

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN'S MEMBERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

This article examines the prospects for strengthening the participation of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the activities of international organizations. The study argues that Uzbekistan's involvement in international organizations should be understood not only as an instrument of foreign policy, but also as a legal and institutional mechanism for implementing constitutional principles, ensuring national interests, modernizing domestic legislation, and integrating the country into global and regional governance systems. The article emphasizes that the effectiveness of Uzbekistan's participation depends on the quality of implementation of international obligations, harmonization of national legislation with international standards, development of professional diplomatic and legal expertise, and promotion of national initiatives within multilateral platforms.

Keywords

Republic of Uzbekistan; international organizations; international law; foreign policy; United Nations; OSCE; Shanghai Cooperation Organisation; WTO accession; legal integration; international cooperation; national interests.

Uzbekistan's participation in international organizations is neither a purely diplomatic choice nor a merely technical treaty practice; it is a constitutionally authorized, legislatively regulated, and internationally framed exercise of state sovereignty. The decisive national anchors are the 2023 redrafting of the Constitution and the 2019 Law on international treaties. Together, they establish: constitutional supremacy; incorporation of treaties and generally recognized international norms into the national legal system; the priority of treaty rules over ordinary legislation; ex ante constitutional review of treaties subject to ratification; and institutional responsibility for execution, publication, monitoring, and reporting.

The most analytically productive approach is comparative. Uzbekistan's memberships and participations in United Nations, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Commonwealth of

Independent States, and the accession process to the World Trade Organization do not have identical legal effects. UN and WTO participation is rooted in constituent treaties that generate binding obligations and, in the WTO case, enforceable dispute settlement after accession. OSCE commitments are politically binding, not legally binding in the classic treaty sense. SCO cooperation is treaty-based and institutional, but relies heavily on consensus and national implementation. CIS practice is institutionally real but legally looser and less judicialized than the WTO model. A high-quality article should therefore distinguish membership as a unitary constitutional competence from the differentiated legal consequences of belonging to different organizations.

On the domestic side, the most important constitutional provisions are Articles 15, 17, 18, 55, 109, and 133. Article 15 incorporates treaties and generally recognized norms of international law into the legal system and gives treaties priority over ordinary laws where they conflict. Articles 17 and 18 constitutionalize Uzbekistan's international legal personality and expressly authorize entry into, and withdrawal from, alliances, commonwealths, and other intergovernmental institutions. Article 109 assigns the President external representation and key international functions. Article 133 grants the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan *ex ante* competence to assess the constitutionality of treaties before the President signs ratification laws. Article 55 gives individuals access to international human-rights bodies after exhaustion of domestic remedies. The 2023 constitutional reform strengthened this entire architecture and expanded constitutional-justice mechanisms, including the post-reform development of the constitutional complaint.

The 2019 Law "On International Treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan" operationalizes the constitutional framework. It divides treaties into interstate, intergovernmental, and interdepartmental instruments; establishes who may initiate, negotiate, sign, and propose ratification; requires explanatory notes on legislative and financial consequences; mandates legal expertise, including review against generally recognized norms of international law and existing international obligations; identifies treaties subject to ratification, including treaties on participation in interstate unions and international organizations; and imposes publication, registration, monitoring, and annual reporting duties. This law is essential to showing that Uzbekistan's membership in international organizations is legally filtered long before it becomes politically visible.

The factual examples are strong and current. Uzbekistan joined the UN on 2 March 1992 after Security Council recommendation and General Assembly admission. It has been an OSCE participating State since 1992 and has hosted an

OSCE field operation since 1995. Uzbekistan joined the SCO in 2001; after its accession, the “Shanghai Five” became the SCO, and the organization’s permanent Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure is based in Tashkent. Uzbekistan remains active in CIS formats, as shown by its participation in the 2024 CIS summit and the opening of a CIS election-monitoring mission headquarters in Tashkent. WTO accession is at an advanced but not completed stage: Uzbek government sources described the process as being in its “final stage” by late 2025, while the WTO reported in March 2026 that Uzbekistan was maintaining momentum to accede during 2026.

