

CONCEPT NOTE
International Scientific and Practical Conference
“Turkmenistan and International Law:
The Experience of Neutrality and Cooperation”
(Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, 12 May 2026)

1. Background

At the current stage of transformation in international relations, the importance of international law as a universal instrument for maintaining peace, security, and sustainable development is growing. Amid growing turbulence in global politics, strengthening the principle of the rule of law in international relations is becoming particularly important.

Turkmenistan, possessing the internationally recognized status of permanent neutrality, consistently advocates for strengthening the legal foundations of interstate interaction, advancing preventive diplomacy, and fostering a culture of trust. The country’s experience demonstrates that neutrality can serve as an effective legal mechanism for ensuring stability, facilitating mediation and mutually beneficial cooperation.

The initiative to proclaim 2028 as the Year of International Law, announced by the President of Turkmenistan during the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, is aimed at restoring respect for international legal norms, strengthening multilateralism and shaping a sustainable global security architecture.

In order to implement the 2026 Action Plan for the preparation of this initiative, it is proposed to convene the International Scientific and Practical Conference entitled “Turkmenistan and International Law: The Experience of Neutrality and Cooperation.”

2. Purpose of the Conference

To establish an international expert platform for dialogue on the role of international law in ensuring peace and sustainable development, as well as to present Turkmenistan's contribution – primarily its policy of permanent neutrality - to the development of legal mechanisms for cooperation, and conflict prevention.

3. Objectives

The conference aims to:

- analyze the current state of international law and the challenges related to its effective application;
- examine the legal nature and practical significance of Turkmenistan's policy of permanent neutrality;
- discuss the role of international law in building trust and preventing conflicts;
- facilitate the exchange of international experience in the legal regulation of security, sustainable development and humanitarian cooperation;
- develop recommendations in preparation for 2028 - the Year of International Law;
- promote academic and educational cooperation in the field of international law;
- disseminate knowledge on international law.

4. Key Thematic Areas

1. International Law in the Context of Global Transformation

- Crisis of multilateralism and ways to overcome it;
- Role of the United Nations in maintaining the international legal order;
- Supremacy of international law in international relations.

2. Permanent Neutrality as a Legal Institution

- International legal status of Turkmenistan's neutrality;
- Neutrality as an instrument of preventive diplomacy;
- Mediation and the peacebuilding potential of neutral States.

3. Legal Foundations of Regional Security and Cooperation

- Legal mechanisms for confidence-building in Central Asia;
- Role of regional organizations in the development of international law;
- Transboundary resources and sustainable development;
- Environmental issues in international law.

4. The Humanitarian Dimension of International Law

- Humanitarian cooperation in the field of human rights;
- Cultural diplomacy and inter-civilizational dialogue;
- International law in the digital era;
- Youth initiatives aimed at promoting peace and security.

5. Format

The conference is proposed to include:

- Plenary session;
- Thematic sessions;
- Presentations of scientific research and analytical reports.

6. Participants

The conference will bring together representatives of the state authorities of Turkmenistan, delegations of foreign States, representatives of the United Nations system and other international organizations, leading scholars and experts in the field of international law, members of the diplomatic corps, as well as faculty, students and graduate students of specialized higher education institutions, analytical centers and research institutes.

7. Expected Outcomes

The conference is expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Formation of an international expert consensus on strengthening international law;
- Development of practical recommendations for preparation for 2028 - the Year of International Law;
- Expansion of academic cooperation and knowledge exchange;
- Promotion of concept of neutrality as an instrument of sustainable peace;
- Preparation and publication of the conference proceedings.

8. Organizational Arrangements

The International Scientific and Practical Conference will be held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, in May 2026.

The event is envisaged to be organized with the participation of relevant ministries and agencies of Turkmenistan, academic and educational institutions, as well as international partners, including the United Nations system.

The conference will be organized on an inter-agency basis, with the coordinating role assigned to the authorized state bodies of Turkmenistan. A high organizational standard will be ensured, including protocol arrangements, interpretation services, media coverage and the publication of final materials.

Following the conference, it is planned to adopt the Ashgabat Outcome Document, which will be serve as Turkmenistan's contribution to preparations for 2028 - the Year of International Law.

9. Conclusion

The holding of the International Scientific and Practical Conference “Turkmenistan and International Law: The Experience of Neutrality and Cooperation” will constitute an important step in the implementation of Turkmenistan's initiative to proclaim 2028 as the Year of International Law, as well as significant contribution to strengthening the authority of international law as the foundation of a just, stable and sustainable world order.

The conference is intended to reaffirm the central role of international law as a universal framework for regulating interstate relations, as well as the importance of the principles of permanent neutrality, preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes as its integral instruments in maintaining international peace, trust and stability.

Its outcomes will contribute to the advancement of a global dialogue on the future of international law, strengthening respect for international legal norms, and reinforcing multilateral legal mechanisms for ensuring peace, trust and sustainable development.