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**TEXT OF THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY UZBEKISTAN PRESIDENT ISLAM KARIMOV ON MAY 9 - THE DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND HONOR**

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Honoring the memory of ancestors, continuing their noble deeds, paying distinctive respect and attention to the representatives of the older generation, who have made a worthy contribution to the peace and development of the country remain one of our national values. The Day of Remembrance and Honor, widely celebrated by the initiative of the head of our state, also embodies these magnanimous principles.

On this holiday we remember once again, at the expense of which challenges and difficulties we achieved peaceful and quiet life, well-being and prosperity. We bow before millions of our countrymen, passed away in this thorny road and are more deeply aware of the importance of independence, peace and tranquility prevailing in our country.

Securing a prosperous life of the seniors, strengthening their health, creating the necessary conditions are in the focus of constant attention of our state. Decree of the President Islam Karimov "On rewards to the participants of World War II" dated April 18 this year, is another sign of honoring the veterans. In accordance with this decree, war veterans were handed cash rewards and holiday gifts in a solemn atmosphere.

President of Uzbekistan honored the memory of our compatriots who perished in World War II.

In these days, in all the cities and villages of our country, in every family, everyone, all of our fellow citizens widely celebrate May 9 – the Day of Remembrance and Honor, the 71st anniversary of the Victory over fascism in the Great Patriotic War, Islam Karimov said in an interview with the media. - It gives me a great pleasure to congratulate our veterans who have shown courage and heroism in attaining this great victory, our compatriots, who selflessly worked in the home front, and wish them health and long life.

It is a duty and honor for all of us to pay tribute to those, who in the name of the current peaceful life and a clear sky fell on the battlefield.

Today, being present in this Memory square, which has become a sacred place for our people marking the Victory Day, reached in the bloodiest war in the whole history of the world, which led to innumerable victims, griefs and suffering, it should be emphasized that while many years have passed, there is no person in our country who has forgotten the brutal war and its consequences.

This date, which will remain in history as a memorable day, the fact that among the thousands and thousands of people of different nationalities, who have shown courage and perseverance in the conquest of the victory over fascism, there were many of our fellow citizens, our fathers and grandfathers, many of whom have not returned from the war, 338 of our compatriots were

awarded the title of hero, thousands - were awarded military orders and medals - all of this, of course, fills our hearts with pride.

However, when it comes to the contribution of our people in the struggle against fascism, we are reminded again and again to the immeasurable loss that will always remain an open wound in our hearts.

In this regard, I think it is appropriate to cite the following figures.

Uzbekistan had a population of about 6.5 million people at the beginning of the war, of which 1.5 million participated in the war. If we consider that more than 500 thousand of them were killed on the battlefields, many returned as disabled, and many were missing, it is self-evident how expensive was the cost of the victory for us, the President of our country noted.

Magnanimity, generosity and humanism of any people are tested not only in relation to their loved ones, but also to other people, on whose lot sorrows and suffering have fallen, obviously revealed in an effort to provide them help and care.

Compassion and mercy are the most noble qualities of our people. Our compatriots have taken nearly one million evacuated children, women and old people. They shared with them the last piece of bread and shelter, demonstrated goodness and mercy to them, saying, "You are not an orphan", which was a high expression of the best human qualities of generosity and nobility of our people.

No doubt, a person, the people are alive and eternal thanks to the historical memory, Islam Karimov said. To honor the memory of fallen heroes, give them a tribute are inherent quality of our people. We are indebted to the people, who fell on the battlefield in the name of Motherland, for the sake of bright days of future generations, especially in front of the veterans who are still alive, who are worthy of all respect and reverence.

In its foundation, history is remembrance, veneration of the glorious deeds of ancestors, their heroism, the ability to draw the right conclusions from the past.

Given all this, 17 years ago, in our country we announced May 9 as a Day of Remembrance and Honor, built Memory squares in          capital Tashkent, the Republic of Karakalpakstan, regions and districts, mounted in these squares monuments of Grieving Mother. In other words, this is a bright reflection of the two noble inextricably linked concepts like remembrance and reverence, complementing each other.

Over time, life itself has confirmed how right our decision was. It has become a good tradition of our people to visit these places, providing respect for memory of the fallen. These areas become truly sacred places of worship, have enriched our spiritual life its deepest meaning and content, the head of our state said.

Our people, experiencing all the hardships and sufferings of the most terrible and cruel war in the human history, always lived with one thought: let this evil never happen again. Our compatriots are always asking the God for only one thing: we need peace and tranquility.

This desire is deeply rooted in the minds of our people, who have seen a lot in this life, and each of us is clearly aware of the nature, importance and value of peace and tranquility.

Meanwhile, contradictions and confrontations more and more exacerbate in the world, bloody clashes in the near and far abroad are an extremely serious threat and a danger to the peace and stability, which disturbs our people.

In neighboring Afghanistan there has been an unstable situation for over 35 years. The growing threats such as extremism, terrorism is a concern of our fellow citizens.

Such a complex and dangerous situation, difficult times, of course, require all of us to be vigilant and careful, said the President of our country. The motto "Take care of your home!" today is relevant more than ever. To avoid still encountered indifference and carelessness, more importantly, to live with a sense of belonging to the events taking place around is our duty.

Such a difficult time requires from our state and our society to strengthen security, prevent any aggression against our country, to take necessary measures to ensure the integrity of our borders, to protect the peaceful life of our people.

In this regard, we believe the best decision in the current difficult situation are further enhancing the capacity of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Uzbekistan and recent legislative endorsement of the non-aligned policy of Uzbekistan to any military blocs, disallowance of placement military bases of other countries on the territory of our country, sending our troops outside of the country, Islam Karimov said.

Time is nearing towards a wide and solemn celebration of the 25th anniversary of independence of our country.

Uzbekistan in this historically short period of time, despite the challenges and hardships, has reached high growth rates, has achieved enormous successes and milestones that are gaining recognition worldwide and are admired by many, and it pleases us all, awakens in our hearts a sense of pride.

The decisive factor in increasing Uzbekistan's authority in the international arena are impressive results, selfless work of our brave and persistent people, their rising political and social activity, changing attitude towards life.

Modern houses on standard designs, being built in rural areas, further enhance the quality of life of our people. As a result of these measures and actions, villages are developed and modernized, modern information technologies gain a firm place in the daily lives of our people. This creative work will be continued consistently.

Once again, I appeal to our younger generation, my children: always be motivated, dare, tomorrow, the future is for you! Who will come to replace us tomorrow? This will be our sons and daughters, thinking in a new way, who have mastered contemporary knowledge and professions, capable to take responsibility for tomorrow, to show their potential and opportunities, Islam Karimov said.

Long-term goals and objectives, set by us today, including a double increase of our countrys GDP by 2030, reinforces our confidence in the future. And, of course, we in no way give in to most developed countries, the nations, living freely and safely in prosperity and improving the quality of life of the people.

Taking this opportunity, I once again sincerely congratulate our esteemed veterans, all of our

people on this remarkable holiday and wish you all health, happiness and prosperity to your homes. Let there always be peace and tranquility, pure heaven in our country, let the Almighty protects our people from all troubles and misfortunes, the President of our country said.

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The Monument of "the Grieving Mother" was filled with flowers this day. Representatives of ministries and agencies, public organizations laid wreaths to the monument.

The Memory square till the evening was filled with people, who came to pay tribute to compatriots who sacrificed their lives for peace and freedom of the motherland, the bright future of the descendants.

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Kaynak/Source: