

The Role of Human Rights in Strengthening Sustainable Development and National Security in New Uzbekistan: Constitutional Reforms, Legal Guarantees, and Human-Centered Governance as Foundations of Social Stability

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the role of ensuring human rights in New Uzbekistan as one of the key factors in promoting sustainable development and strengthening national security. The author analyzes how the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms contributes to the establishment of justice, the rule of law, and the enhancement of citizens' trust in state institutions. The study also highlights the significance of the constitutional and legal reforms implemented in recent years in safeguarding human interests and advancing human-centered governance. Particular attention is given to issues such as ensuring transparency and openness in the activities of public authorities, improving citizens' legal awareness and legal culture, and assessing the impact of effective human rights protection on social stability. The article concludes that respect for and protection of human rights constitutes essential prerequisites for sustainable development, national security, and the overall well-being of the population in New Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Human Rights; Fundamental Freedoms; Democracy; Rule of Law; Constitutional Reforms; Sustainable Development; National Security; New Uzbekistan; Human-Centered Governance; Legal Culture; Social Stability; International Human Rights Standards.

1.0. Introduction

Today, ensuring human rights and fundamental freedoms is regarded as one of the most essential prerequisites for the development of a democratic state and a vibrant civil society. International experience demonstrates that societies in which human interests are prioritized tend to achieve higher levels of social stability, economic progress, and national security. Consequently, the protection and promotion of human rights have become a key priority both for the international community and for the domestic policies of individual states. As a universal value, human rights serve not only as a guarantee of individual dignity and freedom but also as an important foundation for sustainable development, social cohesion, and effective governance. Therefore, strengthening human rights protection mechanisms remains one of the most significant objectives of contemporary democratic reforms worldwide.

In New Uzbekistan, large-scale reforms are being implemented to uphold human dignity, ensure the reliable protection of citizens' rights and freedoms, strengthen the rule of law, and build a just society. In particular, constitutional reforms, the improvement of mechanisms for the protection of human rights, and the incorporation of international human rights standards into national legislation represent significant milestones in this process. These transformations reflect the state's commitment to placing human interests at the center of public policy and governance. Moreover, they contribute to enhancing democratic institutions, promoting legal awareness, and fostering greater public trust in state authorities. In this context, a scholarly examination of the role of human rights in ensuring sustainable development and strengthening national security is of considerable theoretical and practical importance, as it provides a deeper understanding of the interrelationship between human rights, social stability, and the long-term development of the state.

1.1. Study Objectives

The present study pursues the following objectives:

- 1) To examine the conceptual and legal foundations of human rights as a determinant of democratic development and the rule of law;
- 2) To analyze the constitutional and legal reforms implemented in New Uzbekistan for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- 3) To assess the relationship between effective human rights protection and the achievement of sustainable development objectives;
- 4) To investigate the role of human rights guarantees in strengthening national security and social stability;
- 5) To evaluate the impact of harmonizing national legislation with international human rights standards; and
- 6) To formulate practical recommendations for further strengthening human rights protection mechanisms in New Uzbekistan.

2.0. Literature Review

Human rights constitute one of the fundamental characteristics of a democratic state governed by the rule of law. They serve as a key criterion for assessing the level of democratic development achieved by any state. The extent to which human rights and fundamental freedoms are recognized, protected, and guaranteed reflects the maturity of a country's legal and political system. For this reason, human rights occupy a central place in both international law and national legal frameworks. They function as a cornerstone for ensuring justice, equality, human dignity, and the rule of law, while also promoting social stability, democratic governance, and sustainable development. Consequently, the protection and advancement of human rights remain among the primary objectives of modern states and the international community.

Human rights legislation has evolved progressively throughout the course of human civilization. This body of law encompasses a comprehensive set of international and national legal norms aimed at guaranteeing and protecting the rights and freedoms of individuals and citizens. It includes international conventions, declarations, and covenants, as well as domestic legal acts adopted by individual states. Over time, the legal framework for the protection of human rights has undergone continuous development and refinement, ultimately taking its modern form. Scholars generally divide the historical evolution of human rights legislation into three major stages. Each stage is characterized by significant changes in the content, scope, and mechanisms of human rights protection, reflecting the growing recognition of human dignity, equality, and fundamental freedoms within both national and international legal systems [1].

