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# THE HISTORICAL ROLE OF HALIMA MUKHITDINOVA IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF UZBEKISTAN'S JUDICIAL AND LEGAL SYSTEM

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**Abstract**

This article examines Halima Qodirovna Mukhitdinova's place in the history of Uzbekistan's judicial and legal system. Rather than merely listing her official positions, it considers her career across public administration, the justice sector, and the leadership of the Supreme Court of the Uzbek SSR. The analysis compares publicly available biographical information from the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan and the Namangan Regional Council with media coverage of a book devoted to prominent Uzbek women jurists. It argues that Mukhitdinova's long service in the Supreme Court leadership makes her an important figure in the history of women in the legal profession. At the same time, the article distinguishes documented biographical facts from later commemorative interpretations and acknowledges the limits of the currently accessible sources.

**Keywords**

Halima Mukhitdinova, judicial system, Supreme Court of Uzbekistan, women jurists, history of justice, judicial leadership, historical memory.

## Introduction

The history of Uzbekistan's judicial and legal system cannot be understood through laws, institutions, and changes in official positions alone. It also involves the people who carried responsibility within those institutions and shaped their everyday work. Halima Qodirovna Mukhitdinova is one such figure, particularly because of her long connection with the leadership of the Supreme Court of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. However, understanding her historical importance requires more than asking which positions she held. It also requires examining how her experience in public administration and the justice sector related to her later judicial leadership, the historical circumstances in which she worked, and the standards by which her legacy can be assessed today.

The aim of this article is to analyse Mukhitdinova's career using accessible sources, explain her place in judicial history, and distinguish verifiable facts from later interpretations. Historical writing does not need exaggerated praise to honour an important figure. Clear evidence, careful comparison, and an honest account of limitations make an article more credible.

## Review of the Literature

A significant part of the publicly available information about Mukhitdinova appears in materials published by judicial institutions and in reports about commemorative events. The Supreme Court of Uzbekistan published an article titled "Her Name Is Halima, Her Life a Symbol of Resilience," which outlines her biography, leadership roles, and work in the judicial system. The article refers to documents from her personal file, including a decree dated 1 December 1960, No. 791, and an order dated 13 December 1960, No. 228 [1]. These references help establish the administrative context and timing of her appointment to the Supreme Court leadership.

A 2022 report on the presentation of the book "Three Famous Uzbek Women," published on the initiative of the Supreme Council of Judges, states that the book discusses Khadicha Sulaymonova, Mamlakat Vosiqova, and Halima Mukhitdinova. According to the report, it draws on archival documents, historical facts, and recollections of contemporaries [2]. Since the full text of the book was not independently available for verification while this article was prepared, claims about its specific



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chapters or page numbers are not presented as direct evidence. Being transparent about this limitation is part of responsible source use.

An article published by Uzbekistan's National News Agency in 2025, titled "Three Bright Stars of Justice," presents Mukhitdinova's career through a broader historical narrative [3]. It recounts an episode involving pressure on the judicial system in the 1970s and portrays Mukhitdinova as defending the dignity of the courts. This is a useful journalistic source for understanding how her legacy is remembered, but the dramatic episode should not be treated as a verbatim transcript of an official proceeding unless corroborating documents are available.

Information published by the Namangan Regional Council states that Mukhitdinova served as a deputy chair of the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR from 1944 to 1947, as a deputy Minister of Justice from 1949 to 1952, and as Chair of the Supreme Court from 1972 to 1982 [4]. The Supreme Court's article states that she spent a total of 22 years in the court's leadership: 12 years as deputy chair and 10 years as chair [1]. These accounts broadly complement one another, placing her chairmanship within a longer period of service in the court's senior leadership.

**Research Methodology**

This article uses comparative source analysis, historical contextualisation, and cautious source criticism. Official institutional publications are used to establish biographical details, appointment dates, and information about public recognition. Media reports are used to examine how Mukhitdinova's career has been interpreted and remembered in later years. Official biographies are useful for establishing basic facts, but they do not by themselves reveal the substance of judicial decisions or the degree of judicial independence during a particular period. Therefore, the article does not make unsupported claims that Mukhitdinova personally introduced specific reforms or authored particular landmark judgments.

**Main Analysis**

Halima Mukhitdinova was born on 1 January 1916 in the village of Birlashgan, in Uychi district of the Namangan region. The Supreme Court's biographical article attributes this detail to an autobiography she wrote by hand in 1953 [1]. This helps place her later career in a specific social and historical setting. At the same time, where reliable public sources provide limited information about her early education and personal life, those gaps should not be filled with speculation.

Mukhitdinova's career extended beyond the courts. Available sources record her work in public administration, party structures, and the justice sector. In particular, the Namangan Regional Council lists her as a deputy chair of the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR from 1944 to 1947 and as a deputy Minister of Justice from 1949 to 1952 [4]. These positions involved different responsibilities, but all required experience with administration, personnel, and state institutions. Her later move into the Supreme Court's leadership can therefore be understood in the context of a broader career in public service rather than as an isolated appointment.

One significant set of records concerns her appointment in 1960. According to the Supreme Court's published account, a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek SSR dated 1 December 1960, No. 791, assigned Mukhitdinova the duties of deputy chair of the Supreme Court until the next session. An order dated 13 December 1960, No. 228, then recorded her admission to the court's staff as deputy chair, effective from 6 December [1]. The value of these references is that they connect her appointment to identifiable administrative acts rather than relying solely on later recollections.

The Supreme Court reports that Mukhitdinova served in its leadership for 22 years: 12 years as deputy chair and 10 years as chair [1]. The Namangan Regional Council identifies her chairmanship as spanning 1972–1982 [4]. Her lengthy service demonstrates continuity and experience in the institution's senior leadership. However, it must be considered within the political and legal structure of the time. Mukhitdinova worked when Uzbekistan was a Soviet republic within the USSR, and the courts operated within that broader system. It would be misleading to apply contemporary standards of


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judicial independence to that period without explanation. It would be equally one-sided to use the historical context to avoid asking questions about the system's constraints and responsibilities.

Her career is also relevant to the history of women in the legal profession. Reaching the highest leadership level of the Supreme Court in a period when senior state and legal posts were predominantly held by men is an important part of her professional legacy. Yet her significance should not be reduced to the fact that she was a woman. Her experience across several institutions, her sustained judicial leadership, and her place in the development of the legal profession should be considered together. Personal qualities such as courage and integrity are often associated with her in commemorative writing, but such descriptions should be distinguished from claims that can be independently verified through contemporary records.

The 2025 article published by Uzbekistan's National News Agency describes pressure on the judicial system during the 1970s and an episode in which Mukhitdinova is portrayed as defending the honour of the courts [3]. The story helps explain why later accounts connect her name with resilience and professional dignity. However, the published article alone does not establish whether the dialogue it recounts was recorded in an official transcript or preserved in a contemporary document. It is therefore best treated as a later journalistic account, not as a verbatim historical record. Careful source criticism does not diminish a person's contribution; it clarifies which parts of the story are documented and which are interpretations.

The renewed public interest in Mukhitdinova's life is also part of her legacy. In 2022, the book "Three Famous Uzbek Women" was presented, focusing on three Uzbek women jurists and their professional contributions [2]. The 2025 news-agency article similarly brought their careers to a wider audience through the themes of justice and professional dedication [3]. Such publications remind readers that legal history is not only the history of statutes and institutions, but also the history of the people who worked within them.

Nevertheless, historical memory should involve more than anniversary events and memorials. A deeper assessment of Mukhitdinova's contribution would require systematic study of judicial decisions, court administration, personnel policy, and the legal environment during her leadership. These materials are not all readily available in the public sources consulted for this article. It would therefore be inappropriate to claim, without evidence, that she personally initiated particular judicial reforms or changed specific rulings. The strongest conclusion supported by the accessible sources is that she served for many years in the senior leadership of the Supreme Court of the Uzbek SSR and was one of the women jurists who reached a high level of judicial responsibility.

Her service was also formally recognised by the state. The Namangan Regional Council reports that she received the Shuhrat Medal in 1994 and the Mehnat Shuhrati Order in 2000 [4]. These awards indicate official recognition of her work, although a list of honours cannot, by itself, explain the full historical significance of a person's career. Mukhitdinova's experience is better understood as one example of women taking on senior responsibilities in public administration and the justice sector in Uzbekistan's twentieth-century history.

**Conclusion**

Halima Qodirovna Mukhitdinova's place in the history of Uzbekistan's judicial and legal system is primarily associated with her experience in public administration and justice, and with her 22 years in the leadership of the Supreme Court of the Uzbek SSR. The Supreme Court's published account connects her appointment in 1960 to specific decrees and orders, while the Namangan Regional Council provides additional information about her period as chair and the state awards she received [1; 4].

A balanced assessment of her legacy should take two considerations into account. First, she reached a senior judicial leadership position, served for a long period, and occupies an important place in the history of women jurists in Uzbekistan. Second, her career unfolded within the Soviet political and legal system, and the available public sources do not provide a complete picture of her day-to-day judicial practice. For that reason, her history is best presented through documented facts and careful analysis rather than ceremonial praise alone.


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Further research into Mukhitdinova's personal file, court records, and the recollections of colleagues could provide a clearer picture of her practical work as a judicial leader. Based on the sources currently available, her historical importance lies in her sustained leadership within the Supreme Court and in the example her career offers for studying the role of Uzbek women in the legal profession.

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