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Samarkand's Silk Road Legacy Reimagined at the  
**The First Joint ITMF & IAF  
Convention Concluded in Uzbekistan**

### Samarkand's Silk Road Legacy Reimagined at the The First Joint ITMF & IAF Convention Concluded in Uzbekistan

On September 8-10, 2024, Samarkand hosted the first joint conference of two of the world's largest textile associations – the ITMF Annual Conference and the IAF World Fashion Convention – marking the most significant event of the year in the global textile industry. For the first time in ITMF's 120-year history, Central Asia was chosen as the venue.

The event attracted over 500 delegates from around the world, including leading industry players from Europe and Asia.

During the official business program from September 8-10, participants discussed the most topical issues facing the textile industry: value creation in the supply chain, the impact of artificial intelligence, production digitization, international regulations, sustainable development, recycling and supply chain optimization, the role of artificial fibers and fabrics, and other topics – a total of 25 business events, including closed meetings.

A dedicated session focused on the prospects for Uzbekistan's textile industry. Thanks to systematic reforms, including the end of the state monopoly on cotton farming, the creation of cotton clusters, the ban on forced and child labour, and other changes, the country successfully achieved the lifting of the long-standing boycott of Uzbek cotton. Today, Uzbekistan is a member of international organizations like Better Cotton and Better Work, with the quality of Uzbek cotton and its compliance with global production standards confirmed by numerous certifications. The ITMF Annual Conference and IAF World Fashion Convention served as a unique platform to showcase the country's successes and foster international partnerships.

"We highly value and support all mutually beneficial initiatives from our foreign partners. In particular, we are ready to provide full assistance in implementing the necessary standards for international brands to enter Uzbekistan. We are also prepared to create favorable conditions for prestigious international organizations to regularly

hold conferences, exhibitions, and fashion shows in our country, particularly in cities like Bukhara, Khiva, Shakhrisabz, Margilan, Kokand, Namangan, and Andijan, which offer high tourism and industrial potential," said the **President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev** in his address to conference participants.

"We are here in Samarkand not only to see the wonderful Silk Road City of Samarkand. We are also here to learn a lot about Uzbekistan's enormous progress in the last 8 years since the start of the reform policy initiated by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. It will be most interesting to learn how the country's cotton, textile and apparel industry has changed during this period and what can be expected from it in the future.," said **ITMF President Dr. K.V. Srinivasan** in his welcome speech.

Conference attendees had the opportunity to visit cotton clusters in Samarkand ahead of the harvest season and explore various textile productions in Uzbekistan. The event culminated in the announcement of the winners and the awards ceremony for the ITMF Awards and ITMF Start-up Award, recognizing the most outstanding achievements and innovations in the industry for 2024.

"Uzbekistan competed with Egypt, Turkey, Indonesia, and the United States to host this large-scale forum. The selection of our country highlights Uzbekistan's growing role in the global textile supply chain. In just two years, we've made tremendous progress, significantly expanding our circle of international partners. In 2023, the country's textile industry exported around \$3.5 billion worth of products to more than 75 countries, and by 2026, we plan to increase exports to \$6.5 billion. Strengthening ties with strong international partners plays a key role in achieving this goal," noted

**Acting Chairman of the Uztexileprom Association Mirmukhsin Sultanov.**