The first stage began with the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen in 1789 and extended until the outbreak of the First World War. This period was characterized by the legal recognition and consolidation of natural rights, individual freedoms, and the political rights of citizens. It marked a significant shift in legal and political thought, emphasizing the inherent dignity and equality of individuals. During this stage, legal norms aimed at regulating the relationship between the individual and the state on the basis of democratic principles

were established and gradually developed. Particular attention was given to limiting arbitrary state power, protecting personal liberty, and promoting the principles of constitutionalism, popular sovereignty, and the rule of law. As a result, this period laid the foundation for the modern system of civil and political rights that continues to influence contemporary democratic societies.

During this period, particular emphasis was placed on ensuring equality before the law and safeguarding individual liberty. Legal provisions were developed to guarantee personal inviolability, prevent unlawful persecution and arbitrary restrictions, and protect the right to private property. These principles became fundamental elements of emerging constitutional and legal systems. In addition, the formation of political rights, especially the right to vote, represented an important achievement of the era. However, electoral rights were not universally accessible and were often subject to various restrictions based on property ownership, gender, social status, or other qualifications. Despite these limitations, the legal developments of this period played a crucial role in advancing the recognition of individual rights and establishing the foundations of modern democratic governance and constitutional law.

The second stage corresponds to the first half of the twentieth century. During this period, the widespread dissemination of democratic ideals and the emergence of socially oriented state policies significantly increased the importance of legally guaranteeing socio-economic rights. As a result, the protection of individuals' social and economic interests became a central concern of legislative development. Consequently, national legal systems increasingly incorporated provisions aimed at ensuring an adequate standard of living, strengthening social welfare and protection mechanisms, and regulating labor relations. Particular attention was given to the recognition of rights related to employment, fair working conditions, social security, and public assistance. These developments reflected a growing understanding that the effective realization of civil and political rights should be complemented by the protection of socio-economic rights, thereby contributing to social justice, equality, and the overall well-being of society.

During this stage, the rights to work, to enjoy fair and favorable working conditions, to rest and leisure, to social security, and to receive social assistance from the state were formally recognized and legally guaranteed. The progressive experiences of several countries played a significant role in shaping and advancing these socio-economic rights. In particular, the development of social legislation in France and Sweden, the adoption of the Weimar Constitution in Germany, and the extensive incorporation of social rights into the constitutions of France and Italy are widely regarded as major achievements of this period. These legal developments reflected the growing responsibility of the state in ensuring social welfare and protecting vulnerable groups within society. As a result, socio-economic rights became an integral component of the modern human rights framework, complementing civil and political rights and contributing to greater social justice and equality.

The third stage in the historical development of human rights emerged during the second half of the twentieth century and introduced a new dimension to the concept of human rights. During this period, human rights expanded beyond the traditional categories of civil, political, and socio-economic rights to encompass collective interests and concerns shared by humanity as a whole. For this reason, this stage is commonly referred to in academic literature as the era of "third-generation human rights" or "solidarity rights."

During this period, the international system for the protection of human rights underwent significant development and institutional strengthening. Numerous international legal instruments adopted through the cooperation of states and international organizations contributed to the establishment of universal standards for the promotion and protection of human rights. These developments enhanced the effectiveness of international human rights mechanisms and reinforced states' obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill fundamental rights and freedoms. As a result, human rights gradually ceased to be regarded solely as an internal matter of individual states and came to be recognized as a universal value of concern to the entire international community. This transformation reflected the growing understanding that the protection of human rights is essential not only for the well-being of individuals but also for the maintenance of international peace, security, and sustainable development.

According to contemporary constitutional doctrines, fundamental human rights and freedoms are inherent to every individual from birth. These rights are not granted by the state; rather, they are recognized, respected, and guaranteed by it. Such an approach is based on the concept of natural rights, which affirms that human dignity, freedom, and equality are intrinsic and inalienable attributes of every person. Modern constitutional systems are likewise founded on the principle that all individuals are entitled to enjoy rights and freedoms on an equal basis, regardless of their social status, gender, ethnicity, religion, or other characteristics. Another fundamental principle is the guarantee of effective judicial protection, ensuring that individuals have access to impartial and independent courts for the protection of their rights and legitimate interests. At the same time, the exercise of one's rights and freedoms must not infringe upon the rights, freedoms, and lawful interests of others [3].

