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**UZBEKISTAN, KAZAKHSTAN TO CREATE WORKGROUP FOR SAVING ARAL SEA**

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By Fikret Dolukhanov

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan will create a joint workgroup for saving the Aral Sea, Kazakh Ambassador in Uzbekistan Yerik Utembayev said during his visit to Karakalpakstan (Uzbekistan), according to the Uzbek media.

We have reached an agreement on joint actions for saving the Aral Sea. Karakalpakstan has a large experience in the desertization control, as well as in standing of various plants, especially of haloxylon. A joint activity of Uzbek and Kazakh specialists will help finding the most efficient methods, Utembayev noted.

He said that the Kazakh presidents initiative on further strengthening of the role of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea is very important, especially during the Kazakhstans membership year in the UN Security Council.

Currently, Kazakhstan seriously plans to strengthen its coordination with the Central Asian states for saving the Aral Sea, he added.

Utembayev also noted that Uzbekistan pays special attention to saving of the Aral Sea.

Particularly, the Uzbek president noted in his speech at the UN General Assembly that prevention of consequences of the seas drying requires active consolidation of international efforts, including the activity in the framework of the UN Development Program.