

OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of Uzbekistan

CAPITAL: Tashkent

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Multiparty Republic

AREA: 447,400 Sq Km (172,700 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION: 24,998,400



LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY: Uzbekistan is located in Central Asia and is a former republic of the USSR. It is bound by Kazakhstan to the northwest, north and northeast, Kyrgyzstan to the east, Tajikistan to the southeast, Afghanistan to the south and Turkmenistan to the south and west. The country can be divided into four topographical regions. (1.) The Ustyurt Plateau as well as the delta and alluvial plain of the lower Amu-Darya River in the northwest. (2.) The Kyzyl Kum Desert which cuts across the northern region of the country east of the Aral Sea. (3.) The foothills of the Pamir-Alai Mountain Systems in the southeast and the Tien Shan Range to the east of the capital. (4.) The fertile oasis valley of Fergana between the Alai and Tien Shan Ranges. The principal rivers are the Amu-Darya, Syr-Darya and Zeravshan. Major Cities (pop. est.); Tashkent 2,120,000, Samarkand 372,000, Namangan 333,000, Andizhan 302,000, Bukhara 235,000 (1992). Land Use; forested 3%, pastures 47%, agricultural-cultivated 10%, other 40% (1993).

CLIMATE: Uzbekistan has a hot and dry climate with long hot, dry summers and short cold winters. Average annual precipitation varies from 100 mm (4 inches) in the desert areas to 330 mm (13 inches) in the Piedmont regions. Average temperature ranges in Tashkent are from -.3 degrees Celsius (31.5 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 27 degrees Celsius (81 degrees Fahrenheit) in July.

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the Uzbeks who account for 71% of the population while 8% are Russians, 5% are Tajiks, 4% are Kazakhs and 3% are Tartars. Other ethnic minorities include Ukrainians, Armenians, Azerbaijani, Turkmen, Kyrgyzstani, Jews and Germans.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 47 persons per sq km (123 persons per sq mi) (1993). Urban-Rural; 40.0% urban, 60.0% rural (1992). Sex Distribution; 49.4% male, 50.6% female (1992). Life Expectancy at Birth; 66.2 years male, 72.6 years female (1990). Age Breakdown; 41% under 15, 28% 15 to 29, 15% 30 to 44, 9% 45 to 59, 5% 60 to 74, 2% 75 and over (1989). Birth Rate; 34.5 per 1,000 (1991). Death Rate; 6.2 per 1,000 (1991). Increase Rate; 28.3 per 1,000 (1991). Infant Mortality Rate; 35.5 per 1,000 live births (1992).

RELIGIONS: Mostly Sunni Muslims.

LANGUAGES: The official language is Uzbek, although Russian is also widely spoken and each ethnic minority also has its own language.

EDUCATION: Aged 25 or over and having attained: primary or no formal schooling 13.3%, incomplete secondary 19.8%, secondary and incomplete post secondary 57.7%, higher 9.2% (1989). Literacy; N/A.

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: On Aug. 31, 1991 Uzbekistan declared its independence, although prior to independence its history was closely tied with that of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). In Mar. 1953 Yosef Stalin died and was succeeded by Georgy Malenkov who was in turn forced to relinquish the party leadership to Nikita Khrushchev after a little over one week in power. In 1955 the Warsaw pact militarily aligned the Soviet Union with other communist countries and in Nov. 1956 the Soviet Red Army invaded Hungary to quell uprisings. In 1957 three communist ministers unsuccessfully attempted to depose Khrushchev which resulted in their expulsion from the central committee. In 1962 under Khrushchev's rule the USSR was involved in the Cuban Missile crisis and in the same year relations with China were broken off as a result of ideological differences. In Oct. 1964 Khrushchev was forced to retire and was succeeded by Leonid Brezhnev. In Aug. 1968 the Warsaw Pact forces led by the Red Army invaded Czechoslovakia to halt their Prague Spring reforms. In 1977 Brezhnev was elected President. In Nov. 1982 Brezhnev died and was succeeded by Yuri Andropov, the former head of the KGB. Andropov introduced limited economic reforms and established an anti-corruption program. In Feb 1984 Andropov died and was succeeded by Konstantin Chernenko who in turn died on Mar. 10, 1985. On Mar. 11, 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev was elected as Chernenko's successor and Gorbachev embarked on a program which restructured the USSR's relations with the West. Gorbachev also established Glasnost (openness) as well as Perestroika (restructuring and reform). In Apr. 1986 a meltdown in the reactor of the Chernobyl nuclear power station in Ukraine sent radioactive fallout across northern Europe. In Dec. 1987 the USSR and USA signed the Treaty on Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF). In Feb. 1988 a dispute erupted between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh which resulted in mass demonstrations and strikes in the two republics. In Dec. 1988 an earthquake in Armenia killed some 50,000 people. In Apr. 1989 troops violently repressed demonstrations in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. In Dec. 1989 the Lithuanian Parliament adopted multiparty politics. In Jan. 1990 Gorbachev visited Lithuania and was met by some 250,000 pro-independence demonstrators. In Feb. 1990 some 18 people were killed in riots over housing discrimination in Tajikistan. In May 1990 Boris Yeltsin was elected President of the Russian Federation and on Nov. 1, 1990 launched a 500 day plan to give the Russian Republic a free market economy. In June 1990 Nakhichevan an Azerbaijani enclave bordering Iran declared its intention for a unification with Iran while a civil war was escalating between Azerbaijan

