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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Letter dated 15 October 2026 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am pleased to transmit herewith the outcome document of the Fifth Samarkand Forum on Human Rights, held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on 28 and 29 September 2026 (see annex).*

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 70 (b).

(*Signed*) Ulugbek **Lapasov**
Permanent Representative

* Circulated in the languages of submission only in line with current liquidity management measures.

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Annex to the letter dated 15 October 2026 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

SAMARKAND VISION — 2040

Global Partnership for Human Dignity, Equality and Sustainable Development

Outcome Document of the Fifth Samarkand Human Rights Forum

Samarkand, 29 September 2026

PREAMBLE

We, the participants of the Fifth Samarkand Human Rights Forum, representatives of state authorities, parliaments, judicial bodies, national human rights institutions, bodies and mechanisms of the United Nations, international and regional organizations, academia, and civil society,

reaffirming our commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and universal international human rights standards,

noting the 60th anniversaries of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the 40th anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development, as well as the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

recalling the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the 2024 Pact for the Future,

recognizing the interdependence of human rights, peace, security, development, as well as the need for the practical implementation of international standards at the national level,

taking into account the challenges associated with digital transformation and artificial intelligence, climate change, environmental degradation, demographic changes, inequality, migration, armed conflicts, and humanitarian crises, forced displacement,

seeking to strengthen international cooperation, mutual learning, and the exchange of national experiences,

hereby adopt the present **Samarkand Vision — 2040** and declare as follows:

I. THE SAMARKAND VISION — 2040

1. **We aspire** to see, by 2040, further significant progress towards a world in which the human rights enshrined in international treaties and universal standards are effectively respected, protected and realized in the daily lives of every person.

2. **In this regard,** the international human rights system should be strengthened on the basis of universality and equality; national implementation of international law and standards; social justice and the reduction of poverty and inequality; inclusion and equal opportunities; the protection of human rights in digital and natural environments; the protection of human dignity in situations of conflict and crisis; and international solidarity and multilateral cooperation.

3. **The Samarkand Spirit** envisages mutual enrichment: international standards find practical expression through national institutions and decisions, while national experience, shared in a spirit of open dialogue and mutual respect, contributes to international cooperation and mutual learning.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4. Basing our vision on the universal norms and principles of international human rights law, **we emphasise** that its implementation must be guided by the following interrelated principles:

Universality and Equality. The universality, indivisibility, interdependence, and interconnectedness of all human rights, as well as equality and non-discrimination, must be upheld.

No One Left Behind. Particular attention should be paid to individuals and groups facing poverty, discrimination, disability, social exclusion, and other barriers to the full enjoyment of human rights.

Good-Faith Fulfilment of International Obligations. International human rights obligations should be implemented through legislation, judicial and administrative practice, effective institutions, capacity-building, and the necessary resources.

Human Rights, Democracy and Development. Democracy, human rights and development are mutually reinforcing and should be advanced through inclusive participation, accountable governance, social justice and equal opportunities.

Human Rights and Peace. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms., gender equality and non-discrimination, and applicable international humanitarian law is fundamental to protecting human dignity, preventing violence and sustaining peace, particularly in situations of armed conflict and other crises.

Multilateralism and Solidarity. International cooperation should be based on multilateralism, international solidarity, equal, inclusive and open dialogue, respect for the diversity of national and regional experiences, and mutual learning.

III. PRIORITY AREAS FOR ACTION

International human rights treaties and their effective implementation at the national level

5. **We reaffirm** that the principal outcome of the 60th anniversary of the Covenants should be strengthening of their effective implementation. **We support** the initiative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights establishing a Global Alliance for Human Rights and **call** for:

a) strengthening effective realization of the rights enshrined in the Covenants and other international human rights treaties;

b) improving application of international standards by courts and other competent bodies;

c) strengthening national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up on the recommendations of treaty bodies and the UPR; including by encouraging parliaments to regularly review their

implementation and promote transparent public reporting on progress, challenges and results;

d) improving national systems for implementation of views and recommendations of treaty bodies and special procedures on individual cases;

e) developing legal education and professional training for specialists.

The right to development and social justice

6. **We reaffirm** the need to further strengthen a human rights-based approach to development. **We call** for:

a) integrating human rights into national strategies, programmes, and budgets;

b) ensuring equal access to education, healthcare, decent work, and social protection, with particular attention to women, girls, young people, and those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination;

c) paying particular attention to reducing poverty, inequality, and social vulnerability, including by addressing the structural barriers that limit women's and young people's participation, leadership, and access to resources;

d) developing international cooperation in the field of sustainable development and the realization of economic, social, and cultural rights, including through support for women's and youth-led organizations and civil society actors contributing to conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and social cohesion;

e) taking into account the interrelationship between the right to development, the realization of all human rights, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, while recognizing that sustainable peace requires the full, equal, meaningful and effective participation and leadership of women and young people in decision-making at all levels;

f) strengthening the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security agendas, including through adequate and sustained financing, gender- and age-responsive policies, and accountable monitoring of commitments;

g) promoting intergenerational dialogue and partnerships, recognizing women and young people not only as beneficiaries of peace and development, but as agents of change, decision-makers, mediators, peacebuilders, and leaders in shaping inclusive and sustainable peace.

Inclusive society and equal opportunities

7. **We reaffirm** the need to build inclusive societies in which every person can fully enjoy their rights and participate in public life. **We call** for:

a) eliminating legal, institutional, physical, and digital barriers;

b) ensuring equal opportunities for women, children, young people, older persons, and persons with disabilities;

c) strengthening inclusive education, decent work, social protection, and people-centred access to justice, including access to quality legal aid and legal assistance;

d) ensuring meaningful, equal and effective participation of affected groups, including children and adults, women, young people, and persons with disabilities, in decision-making on matters concerning their rights and interests, and ensuring that their participation is reflected in policy development, implementation, monitoring and review;

e) recognizing the contribution of care work to human development and social cohesion, and strengthening care systems as an investment in human capital, intergenerational solidarity and resilient societies;

f) incorporating the principles of equality and non-discrimination into development strategies, public policies, and action plans.

Demographic changes, human capital and intergenerational solidarity

We recognize that demographic change has profound implications for the realization of human rights, human capital development, labour markets and social protection systems. We call for:

a) grounding demographic policies in human rights, gender equality, non-discrimination, individual agency and informed choice;

b) investing in human capital throughout the life course, including in health, sexual and reproductive health and rights, education and lifelong learning;

c) expanding access to future-oriented skills, decent employment and economic opportunities, particularly for young people and women;

d) strengthening family well-being, supportive care systems and intergenerational solidarity, while enabling women and men to reconcile work and family responsibilities;

e) ensuring the meaningful participation of young people in public life and decision-making, while promoting the rights, dignity, health and active participation of older persons.

Women, Gender Equality and Climate Justice

8. **We reaffirm** the need for the effective implementation of international obligations to ensure the rights of women and achieve gender equality. **We call** for:

a) mainstreaming gender equality and the rights of women and girls into climate and environmental policies and strategies, including through gender-responsive approaches to climate adaptation, mitigation, resilience and disaster risk reduction;

b) strengthening the participation and leadership of women and girls in climate-related decision-making at all levels, including in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of climate policies and programmes;

c) expanding women's economic opportunities and ensuring equal access to education, employment, technology, and innovation;

d) preventing discrimination and violence against women and girls, including in contexts affected by climate change, environmental degradation and other crises;

e) taking into account the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change and environmental risks, with particular attention to women and girls

facing poverty, social exclusion, disability or other intersecting vulnerabilities;

f) strengthening access of women and girls to information, resources and remedies relevant to climate and environmental decision-making;

g) taking into account the gender dimension of issues related to peace, security, armed conflict and climate-related displacement.

Digital Environment and Artificial Intelligence

9. **We recognize** that digital transformation and artificial intelligence offer significant opportunities for the realization of human rights and sustainable development, while also creating new legal and ethical challenges. **We call** for:

a) basing the development and use of artificial intelligence on respect for human dignity and human rights;

b) ensuring the protection of personal data and the right to privacy;

c) preventing discrimination and unjustified disparities arising from the use of algorithmic systems;

d) ensuring transparency, accountability and meaningful human oversight in the development and use of artificial intelligence, particularly where AI-enabled systems may affect human rights, and ensuring effective safeguards and access to effective remedies, in line with the principle of "People at the centre of the digital future";

e) bridging the digital divide and promoting inclusive and equitable access to digital technologies and their benefits;

f) developing international cooperation on global artificial intelligence governance, including cooperation in preventing and responding to crimes facilitated by digital technologies and artificial intelligence, such as cybercrime and technology-enabled fraud, while safeguarding human rights, privacy, transparency, accountability and meaningful human oversight.