For journal publication, the article should not be a descriptive inventory. Its originality should lie in demonstrating how Uzbekistan’s constitutional order mediates between sovereignty, international legality, and differentiated institutional integration. The best framing is to present Uzbekistan as a case of constitutionally controlled openness to international organization membership: treaties prevail over ordinary statutes, but only after structured domestic authorization, constitutional conformity review, and implementation through specific institutions. That analytic design is substantially stronger than a simple country profile and is much better aligned with what peer reviewers in comparative constitutional law and international law typically expect.

The primary-source hierarchy for the article should be explicit and conservative. The sources to prioritize are: the new edition of the Constitution adopted by referendum on 30 April 2023; the 2019 Law “On International Treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan”; official materials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan and other Uzbek state portals; UN admission documents and UN Uzbekistan materials; OSCE country and institutional documents; SCO Secretariat materials; WTO accession documents and official WTO legal texts; available material on the Constitutional Court’s post-2023 jurisprudence and powers; and legislation published via Lex.uz. This source strategy is fully defensible in a law article because it privileges constitutive legal texts and institutional practice over commentary.

Three details remain unspecified by the request and should be stated transparently in the eventual manuscript cover note or author’s draft memo: the target journal name, the required citation style, and the exact word-count target within the 2,500–3,500 range. Those variables matter because some Scopus-indexed journals prefer OSCOLA or Chicago-style footnotes, while others accept APA-like references, and some are stricter about doctrinal versus empirical balance. Since no journal has been named, the most prudent working model is a 2,900–3,200-word doctrinal-comparative article with footnotes, two tables, and one figure.

The constitutionally decisive provision is Article 15. It does two things at once. First, it preserves the supremacy, supreme legal force, and direct effect of the Constitution. Second, it constitutionalizes a monist opening by declaring that Uzbekistan's international treaties, together with generally recognized principles and norms of international law, form an integral part of the Uzbek legal system. The same article adds a conflict rule: where a treaty establishes rules different from those in ordinary legislation, the treaty rules apply. For legal analysis, this means that Uzbekistan does not subordinate the Constitution to treaties, but does subordinate ordinary legislation to treaties once validly incorporated. That distinction is the cornerstone of the whole article.

Articles 17 and 18 provide the foreign-relations basis of membership. Article 17 recognizes Uzbekistan as a full subject of international relations and grounds foreign policy in sovereign equality, non-use of force, inviolability of frontiers, peaceful dispute settlement, non-interference, and other generally recognized norms of international law. Article 18 goes further and expressly states that Uzbekistan may enter into, join, and withdraw from alliances, commonwealths, and other intergovernmental institutions on the basis of the supreme interests of the state, the people, welfare, and security. This is not simply a political declaration. It is a constitutional authorization for membership in international organizations, but one filtered through national-interest criteria rather than open-ended delegation.

Article 109 allocates the core external competence to the President, who represents Uzbekistan in international relations and nominates heads of diplomatic and other representative offices to foreign states and international organizations. Article 133, however, prevents international action from becoming constitutionally unchecked. It gives the Constitutional Court the authority to review the conformity of international treaties with the Constitution before the President signs laws on ratification. This *ex ante* review is especially important from the standpoint of Article 27 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, because international law generally does not allow a state to invoke internal law as justification for non-performance; Uzbekistan's solution is to screen constitutional conformity before ratification is finalized.

Article 55 is the clearest bridge between organizational membership and the individual legal subject. It guarantees the right of every person, in accordance with legislation and international treaties of Uzbekistan, to apply to international bodies for protection of human rights and freedoms after exhaustion of available domestic remedies. This clause is important both doctrinally and practically. Doctrinally, it shows that international institutional membership can produce direct remedial

consequences for individuals. Practically, it connects the constitution to Uzbekistan's record before international bodies, including communications decided by the UN Human Rights Committee.

