



# THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN PREVENTING CHILD LABOR AND FORCED LABOR IN RENEWING UZBEKISTAN

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## ABSTRACT

*This article analyzes the work of trade unions in the prevention of child labor and forced labor in Uzbekistan, which is updated using periodicals and the Internet.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Trade unions, federations, public organizations, labor protection, child labor, International Labor Organization, labor law, development strategy.*

## INTRODUCTION

On the basis of the principle “From action strategy to development strategy” adopted at the initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy for 2022-2026 was developed to further improve the welfare of the population, ensure human rights and interests, and establish active civil society was released. This strategy is an important document that determines the development of our country.

We all know that today the development of Uzbekistan in the socio-economic and political spheres, the reforms being carried out in all spheres of state and society building will not leave anyone indifferent. Therefore, the huge reforms being carried out in our country, of course, require a radical change in the activities of public organizations, including trade unions. One of the historic events in the life of trade unions was the signing on December 6, 2019 by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan of a new law “On Trade Unions”. The adoption of this law has allowed to bring the activities of trade unions to a new level and expand their powers.

## METHODS

The Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan, as a member of the General Conference of

Trade Unions, acts as an independent and equal social partner of the government in the field of labor protection, ensuring the rights and freedoms of workers. Indeed, as stated in Article 13 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, democracy is based on universal principles, according to which a person, his life, freedom, honor, dignity and other inalienable rights are the highest value. Therefore, the solution of this issue is in the first place in the activities of trade unions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In Uzbekistan, trade unions pay special attention to the prevention of child labor and forced labor, the protection of their legal interests, the full implementation of all provisions of international labor standards, including international labor conventions.

It should be noted that since 2013, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has been conducting research on the situation with forced labor and child labor in our country, in particular the cotton harvest. Significant progress has been made as a result of the practical work of government and public associations, including trade unions, in cooperation with this organization. In particular, the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of May 10, 2018 “On additional measures to eliminate forced labor in the Republic of Uzbekistan” was an important tool in the fight against



forced labor in the cotton harvest. In general, a strong legal mechanism has been created in our country to prevent and prevent forced labor.

At present, the country has three organizational structures on prevention and suppression of child labor and forced labor, the Parliamentary Commission on Guaranteed Labor Rights, the Coordinating Council on Child Labor and Forced Labor in the Republic of Uzbekistan, the International Labor Organization conventions ratified by the Republic of Uzbekistan. It is also commendable that the Republican Interdepartmental Commission for its implementation is functioning.

At the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M.Mirziyoev said: "We have worked hard with the International Labor Organization and the World Bank to eliminate forced labor and child labor. This has been one of our major achievements in reform".

The adoption of a new version of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On labor protection" in 2016 will also serve to increase the prestige and social role of the federation in the eyes of the public. The ratification of the ILO Convention on Freedom of Association and the Right to Organize and the accession of Uzbekistan to the Protocol to the ILO Convention on Forced Labor also played a positive role.

These documents gave the trade unions of Uzbekistan unprecedented rights and powers in the field of labor protection. This allows them to support and assist in the implementation of active reforms and changes in all spheres of life of the state and society.

Nowadays, the role of trade unions in Uzbekistan has risen to the highest level, even compared to the standards of the International Trade Union Confederation. And it can be said that in the new Uzbekistan, a fundamentally new legal mechanism for the protection of socio-economic rights of workers has been created, which indicates that the activities of trade unions have reached a new level. Article 31 of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On labor protection" stipulates that trade unions and other representative bodies of employees represent in the field of labor protection, as well as the rights and legitimate interests of employees.

Currently, more than 33,000 primary organizations are effectively operating in the system of trade unions in the country, as well as more than 6,500 employees and about 360,000 activists.

Currently, trade unions unite more than 5.5 million members and provide practical assistance in ensuring their labor rights and interests.

It is noteworthy that in order to protect the labor of employees, trade unions have studied the activities of about 16,000 enterprises and organizations, and more than 61,000 identified shortcomings have been eliminated.

As a result of the efforts of trade unions, the violated labor rights of about 14,000 employees were restored, and more than 3.6 billion soums were recovered.

In 2019, an employee of the labor protection service examined the activities of 1,080 primary trade union organizations and identified 6,294 deficiencies in compliance with the rules and requirements of labor protection. 740 proposals were submitted to employers to address these shortcomings, and the shortcomings identified in 697 applications were addressed with the intervention of trade unions.

The Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan in cooperation with the Parliamentary Commission on Guaranteed Labor Rights and the Coordinating Council for Child Labor and Forced Labor in the Republic of Uzbekistan held a video conference on "Social partnership - a guarantee of decent work".

It was noted at the event that according to the results of systematic monitoring of child labor and forced labor in the cotton industry with the participation of the International Labor Organization and foreign experts, the world community recognizes the absence of child labor in our country and serious measures against forced labor.

It should be noted that the historic speech of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly became the main historical point of these renewals and became the basis for the complete abolition of forced labor.

At the initiative of the President of the country, the Federation of Trade Unions is carrying out systematic work with the participation of social partners and international organizations, in particular, the



Federation of Trade Unions in cooperation with the International Labor Organization in April-May 2018 324 seminars on prevention and prevention of severe forms of child labor and forced labor were held.

In 2019, with the active participation of the Federation of Trade Unions in honor of June 12 "World Day Against Child Labor" in a total of 130 camps and 253 health centers across the country "Children should work in dreams, not in the fields!" 53,330 children took part in the event.

The event featured video slides on labor protection and children's rights in agriculture, competitions in chess, checkers, table tennis, football and other sports, drawing competitions, meetings with artists and other masters in other fields, as well as master classes were held.

In the development of a renewed Uzbekistan, trade unions should pay special attention to the following issues in the implementation of the huge tasks aimed at ensuring the legitimate socio-economic rights and interests of workers:

- Further improvement of specific mechanisms for the protection of socio-economic and rights and interests of employees;
- Use of effective means of employment, labor protection and safety;
- Ensuring decent wages, further increasing the effectiveness of social protection;
- Systematic implementation of practical work on the eradication of poverty, the perfect guarantee of human rights and freedoms;
- Ensuring gender equality in our country, ensuring that children and forced labor are not allowed;
- Continuous implementation of additional benefits for employees working in hazardous and harmful working conditions;
- The use of effective tools to further expand the participation of trade unions in the legislative process;
- Further systematic development of cooperation of the International Federation of Trade Unions with international organizations.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it should be noted that the participation of trade unions in the country in the field of lawmaking, promotion of employment, labor

protection, protection of socio-economic interests and labor rights of workers, especially youth and women, effective communication with the population. Only if we ensure that great changes will take place in our society and practical results will be achieved in building a new Uzbekistan. It is noteworthy that the trade unions also have important tasks in this regard.

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