

## **Islam Karimov**



***Passion or Profession:*** President

***Period:*** 1938–

An economist by profession, Karimov entered politics in 1964, when he joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He later became the Uzbek Republic's finance minister and first secretary of the Communist Party. When the country declared its independence in 1991, Karimov was its leader. He has maintained that role through two referendums and an election, in which he ran unopposed. His government is accused of using repressive tactics to maintain power.