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THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF LAWS ON RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: This thesis provides information about the laws and reforms related to religious tolerance in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Key words: Tolerance, spirituality, assembly, session, resolution.

It is known from the glorious history of our country that since ancient times, representatives of different nationalities and religions have lived in peace and harmony in this country. It is on the basis of this peace and tolerance that two great renaissances were formed. Today, the new Uzbekistan aims to build the Third Renaissance. Taking into account these factors, peace, interethnic harmony, tolerance and mutual solidarity are enshrined in the policy of the New Uzbekistan by law. In this regard, the adoption of the Law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations", adopted in a new edition on July 6, 2021, strengthening Article 35 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Freedom of Conscience", indicates that reforms in this direction are being further improved.[1]

"It is worth noting that the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan meet the requirements of international legal instruments on ensuring freedom of conscience and determine the principles and procedures for the implementation of these freedoms. Based on this legal foundation, state and religion relations in our republic are conducted on the basis of the following principles:

-Respect the religious feelings of believers;

-Recognizing religious beliefs as a private matter of citizens or their associations;

-Equally guarantee the rights of citizens with religious beliefs and those who do not practice them, and prevent their persecution;

- Seeking ways to communicate with various religious associations in order to use their potential in the work of spiritual revival and the establishment of universal moral values;

- Preventing the use of religion for destructive purposes.

The organizational structure that connects the state and religious organizations in coordinating work in this area is the Committee for Religious Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Committee for Religious Affairs has been promoting the peaceful and harmonious functioning of

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various religious organizations in our republic and the implementation of their rights and obligations established by regulatory documents.

Today, 2,356 religious organizations belonging to 16 religious denominations operate in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Of these, 2,159 are Islamic and 197 are non-Islamic religious organizations.

The work of the Committee on Religious Affairs aimed at strengthening tolerance in society is based on two main principles: non-interference in the internal affairs of religious organizations and the establishment of mutually beneficial cooperation with them.[2]

This information shows that reforms in the religious sphere in our country are being carried out on the basis of the principles of religious tolerance, interethnic harmony, mutual understanding and maintaining a healthy social environment. "In our country, the ideas of religious tolerance and interethnic harmony are included in the main ideas of the national development strategy, and the work carried out in this area can be divided into the following stages.

The first stage was the work carried out during the years of Independence, during which hundreds of mosques, churches, synagogues and houses of worship were built in our republic and the existing ones were renovated. Among them are the “Hazrati Imam” complex in Tashkent, mosques in regional centers, Russian Orthodox churches in Tashkent, as well as the Buddhist temple, the Armenian Apostolic Church in Samarkand, the “Sultan Weiss Baba” and “Muhammad Norimjani” shrines in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, the “Panteylemon” church, and others. In our country, along with the statues of Amir Temur, Mirzo Ulugbek, Alisher Navoi, Berdak, Ajinyaz, the statues of Ganjavi, Rustaveli, Pushkin, Shevchenko also grace our neighborhoods and streets. All of this is a clear manifestation of interfaith tolerance and interethnic harmony.

At the second stage, within the framework of the Strategy of Actions on Five Priority Areas of Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017–2021, many measures were implemented in the field of ensuring religious tolerance. In particular, the UN General Assembly adopted a special resolution entitled “Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance” at its plenary session on December 12, 2018. The draft document developed by Uzbekistan was unanimously supported by all UN member states. It is a matter of pride for all of us that the initiative to adopt this resolution was put forward by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh. Mirziyoyev, at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly in September 2017.

It is a historical fact that the draft document developed by Uzbekistan was unanimously supported by the UN member states. The main goal of this resolution is to provide access to education for all, eliminate illiteracy and ignorance. The document also calls for “establishing tolerance and mutual respect, ensuring religious freedom, protecting the rights of believers and preventing their discrimination.” The resolution was supported by the UN member states and was adopted with the co-authorship of more than 50 countries. It is gratifying that the authors include Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan,

[2] Joniev M., Shamirzayev N. Healthy faith is the key to stability. IMAM TERMIZI INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH CENTER - Termez: "Ilm-21" publishing house, 2024. pp. 5-6.

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Lebanon, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Azerbaijan, Algeria, Bahrain, Belarus, Ghana, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, the Philippines, Japan and other countries.

Third stage: The fifth priority area in the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy is called "Ensuring spiritual development and bringing the sector to a new level," and its 74th goal is aimed at strengthening an atmosphere of interethnic harmony and interreligious tolerance in society. Within the framework of this goal, the following work is planned to be developed:

- further improve the system of state support for national cultural centers;

- ensuring the consistent implementation of the concept of state policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the field of interethnic relations;

-creating additional favorable conditions for young people of different nationalities, promoting an understanding of civic duty, patriotism, and a culture of interethnic interaction based on tolerance;

- taking measures to provide additional state support to media outlets operating in foreign languages and covering state policy in the field of interethnic relations;

- improving the activities of friendship societies in order to develop friendly relations with foreign countries."[3]

Also, in order to encourage employees who have been working in this field for many years and to reward active citizens who have been contributing to this direction in partner organizations, the "Religious Tolerance" badge was established on September 25, 2023.[4]

In order to ensure the implementation of these adopted laws and resolutions and further increase their effectiveness, on March 21, 2025, the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to effectively organize the activities of the Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Interethnic Relations and Issues of Compatriots Abroad"[5] was approved. There is much more information like this, in short, Uzbekistan is a state that is extremely progressive and proactive in its domestic policy on the issue of religious tolerance and can serve as an example to neighboring countries and even in the international arena.

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[4] https://lex.uz 495-number 25.09.2023

[5] htpps://lex.uz PF-5876-number 15.11.2019

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