Environment and Climate Change

10. **We reaffirm** the importance of every person's right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment and the need to take human rights into account in the development of climate and environmental policies. **We call** for:

a) taking into account impacts of climate change on the realization of human rights, with particular attention to the most vulnerable groups and territories;

b) strengthening regional cooperation in the management of water, land, and other natural resources;

c) developing environmental justice practices and public participation in decision-making on matters of environmental significance;

d) paying particular attention to the environmental and social consequences of the Aral Sea crisis and other environmentally vulnerable areas of Central Asia;

e) ensuring coherence between climate policy, sustainable development, and the protection of human rights.

Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness

11. We reaffirm the importance of every person's right to a nationality and the need to prevent statelessness. We call for:

a) ensuring universal and timely birth registration;

b) improving national mechanisms for determining nationality and preventing statelessness, with particular attention to children;

c) developing regional cooperation and exchanging successful national practices;

d) strengthening cooperation with international organizations and civil society;

e) striving for a substantial reduction in statelessness by 2040.

Peace, Security and International Humanitarian Law

12. **We recognize** the need to protect human dignity in situations of armed conflict and other situations of violence. We welcome the development of the first Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security for Central Asia and call for its inclusive adoption, implementation and adequate financing as a shared regional framework to translate international Women Peace and Security commitments into concrete action. We recognize the important contributions of women-led organizations, women peacebuilders, women human rights defenders and young people to its development and call for their continued meaningful participation in its implementation, monitoring and review of relevant commitments. In this spirit, **we welcome** Uzbekistan’s forthcoming chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement for 2027–2029 as an opportunity to further strengthen dialogue, trust and international cooperation in addressing shared challenges to peace and security, including climate change and the meaningful engagement of young people. **We call** for:

a) ensuring compliance by all parties to armed conflicts with applicable norms of international humanitarian law and ensuring the protection of civilians and persons not directly participating in hostilities;

b) ensuring the full, equal, meaningful and effective participation and leadership of women in conflict prevention, mediation, peace processes, peacebuilding, humanitarian action, recovery and decision-making at all levels;

c) strengthening the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda through nationally owned, time-bound and measurable National Action Plans, supported by adequate and predictable resources, clear institutional responsibilities, and effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms, and integrated into national planning, sectoral strategies and budgets;

d) supporting the meaningful participation of women-led organizations, women peacebuilders, women human rights defenders, youth organizations and civil society in the design, implementation, monitoring and review of Women, Peace and Security commitments, including through appropriate and sustainable financing;

e) encouraging the five Central Asian countries to strengthen regional cooperation and national implementation of Women, Peace and Security commitments through the Regional Action Plan, including on emerging and cross-border challenges such as climate and water security, disaster

preparedness, humanitarian action and the prevention of violent extremism;

f) strengthening the links between the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security agendas, including through the meaningful participation and leadership of young women and young people in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and decisions affecting peace and security;

g) strengthening prevention, early warning and early action mechanisms that incorporate gender and age perspectives and draw on the knowledge and analysis of women and young people at community, national and regional levels;

h) ensuring gender-responsive humanitarian action and recovery, including access to essential services, protection from gender-based violence, livelihoods, justice and meaningful participation in recovery and reconstruction decision-making;

i) strengthening financing, monitoring and accountability for Women Peace and Secutiry commitments at national and regional levels, including through gender-responsive budgeting, reliable gender-disaggregated data and regular public reporting on progress and results;

j) ensuring full respect for and effective protection of medical and humanitarian personnel in the discharge of their duties.

IV. THE SAMARKAND PARTNERSHIP

13. **We suggest** developing the Samarkand Forum as a permanent international platform for dialogue, exchange of national experiences, and mutual learning on the practical implementation of international human rights obligations.

14. **We welcome** the initiative to establish a **Samarkand Digital Platform for Cooperation** for the implementation of the International Covenants. Interested partners are encouraged to jointly explore its possible format and modalities of operation, including the exchange of practices, recommendations, monitoring methodologies, and reporting tools.

15. **We believe** that such cooperation should be based on voluntary participation, mutual respect, reliability of information, protection of personal data, and open professional dialogue.

16. We welcome the decision for Uzbekistan to host the **16th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in 2031** and view the forthcoming Congress as an important platform for international exchange on crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law, including transnational organized crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, corruption, environmental crime, child protection and emerging crimes associated with digital technologies. We recognize that its specific agenda will be developed through the established United Nations preparatory process.