The 2023 constitutional reform matters not only because it reissued the Constitution by referendum on 30 April 2023, but because it deepened the legal infrastructure of constitutional review and rights protection. Official constitutional commentary emphasizes that the reform expanded the powers of constitutional justice, strengthened the constitutional complaint mechanism, and was already tested in relation to referendum-constitutionality review during the 2023 reform process itself. It also records a 2024 interpretive clarification by the Constitutional Court concerning the exhaustion requirement for constitutional complaints. For the article, this supports an important argument: the legal control of international commitments in Uzbekistan now belongs to a broader post-2023 architecture of constitutional legality, not to treaty law in isolation.

The 2019 Law on international treaties gives the domestic mechanics. It states that treaties are concluded, executed, terminated, and suspended in accordance with generally recognized norms of international law, the Constitution, the Law itself, and treaty provisions; and it repeats the treaty-priority rule over legislation. It also clarifies that the right to conclude international treaties belongs to the state and classifies them as interstate, intergovernmental, and interdepartmental. This formal differentiation matters because accession to international organizations may proceed through different legal pathways depending on the instrument and the state organ involved.

The same law requires a legally dense preparatory process. An initiative to develop a treaty draft or join a multilateral treaty must be accompanied by an explanatory note showing practical significance, expected results, any regulatory acts that must be adopted, amended, supplemented, or invalidated, and—where necessary—financial or economic consequences. The draft then undergoes mandatory legal expertise by the foreign ministry, which checks conformity with generally recognized norms of international law, existing international obligations, foreign-policy legislation, and legal-drafting requirements; other forms of expert review, including economic, financial, scientific, environmental, and linguistic review, may also be conducted. This is a sophisticated domestic filtering mechanism and should be presented in the article as such.

Ratification procedure is the clearest doctrinal link between the Constitution and organizational membership. Under Article 18 of the 2019 Law, ratification is carried out by the chambers of the Oliy Majlis through adoption of a ratification law. Treaties subject to ratification include treaties on the basics of interstate

relations, mutual legal assistance, peace and collective security, territorial delimitation, participation in interstate unions and international organizations, and treaties whose execution requires legislative change or sets rules different from Uzbek laws. Proposals for ratification are transmitted to the Legislative Chamber by the President or the Cabinet of Ministers, depending on who authorized signature, and the President later signs the ratification instrument. In short, membership in international organizations is constitutionally permitted, but legally domesticated through parliamentary ratification and presidential formalization.

Domestic implementation is not left to implication. The law states that treaties are subject to rigorous and mandatory execution in accordance with international law. Where implementing legislation is needed, interested state bodies must submit proposals, coordinated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice. The President ensures compliance with treaty obligations; the Cabinet takes practical measures and designates responsible implementing bodies; and competent state bodies must both execute treaty obligations and monitor reciprocal compliance by other treaty participants. Publication is mandatory in the National Database of Legislation, and registration in the UN Secretariat or other relevant international organizations is handled by the foreign ministry or other state bodies in agreement with it. Monitoring is systematic: competent agencies report by 31 December each year, and the foreign ministry prepares a generalized assessment and proposals for the Cabinet or, where needed, the President.

This implementation logic is also reproduced in ordinary sectoral legislation. The Customs Code and the Family Code both contain clauses stating that if an international treaty establishes rules different from domestic legislation, the treaty rules apply. That matters methodologically because it shows the treaty-priority clause is not merely constitutional rhetoric; it is transposed into sector-specific law and therefore into day-to-day administration and adjudication.

Uzbekistan's admission to the UN is the cleanest example of classic treaty-based organizational membership. The UN in Uzbekistan states that the country joined on 2 March 1992 and that the UN Office opened in Tashkent the following year. The admission path is traceable through Security Council resolution 737 (1992), recommending admission, and General Assembly resolution 46/223, admitting Uzbekistan to membership. Today the UN Country Team in Uzbekistan comprises 25 agencies, funds, and programmes. In legal terms, this example is ideal because it links constitutional authorization for multilateral relations to the concrete Charter procedure for membership and ongoing institutional obligations.

