



RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 26 th September 2024 Accepted: 24 th October 2024	The article presents observations on the role and social and legal significance of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan in regulating religious tolerance and sincere fraternal relations in our country, ensuring interethnic harmony.
Keywords: Religious tolerance, interethnic harmony, security, democracy, culture, nation, people, tolerance, society	

Peace, harmony, interethnic tolerance and tolerance between different religions, friendly relations are a solid foundation for the development of any society. Religious tolerance is an important condition for strengthening peace and stability, building a free and prosperous homeland.

The process of religious tolerance does not arise by itself, by chance, but is a product of a fair policy of the state, which is moving towards building a democratic society. The state is necessary not only in the economic, social and political spheres, but also in ensuring friendly relations and tolerance between different nationalities and religions.

Today, for representatives of more than 130 nationalities and ethnic groups living in our country, the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan serves as a guarantee of strengthening interethnic harmony, ensuring stability and development.

In the process of analyzing this article, the methods of logic, historicity, consistency and objectivity of scientific knowledge were widely used. The basis for further strengthening interethnic harmony and religious tolerance was objectively analyzed. The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Declaration «On the Principles of Tolerance» were taken as the main methodological source.

The term tolerance was introduced into scientific circulation by P. Madevar in 1953. Tolerance is the observance of the principle of ensuring a balance of rational norms and compromise in the process of free activity of a person in any situation. Its main components are: democracy, solidarity, mutual respect, humanity, patriotism, etc. The place of this principle in the social environment is influenced by such factors as morality, traditions, public opinion, lifestyle, religion, methods of production, and the intellectual and intellectual level of society. For a deeper analysis of the principle of tolerance, it can be divided into components, namely: individual tolerance, tolerance in education, socio-political tolerance, religious tolerance, national tolerance, etc. At this point, it is appropriate to

call this principle infinite, recognizing that its main - mind, heart, and its product - determines the perfection of the individual, and its criterion - the manifestation of the individual's patience. The principle of tolerance, together with the principles of goodness, justice, beauty, and humanity, serves for peace and tranquility in the world. The UN declared 1995 the year of tolerance - tolerance, patience, and on November 16 of the same year, the «Declaration of Principles of Tolerance» was signed at the UNESCO General Conference. This Declaration is strictly observed in 185 countries of the world, including Uzbekistan. This document comprehensively explains the meaning of the concept of tolerance:

Tolerance means respecting, accepting and understanding the rich diversity of cultures, ways of expressing oneself and the individuality of a person in our world. It is created by knowledge, sincerity, open communication, as well as free thought, conscience, and faith;

Tolerance is not only a moral duty, but also a political and legal necessity;

Tolerance is a prerequisite for achieving peace and leads from the culture of warlessness to the culture of peace;

Tolerance is, first of all, an active attitude formed on the basis of recognition of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Tolerance should be demonstrated by individuals and groups. Everyone is free to practice their beliefs, and everyone must be recognized by others that they have this right. One person's views cannot be forced on others. It is the duty of everyone to establish the ideals of tolerance in society. Because tolerance is a necessary condition for peace and socio-economic development. The Declaration also attaches special importance to the education of tolerance (Article 4), which clearly indicates the role and tasks of educational institutions. The culture of tolerance among the Uzbek people means respecting, accepting and correctly understanding various rich cultures, diverse ways of



expressing oneself and demonstrating one's individuality. It is created by knowledge, sincerity, open communication, as well as free thought, conscience and faith. This is not only a spiritual duty, but also a political and legal necessity. Tolerance is what makes it possible to achieve peace and leads from the culture of war to the culture of peace. The fact that representatives of 136 nationalities and ethnic groups live on the territory of Uzbekistan, schools in 7 languages, and more than 130 national cultural centers operate are evidence of the special attention paid to this principle in our republic.

The Constitution states that "all citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan shall have the same rights and freedoms and shall be equal before the law, regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, religion, social origin, beliefs, personal and social status" (Article 18). It is emphasized that "the Republic of Uzbekistan shall ensure respect for the languages, customs and traditions of all nations and peoples residing on its territory, and shall create conditions for their development."

The number of definitions of the concept of "tolerance" is constantly updated. The principle of tolerance is defined in Article 1 of the Declaration as follows: "Tolerance is not concession, discrimination or indulgence. Tolerance is, first of all, an active attitude arising from the recognition of universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. Tolerance should be exercised by individuals, groups and states.