In the legal systems of countries around the world, human rights legislation is generally classified into the following categories:

- Laws concerning the personal (civil) rights of citizens;
- Laws regulating the political rights of citizens;
- Laws governing the economic rights of citizens;
- Laws related to cultural rights; and
- International legal instruments on human rights.

Together, these categories form a comprehensive legal framework for the recognition, protection, and promotion of human rights at both the national and international levels. Recent scholarship further emphasizes that, under the conditions of digital transformation, the legislative framework for human rights protection in Uzbekistan must be continuously improved to ensure reliable guarantees of rights in the digital economy [6].

3.0. Methodology

The present study employed the methods of analysis and synthesis, comparative legal analysis, historical inquiry, and a systematic approach. The role of human rights in ensuring sustainable development and security was examined through the analysis of national and international legal instruments, scholarly literature, and normative legal documents. The collected data were systematically reviewed, synthesized, and interpreted to formulate

relevant scientific conclusions regarding the significance of human rights in strengthening social stability, democratic governance, and national development. These methodological approaches enabled a comprehensive assessment of the relationship between human rights protection, sustainable development, and security within the context of contemporary reforms in New Uzbekistan.

4.0. Results and Discussion

Comprehensive reforms are being implemented in Uzbekistan to build a democratic state governed by the rule of law and founded on a developed market economy, to strengthen civil society institutions, ensure the supremacy of law, safeguard national security and the inviolability of state borders, promote sustainable development, and guarantee the protection of human rights and freedoms. The constitutional reforms currently underway are aimed at fundamentally transforming the approaches and principles of public administration and governance. In particular, these reforms seek to establish a new model of social relations in New Uzbekistan based on the principle of “Human–Society–State,” replacing the previously dominant paradigm of “State–Society–Human.” This conceptual shift reflects a human-centered approach to governance, placing the dignity, rights, and legitimate interests of individuals at the core of state policy and development strategies. Consequently, these reforms are creating favorable conditions for enhancing democratic institutions, strengthening the rule of law, and ensuring the sustainable development of society and the state [1].

Recent studies confirm that the updated Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the “Uzbekistan–2030” Strategy are systemically interconnected, with the constitutional principles of a “social state,” “human dignity,” and the “rule of law” serving as both a legal basis and a key guarantee for the achievement of sustainable development objectives [7].

Addressing the issue of human rights at the 46th Session of the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council (UNHRC), the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, emphasized the country’s commitment to democratic reforms and the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms. He stated:

“Over the past several years, we have consistently sought membership in the Council with a full understanding of the responsibility that such membership entails. Our democratic reforms are aimed at building a New Uzbekistan, and these transformations have become irreversible. We will continue close cooperation with the members of the Council and all our partners in advancing the United Nations initiative ‘Call to Action for Human Rights.’ Further deepening democratic reforms in Uzbekistan and advancing our priorities within the framework of the Council remain among our key objectives. First and foremost, ensuring fundamental human rights and freedoms occupies a central place in the reform agenda of Uzbekistan. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030 are being implemented in our country on the basis of the principle of ‘leaving no one behind,’ which seeks to guarantee the rights and legitimate interests of every individual. In this regard, particular attention is being paid to the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy, developed with the active participation of experts from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)” [2].

At present, guaranteeing and protecting human rights is regarded as one of the fundamental responsibilities of every democratic state. The legal foundations for the protection of human rights are primarily enshrined in national

constitutions, which define and guarantee the basic rights and freedoms of individuals and citizens. These constitutional provisions serve as the cornerstone of the national legal system and establish the fundamental principles governing the relationship between the state and the individual. Furthermore, constitutional norms are elaborated and implemented through sector-specific legislation and other normative legal acts, ensuring their practical realization in various spheres of social life. Through this legal framework, states create the necessary conditions for the effective protection of human dignity, equality, justice, and the rule of law. Consequently, the constitutional recognition and legal enforcement of human rights play a crucial role in strengthening democratic governance, promoting social stability, and ensuring sustainable development.

