

HUMAN RIGHTS IN  
UZBEKISTAN  
PRESENTED BY  
UZBEK FORUM FOR HUMAN  
RIGHTS

UPR Info Pre-sessions

# Situation in Country Uzbekistan – Issue 1: Freedom of Expression

- Implementation of previous recommendations made by Sweden and Germany to lift restrictions on the right to freedom of expression.
- Implementation of previous recommendation made by Lithuania to review laws on defamation.
- Implementation of general recommendations to allow the media to operate without government interference and permit access to information, including foreign sources and the Internet.

# New Developments – Issue 1: Freedom of Expression

- The Uzbek government has recently adopted a series of restrictive amendments that have negative effects on bloggers and journalists.
- “Disseminating false information” in the media or online was added to the criminal code in 2020.
- New criminal provision for “public calls to mass disturbances and violence against citizens”.
- Amendment to criminal code criminalizes “public insult or defamation” of the president of Uzbekistan online.

# Recommendations – Issue 1: Freedom of Expression

- Decriminalize insult, defamation, and insulting the president online which risks violating the right to freedom of expression guaranteed by Article 19 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights.
- Stop prosecuting journalists and bloggers for their legitimate work.
- Immediately grant pardons to all journalists and bloggers who have been wrongly imprisoned and ensure that they are swiftly released and rehabilitated.

# Situation in Country Uzbekistan – Issue 2: Freedom of Association

- Implementation of previous recommendation made by Germany and Spain to “ensure that all civil society and human rights organizations can work without hindrance by lifting prohibitive registration requirements and burdensome regulations”.
- Implementation of Italy’s recommendation to enhance efforts to create an environment in which journalists, human rights defenders and NGOs can freely operate

# New Developments – Issue 2: Freedom of Association

- Only a handful of independent human rights NGOs registered in Uzbekistan since last review.
- Burdensome regulations on funding from foreign donors require approval from the Ministry of Justice.
- Government decree of June 2022 stipulates that NGOs receiving funds from foreign donors must be appointed a national partner or representative of a government agency that oversees implementation and can make changes to NGO projects.

# Recommendations – Issue 2: Freedom of Association

- Introduce a simplified registration process for civil society organizations, including independent trade unions.
- Desist from interfering in civil society activity.
- Lift funding restrictions on non-governmental organizations.
- Abandon the requirement for NGOs to work with a representative of a government agency.

# Thank you!

From Uzbek Forum for Human Rights, Berlin