Tolerance means respecting, accepting and understanding the rich diversity of cultures, ways of expressing oneself and expressing one's individuality in our world. It is created by knowledge, sincerity, dialogue and free thought, conscience and faith. Tolerance is unity in diversity..."

The word «tolerant» in the «Declaration of Principles on Tolerance» adopted by UNESCO on November 16, 1995, became firmly established in our language after it was translated into Uzbek as «tolerance». Along with tolerance, the word religious tolerance is also widely used. Religious tolerance is the coexistence of representatives of different religions in one place, regardless of ideological differences in their beliefs, in peaceful, harmonious, cooperative and friendly relations. Religious tolerance also means that people of different faiths live together in harmony for the sake of noble ideas and intentions, serving the development of human society. Currently, this idea implies the cooperation of not only believers, but also all members of society in the cause of goodness.

The Holy Quran clearly states that belief and adherence to a religion are a personal matter for people and that this is a matter for each person's conscience.

In general, hundreds of verses in more than 50 surahs of the Holy Quran call on Muslims to be peaceful and tolerant towards representatives of other religions. In particular, Surah Mumtahana, verse 8, states: «Allah does not forbid you from doing good to those who have not fought you on account of your religion and have not driven you out of your homes, and from being just to them. Indeed, Allah loves those who are just.»

The ideology of independence is that in the policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, special attention is paid to the idea of interethnic equality and harmony. Our dictionary, "Preface," states that our fundamental law is being adopted "in order to ensure a decent life for citizens of the republic" and "to ensure peace and national harmony among citizens." Article 8 states: "The people of Uzbekistan, regardless of their nationality, are citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan." In addition, President Sh. Mirziyoyev's Address to the Oliy Majlis of December 28, 2018, states in this regard: "Uzbekistan will always be faithful to its traditions in the field of interethnic harmony and religious tolerance and will never deviate from this path. In our country, primary attention is paid to strengthening the atmosphere of mutual respect, friendship and harmony between representatives of different nationalities and religious confessions." So, although they are considered synonymous from a linguistic point of view, since the adoption of the Constitution, the words «people» and «nation» have ceased to be synonymous in the legal terminology of Uzbek political science. Because in the Constitution, «people» means the entire population of the country, and «nation» means one of the 136 nationalities living here. All of them are children of this country, our compatriots, citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan. No citizen is to blame for the migration processes. The law «On the State Language», adopted on October 21, 1989, has practically paved the way for the development of other languages in our republic. Currently, there are general education schools in 7 languages - Uzbek, Karakalpak, Russian, Tajik, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Turkmen. In fact, despite certain economic difficulties, textbooks and manuals for these schools are prepared and published in our country. In schools, the mother tongue, Russian and one foreign language (three in total), in Russian schools the mother tongue, state language and one foreign language (three in total), in Karakalpak, Tajik, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Turkmen schools the mother tongue, state language, Russian and one foreign language (four in total). Learning a language practically develops a person's



consciousness and thinking, expands his or her ability to receive information, and develops and forms comparative thinking skills. In our country, there are press publications in Uzbek, Karakalpak, Russian, Tajik, Kazakh and English. During the years of independence, the opportunities for representatives of practically every nation and ethnic group to create art in their own language have also expanded. For example, during the last thirty to forty years of the Soviet era, only one book was published in the Tajik language in Tashkent. However, in the current period, more than 100 collections of Uzbek Tajik poets have been published in Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Termez and other cities. Most of them contain poems about the Motherland. In all of them, when we say "Motherland", we describe our beloved Uzbekistan, its valleys and oases, cities and villages, deserts and mountains, fields and gardens. Many prose works by Tajik writers are also being published.

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to further improve interethnic relations and friendly relations with foreign countries" was adopted. According to it, the Committee on Interethnic Relations and Friendly Relations with Foreign Countries under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan was established on the basis of the Republican International Cultural Center. The activities of the Republican International Cultural Center, 138 national cultural centers, as well as the Council of Societies for Friendship and Cultural-Enlightenment Relations with Foreign Countries of Uzbekistan, and 34 friendship societies were combined. Thus, this committee acquired the status of a governing body ensuring the implementation of a single state policy aimed at strengthening interethnic relations and friendly relations with foreign countries. The development of the country today directly depends on the efforts of more than 36 million people. Therefore, representatives of all nationalities in Uzbekistan are our compatriots, our kindred spirits. Therefore, regardless of our nationality, we are all equally responsible for the fate of this Motherland. Because, as the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov put it in a special slogan: "This dear Motherland belongs to all of us!"