Today, many countries recognize human rights as a supreme value and consider their protection to be one of the primary responsibilities of the state. Accordingly, national legislation in the field of human rights is increasingly being harmonized with the universally recognized principles and standards of international law. This process reflects the growing commitment of states to ensuring the effective protection of fundamental rights and freedoms in accordance with international legal obligations and best practices. In this regard, human rights are viewed not only as a legal category but also as a fundamental value that contributes to democratic governance, social justice, public participation, and the overall well-being of society [3].

In recent years, further strengthening the system for the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms in New Uzbekistan has become one of the priority directions of state policy. In this regard, large-scale reforms have been undertaken to reinforce the normative and legal foundations of human rights protection, systematically incorporate international human rights standards into national legislation, and ensure the full implementation of the country's international obligations. Moreover, particular attention is being devoted to expanding cooperation with international organizations in the field of human rights and fostering constructive dialogue with international partners. Such efforts contribute to the enhancement of national human rights institutions, the exchange of best practices, and the improvement of mechanisms for protecting individual rights and freedoms.

At present, the Republic of Uzbekistan is a party to more than 80 international human rights instruments, including six core UN human rights treaties and four optional protocols. By acceding to these international legal instruments, Uzbekistan has undertaken significant obligations to respect, protect, and promote fundamental human rights and freedoms in accordance with internationally recognized standards [4].

Addressing the participants of the Fourth Meeting of the Councils of Judges of the member states of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized the importance of the rule of law, effective governance, and the protection of human rights within the activities of the OTS. He stated:

“Ensuring the rule of law, promoting effective governance, and protecting human rights occupy a special place within the activities of the Organization of Turkic States. Particularly in the current complex international environment, characterized by profound changes in the geopolitical landscape, growing contradictions, and escalating conflicts, it is of critical importance to discuss these issues jointly and to develop effective solutions. Undoubtedly, we place great expectations on the Councils of Judges in ensuring justice and the rule of law,

protecting human rights, and establishing a strong and professional judiciary in our countries. From this perspective, I am confident that the issues included in the agenda of today's meeting will define new directions for the future activities of the Councils" [5].

5.0. Conclusion and Future Recommendations

In conclusion, in the context of globalization, the protection and promotion of human rights have emerged as one of the key factors influencing state development and social stability. The findings of this study demonstrate that the effective protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms plays a crucial role in strengthening the rule of law, enhancing public trust in state institutions, and ensuring national security. The large-scale reforms being implemented in New Uzbekistan are aimed at recognizing human interests and dignity as the highest social values.

In particular, the harmonization of national legislation with international standards, the improvement of citizens' legal awareness and legal culture, and the enhancement of mechanisms for the protection of human rights constitute essential prerequisites for democratic development. Furthermore, these measures contribute to the establishment of a just and inclusive society founded on the principles of equality, justice, and respect for human dignity. Therefore, the consistent continuation of efforts aimed at safeguarding human rights will not only support the country's sustainable development and social cohesion but will also strengthen its international reputation and position within the global community.

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following future recommendations are proposed:

- 1) Further harmonize national legislation with international human rights standards and ensure the timely implementation of treaty-body recommendations and international obligations;
- 2) Strengthen independent national human rights institutions and develop effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms;
- 3) Expand legal-awareness and legal-culture programmes, with particular emphasis on youth, in order to build a sustainable culture of human rights;
- 4) Enhance the digital dimension of human rights protection, including e-justice, e-government services, and personal data protection;
- 5) Deepen cooperation with international and regional organizations and intensify the exchange of best practices in human rights protection; and
- 6) Conduct further empirical and comparative research measuring the impact of human rights guarantees on sustainable-development and national-security indicators.

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The author declares that there are no competing interests.

Consent for Publication

The author declares that he/she consented to the publication of this study.

Authors' Contributions

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Informed Consent

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Declaration of Artificial Intelligence

The author declares that artificial intelligence tools were used only for language editing, proofreading, and formatting assistance. All scholarly content, analysis, interpretations, and conclusions are entirely the author's own.

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