of current legislation of Uzbekistan has been created and made available on the Internet.

**Sixth direction – judicial and legal reform aimed at protection of human rights, freedoms and legitimate interests is gradually accomplished.** Independent judiciary is the major factor of guaranteeing human rights.

The following measures aimed at guaranteeing the true independence of judiciary have been taken in the sphere of criminal proceedings:

- specialization of courts on criminal, civil and economic cases has been made;
- institutes of consideration of cases in the appellate and cassation court has been introduced;
- terms for investigation and custody has been reduced by Law, rigid terms for consideration of cases in courts have been established;
- the democratic legal mechanism of selection and appointment of the judicial staff has been created;
- the Department on execution of judgments operates, and courts are exempt from functions unusual for them;
- the principle of competitiveness of litigation, equality of the rights of public prosecutor and lawyer are observed;
- *habeas corpus* democratic institute is introduced, i.e. sanction on arrest is issued by courts.

**In the sphere of criminal and criminal executive legislation:**

- classification of crimes is completely changed, the scope of criminal acts falling under the category of less serious and not bearing social danger is essentially expanded. As a result of such approach the percentage of persons who are subjected to imprisonment was essentially reduced. There was an essential liberalization of criminal punishment;
- conditions in penitentiary establishments are improved: regime and rules in colonies are softened;
- number of articles which allow the application of parole is increased. Currently Uzbekistan has one of the best records among CIS countries on number of prisoners per capita (about 37 thousand persons). In other words there are 142 prisoners per 100 thousand people in Uzbekistan;
- institute of reconciliation as a form of execution of justice has been implanted into the legislation. The application of this institute has enabled the release from criminal liability of more that 67 thousand persons.

Mr. President,

**Civil society institutions** constituting the nongovernmental system of protection of human rights are actively developing in Uzbekistan. The principle of transition «from a strong state to a strong civil society» is gradually implemented. The state, while implementing the policy of social partnership, encourages the development of nongovernmental organizations among which the certain part carries out human rights activity. Nongovernmental organizations provide a strong support to the development of civil society and lawful state by accomplishing important socially significant functions, working in such spheres as education, care for child and women, people with disabilities and suffering from illnesses, people requiring social help. National Association of Nongovernmental Organizations and NGO Support Fund are established and successfully function.

The role of civil society, self-governance institutions of citizens, including *mahalla*, which should render the most direct and daily influence on formation of human rights culture and increase of legal

awareness of the population, are indispensable in implementation of the principle of universality of human rights. NGOs devote special attention on rendering true and targeted legal aid to various social groups of the population.

**Mass media** devote special attention to issues of protection of human rights, freedoms and legitimate interests. Mass-media carry out activities aimed at formation of democratic and legal values in people's conscious, active social – legal position of citizens. There are variety of non-state newspapers, magazines (about 1000) and TV and radio companies (44), news agencies (3) and websites in Uzbekistan.

Mass-media are a consecutive conductors of knowledge on human rights. A necessity of activation of mass-media is becoming more and more obvious because they are those democratic institutes which formulate the public opinion and human rights culture. The significant attention is devoted by mass-media to human rights issues, explanation in periodicals, on TV and radio of those legal issues which arise.

**The international cooperation** is actively carried out in the field of human rights. Uzbekistan pays great attention to the implementation of its international obligations in the sphere of human rights. The state policy in the field of human rights is accomplished in a vein of basic principles and measures developed by the United Nations. Based on that, Uzbekistan has established close relations with Charter and treaty bodies, and as well as with special mechanisms and procedures of the United Nations.

Being the State party to more than 60 international documents on human rights, including six basic treaties of the United Nations, Uzbekistan consistently implements its international obligations and takes concrete measures on protection and promotion of human rights, freedoms and legitimate interests.

During the years of its independence the Republic of Uzbekistan has submitted 18 national reports on implementation of international treaties to the treaty bodies of the United Nations. National Plans of Action have been developed to implement recommendations of treaty bodies and they are under implementation.

Mr. President,

We fully share the concerns earlier expressed by many states, including Members States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the African Group that during the elaboration of the Strategic Management Plan of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for 2008-2009 there have been lack of transparency and observance of due methods of preliminary discussion of this document in bodies of the United Nations, in particular, in the Human Rights Council.

We also note with concern the selective and arbitrary approach concerning the presence of OHCHR in regions and countries of the world. There is an absence of balanced level of OHCHR presence both in developing countries and in states of Europe and North America.

We support the proposal on necessity of discussion and consideration of issues relating to opening of each regional and country office of the OHCHR within the framework of the UN Human Rights Council.

Thank you for attention.