OSCE participation illustrates a different legal pattern. OSCE sources record

that Uzbekistan has been a participating State since 1992 and has hosted an OSCE field operation since 1995. Uzbek foreign-ministry materials state that cooperation focuses on implementation of OSCE principles and obligations in light of new security threats, the international agenda, and Uzbekistan's national interests. Yet OSCE institutional materials also emphasize that OSCE decisions are politically, not legally, binding. That combination makes the OSCE especially useful for the article's comparative thesis: constitutionally, OSCE participation falls under Article 18's authorization to join intergovernmental institutions; internationally, however, its enforcement logic is political monitoring, election observation, peer pressure, and institutional dialogue rather than classic treaty adjudication.

The SCO is more formalized. SCO materials describe it as a permanent intergovernmental international organization created in 2001, after Uzbekistan joined the previous "Shanghai Five" format, and note that the SCO Charter was signed in 2002 and entered into force in 2003. The same official source explains that the organization has two permanent bodies: the Secretariat in Beijing and the RATS in Tashkent. It further states that the Executive Committee of RATS operates on the basis of the SCO Charter, the Shanghai Convention on combating terrorism, separatism and extremism, and the RATS Agreement. For article writing, the SCO example shows how Uzbekistan's membership can generate institutional presence on its own territory and thus a deeper domestic interface between international security cooperation and national administrative practice.

CIS practice is institutionally real, even if less judicialized. Uzbek official sources show that Uzbekistan treats relations with CIS states as a priority direction of foreign policy and continues to participate actively in CIS summitry. In October 2024, the President of Uzbekistan participated in the CIS Council of Heads of State summit, and in September 2024 the foreign ministry met the CIS Deputy Secretary General while a CIS election-monitoring mission headquarters was operating in Tashkent for parliamentary elections. The CIS Charter, according to official CIS material, was adopted on 22 January 1993. For the article, CIS material should be used less as a model of hard supranationality and more as an example of regional institutionalism where coordination, summit diplomacy, and sectoral agreements matter more than highly legalized enforcement.

WTO accession is the best example of how organizational membership can discipline domestic law before membership is completed. WTO materials describe Uzbekistan as an applicant under Article XII and reported in June and November 2025 that the country was working towards finalization by MC14; in March 2026, the WTO reported that Uzbekistan was maintaining "strong momentum" to accede in 2026. Uzbek government materials from December 2025 describe the accession

process as having reached its final stage, note that 11 working-party meetings had been held, state that negotiations on market access conditions had been concluded with the majority of WTO members, and report extensive harmonization of national legislation, including more than 10 new regulatory legal acts and 54 harmonized documents in 2025 alone. This example is particularly valuable because it shows membership law operating before accession through legislative convergence, administrative transparency, and interministerial negotiation.

The prospects for strengthening the participation of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the activities of international organizations are closely connected with the country's constitutional development, legal modernization, economic reforms, and active foreign policy. International organizations provide Uzbekistan with important platforms for protecting national interests, promoting regional initiatives, attracting expert and technical assistance, and participating in the formation of international legal and political standards.

At the same time, the effectiveness of participation in international organizations cannot be measured only by the number of organizations in which the state is represented. A more important criterion is the real influence of Uzbekistan on international agendas, the quality of implementation of international obligations, the ability to harmonize domestic legislation with international standards, and the capacity to transform international cooperation into concrete legal, economic, social, and institutional results.

The analysis shows that Uzbekistan has significant opportunities to strengthen its role in the United Nations system, deepen cooperation with the OSCE in the field of rule of law and democratic institutions, expand its functional participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, develop pragmatic regional cooperation within the CIS and other formats, and successfully complete the process of accession to the World Trade Organization. Each of these directions requires not only diplomatic activity, but also systematic legal preparation, professional expertise, and effective coordination among state institutions.

A key condition for strengthening Uzbekistan's participation in international organizations is the improvement of national mechanisms for implementing international obligations. This includes the development of monitoring systems, parliamentary oversight, interdepartmental coordination, judicial application of international norms, and the training of specialists in international law, trade law, human rights law, environmental law, and the law of international organizations.

Thus, the strengthening of Uzbekistan's participation in international organizations should be viewed as a strategic component of state modernization. It contributes to the growth of the country's international authority, the expansion of

economic opportunities, the improvement of legislation, the consolidation of the rule of law, and the more effective protection of national interests in a globalized and legally interconnected world.

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