and Armenia. In the same month around 150 people were killed during ethnic clashes in Kyrgyzstan. In Jan 1991 another 15 people were killed as the Red Army seized a television station in Lithuania while in Latvia the Soviet Black Berets killed 5 people in an attack on the ministry building. In the same month troops were being deployed in Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Moldova. In Mar. 1991 pro-Yeltsin demonstrators held a mass rally. On Aug. 18, 1991 as Gorbachev was vacationing in the Crimea, the Politburo hard liners attempted a coup to remove Gorbachev from power through the declaration of a State of Emergency under the control of a State Committee. Almost immediately republic leaders declared the emergency committee illegal as well as unconstitutional and began to barricade their parliaments as troops and tanks were deployed throughout the republics. By Aug. 20 senior officers had refused to order their troops to use force against the civilians and on Aug. 21, 1991 the coup collapsed as troops were ordered to return to their barracks. Immediately following the unsuccessful coup many republics suspended or purged the communist party and on Sept. 5, 1991 after 3 days of debate the 74 years of centralized communist control came to an end. On Dec. 29, 1991 presidential elections were won by Islam Karimov, the former first secretary of the Communist Party now known as the People's Democratic Party. In Jan. 1992 Uzbekistan became a founding member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and on Jan. 8, 1992 Abdulkhashim Mutalov was inaugurated as Prime Minister. The three opposition parties, Erk Democratic Party, Birlik Peoples' Movement and the Party of Islamic Rebirth (PIR) aligned themselves. All three parties advocated a secular political state with Islam occupying a central public position and opposed the government's economic reform program favoring a rapid transition to a market economy. In May 1992 following mass demonstration in neighboring Tajikistan, the Birlik, Erk and PIR attempted to form a coalition government that led Pres. Karimov to close Birlik's headquarters and arrest its leaders. Following which the Supreme Soviet amended the criminal laws to increase anti-government activity penalties, to increase the powers of security forces and allow for the registration of political parties. Also in 1992 Pres. Karimov attended the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in Finland, visited Beijing to establish diplomatic relations with China and also received US Secretary of State, James Baker. In 1993 the government continued with its' crackdown on opposition parties starting with the main opposition party, the Birlik Movement, banning their activities for the first quarter of the year. On Oct. 12, 1993 the government passed a law that reinstated the Latin alphabet for the Uzbek language. Also in 1993 a number of opposition members were granted amnesty following their conviction, although six members were sentenced to 10-15 years following their conviction of attempting to establish an alternate parliament.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Sum (plural; Sumy).

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$21,030,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; USD \$123,000,000 (1992). Imports; R 191,885,000,000 (1992). Exports; R 150,635,000,000 (1992). Tourism Receipts; N/A. Balance of Trade; R -4,100,000,000 (1992). Economically Active Population; 8,242,800 or 39.0% of total population (1992). Unemployed; 1.1% (1992).

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partner is the CIS.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Coal, Copper, Cotton, Fruit, Gold, Grapes, Iron Ore, Lead, Livestock, Maize, Melons, Molybdenum, Natural Gas, Oil, Rice, Silkworms, Silver, Sulfur, Tungsten, Vegetables, Wheat.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, Chemicals, Fertilizers, Machinery, Mining, Oil Refining, Silk, Steel Milling, Textiles.

MAIN EXPORTS: Chemicals, Clothing, Fertilizers, Leather, Minerals, Natural Gas, Ores, Petroleum and Petroleum Products.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 6,800 km (4,225 mi) (1991), passenger-km 5,200,000,000 (3,231,000,000 passenger-mi) (1991), cargo ton-km 70,600,000,000 (48,354,000,000 passenger-mi) (1991). Roads; length 89,207 km (55,431 mi) (1990). Vehicles; cars 790,800 (1988). Merchant Marine; N/A. Air Transport; passenger-km 10,500,000,000 (6,524,000,000 passenger-mi) (1991), cargo ton-km 88,700,000,000 (60,751,000,000 short ton-mi) (1991).

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 12 with a total circulation of 452,000 (1992). Radio; receivers 3,677,000 (1991). Television; receivers 3,308,000 (1991). Telephones; units 1,458,000 (1991).

MILITARY: 25,000 (1995) total active duty personnel with 84.0% army, 0.0% navy and 16.0% air force while military expenditure accounts for 0.2% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).