United Nations
Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Republic of Uzbekistan

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POSITION OF UZBEKISTAN REGARDING WATER FLOW CRISES WORLDWIDE

General information

Uzbekistan lies mainly between two major rivers, the Syr Darya and the Amu Darya. Fun fact: It's one of only two double-landlocked countries on Earth. The flow of the two rivers has been severely depleted in recent decades, due misuse of the water by both industry and agriculture. The Aral Sea, once the 4th largest inland body of water, has lost 90% of its surface and volume since 1961. Drainage has increased salinity of the sea, which combined with heavy pollution with insecticides and fertilizers has led to the death of the fishing industry and poisoned the vegetables and drinking water. As of 2025, 90% of the country's fresh water is used for agriculture, and it is forecast to be among the world's most water-stressed countries by 2040.

Position on the matter

Uzbekistan is heavily dependent on its neighbours when it comes to fresh water, partially due to geography, partially as a legacy of their shared history with the USSR. Despite some historic conflicts (for example around the Kambar-Ata-1 Dam on the Naryn river, a feeder of the Syr Darya coming from Kyrgyzstan), coordination and cooperation around river and aquifers has improved significantly in the last couple years.

Proposed solutions

Given its geographic position, Uzbekistan is likely to advocate for more regional cooperation, both in Central Asia and world wide. Rivers and aquifers are often transboundary, thus their management requires international cooperation. Regionally only Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are parties to both the UN Water Convention and the UN Watercourses Convention, so pushing neighbours in this direction is possible. Additionally, promoting foreign investment and ecological development is likely to be a key point, as the government struggles to fund e.g. subsidies for more efficient irrigation systems for cotton farming. Pursuing low cost solutions, such as micro hydroelectric generators instead of dams, has also been proposed by the government.

Potential Blocks

Central Asian nations (with the exception of Afghanistan) maintain strong cultural, economic and military ties, driven by their desire for regional peace and prosperity. Of the countries present, this means Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The country has also developed close ties with China via the BRI, while maintaining good relations with Russia, and neutrality with the West.

Read More

Uzbekistan - Encyclopedia Britannica
Water Crisis Leads to Debt for Farmers - The Diplomat
World's Most Water Stressed Countries by 2040 - WRI
Dam Conflict Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan
Kambar-Ata-1 Dam Roadmap Agreed
Uzbekistan Case Study - UN Water
Uzbekistan Adapting to Water Deficit
Uzbekistan Diplomatic Relations

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