V. NEXT STEPS AND VOLUNTARY REVIEW

17. **We propose** holding consultations on follow-up actions, including the development of an indicators' framework for priority areas, taking into account, where applicable, the indicators of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Sustainable Development Goals.

18. **We encourage** state authorities and national human rights institutions, taking into account national priorities and legal systems, to consider the provisions of this document when developing and updating strategies, policies and action plans.

19. **We encourage** voluntary exchange of information at subsequent Samarkand Forums, including national and institutional experiences, practical results, emerging challenges and new developments.

20. Hereby, **we annex an** Indicative Roadmap: 2026–2027 — consultations on the digital platform; 2027–2028 — development of an indicators' framework and methodology for voluntary exchange; 2028–2030 — first voluntary review; 2030–2035 — interim review and enhancement of mechanisms; 2035–2040 — final voluntary review. The Roadmap is indicative and voluntary in nature and may be further refined by participants of subsequent Forums.

VI. INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND FINAL PROVISIONS

21. **We suggest** disseminating the present Samarkand Vision among all relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, and other international and regional organizations, as well as national human rights institutions, civil society organizations and activists, academic and expert centers.

22. The present document reflects our shared aspiration, as participants of the Fifth Samarkand Human Rights Forum, to strengthen international cooperation in the field of human rights and does not create new legal obligations under international law.

23. Nothing in the present document shall be interpreted as modifying, limiting, or replacing existing international obligations of States or existing universal and regional human rights protection mechanisms.

24. The present document was adopted at the concluding plenary session of the Fifth Samarkand Human Rights Forum on 29 September 2026 in Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan.

Annex

Roadmap for the implementation of the ‘Samarkand Vision – 2040’

The timelines and responsible parties are indicative and are subject to agreement with the Forum’s partners

№	Action	Performance indicator	Duration	Reporting form	Those responsible
1	Dissemination of the ‘Samarkand Vision – 2040’ amongst bodies and organisations within the UN system, the OSCE, the OIC and other international and regional bodies	The document has been forwarded to the relevant recipients; the necessary steps have been taken to submit it as a UN document in accordance with established procedures	Fourth quarter 2026	Information about the programme, available on the Forum’s website	National Centre for Human Rights
2	Development of a system of indicators for the implementation of the ‘Samarkand Vision – 2040’ across the priority areas set out in Section III	A guidance document setting out a system of indicators has been drawn up and presented to the Forum’s partners; where applicable, this system takes into account the UN OHCHR human rights indicators and the SDG indicators	2027	A guidance document published on the Forum’s website	National Centre for Human Rights
3	Consultations on the establishment of the Samarkand Digital Platform for Cooperation, including exchange of practices on human rights, digital technologies, artificial intelligence, digital threats and technology-enabled crime	Proposals have been drawn up regarding the concept, possible format, range of participants, functional capabilities and operating procedures of the platform	2027	The platform concept presented to partners	National Centre for Human Rights, Forum partners
4	Incorporation of the document’s provisions into national strategies, policy documents and action plans	The number of national strategies, policy documents and action plans that reflect the priorities of the “Vision 2040”	2027–2030	National reports to UN treaty bodies and within the framework of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)	Government bodies, national human rights institutions
5	First voluntary review of progress	An assessment has been carried out of the progress made in priority areas, based on the agreed system of indicators and the national and institutional experience shared	2028	Progress report considered at a regular Samarkand Forum	National Centre for Human Rights, Forum partners

№	Action	Performance indicator	Duration	Reporting form	Those responsible
6	An assessment of the linkage between the “Samarkand Vision 2040” and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals	An analysis of the relevant indicators has been carried out and areas for further cooperation have been identified, including possible priorities for the international agenda beyond 2030	2030	Analytical report	National Centre for Human Rights, academic community
7	Anniversary Review: the 70th anniversary of the International Covenants, the 50th anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development and the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	An interim assessment of progress towards the objectives of the “Samarkand Vision 2040” has been carried out; where necessary, proposals have been put forward to refine priorities, indicators and formats for cooperation	2036	Final document of the Samarkand Forum commemorating their anniversaries	Forum participants, treaty bodies (as agreed)
8	Final voluntary review of the implementation of the “Samarkand Vision 2040”	A final review has been carried out covering the progress made, the national and international experiences gained, and possible areas for cooperation in the coming period	2040	The Forum’s Final Report and a New Outcome Document	Organisers and participants of the Forum