We will continue on this path. Because the next brick must be laid on top of the previous one. Historically, the formation of a state into a state, a country into a country, and a people into a people is not an easy process. The Republic of Uzbekistan is a completely new state that was historically formed in this territory and managed to find its place in the world. We have built a national state. The population, consisting of different

nationalities and ethnic groups, has formed a single political entity, the people of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The concept and views that the interests of the country are the interests of each of us, the achievements of the people are the achievements of each of us, if it is good for everyone, then it is also good for me, let it be good for many, and let the many give it to me, cannot be achieved overnight.

Central Asia, in particular Uzbekistan, has long been a land of diverse cultures, languages, traditions, and lifestyles, where different peoples and nationalities, professing different religions and not similar to each other, have lived and continue to live. Religious tolerance has become a special virtue inherent in our people.

Muslims who believe in Islam and organizations belonging to religious denominations operate freely, in a spirit of mutual solidarity and tolerance, and in accordance with the law, each of them has the same rights and freedoms in their activities.

As stated in Article 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, "The Republic of Uzbekistan ensures respect for the languages, customs and traditions of all nationalities and ethnic groups residing on its territory, and creates conditions for their development. National cultural centers operate to meet the cultural needs of representatives of different nationalities living in Uzbekistan. The first national cultural centers were established in the regions of the republic by Koreans, Kazakhs, Jews, and Armenians in 1989. The real development and prosperity of these centers began after Uzbekistan gained independence. During this period, ample opportunities were created for their effective operation. As a result, their number increased every year. If in 1992 there were 10 national cultural centers operating, in 1995 their number reached 72, and in 2003 there were 135. Currently, 138 national cultural centers operate in the country.

Ensuring the active participation of representatives of different nationalities living in the Republic of Uzbekistan in the social, spiritual and educational life of the republic is one of the important areas of activity of national cultural centers.

Also, the main tasks of the center are to establish friendship, cooperation, cultural and educational ties and develop friendly relations with similar organizations in foreign countries and their historical homelands, to contribute to the strengthening of civic unity and interethnic harmony in the country in cooperation with the Republican International Cultural Center, various state and public organizations and creative associations. The Republican International Cultural Center, established by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers



of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated January 13, 1992, coordinates the activities of these national cultural centers and provides them with organizational and methodological assistance.

Today, tolerance is one of the greatest achievements of humanity, and it will remain an important factor for further development. In addition, tolerance is an integral part of the spirituality and culture of the Uzbek people. The idea of religious tolerance means that people of different religious beliefs live together in one land, one homeland, in the pursuit of noble ideas and intentions. Along with common interests, each nation also has its own values, and harmonizing the interests of different nations in Uzbekistan and ensuring harmony between them is one of the decisive factors of development. That is why great attention is paid to this issue in our country.

The great Amir Temur in his "Tuzuk" wrote: "I saw all forty regions under my control as equal. I did not put the Barlos above the Tatar, the Tatar above the Naiman, and the Naiman above the Hundred. «This is the key to all my successes,» he wrote.

Our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) not only set a high example of tolerance towards representatives of other religions and beliefs, respecting their beliefs, and respecting their rights, but he never tired of calling on the ummah to always follow this path. In a hadith narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), it is said: «All people are under the command of Allah. The most beloved of them to Allah is the one who benefits his family the most» (Bazzar narration).

The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Law «On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations» (adopted on June 14, 1991, approved in a new edition on May 1, 1998) provides for this. According to the Constitution, «freedom of conscience is guaranteed to everyone. Everyone has the right to profess any religion or not to profess any religion» (Article 35). According to the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, forced indoctrination of religious views is not allowed. At the same time, according to the newly amended Law «On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations», the equality of citizens is ensured regardless of their attitude to religion (Article 4). This law states that no religion or religious belief may be granted any privileges or restrictions over others. The law also establishes the procedure for citizens who have reached a certain age to establish a religious organization to satisfy their religious needs, and to receive education in higher and secondary religious educational institutions.

In particular, on December 12, 2018, the UN General Assembly adopted a special resolution entitled

"Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance". The main goal of this resolution is to ensure the right to education for all and to help eradicate illiteracy and ignorance.

Goal 73 of the 100 goals adopted in the development strategy is aimed at organizing international and republican conferences on the topic **"Interfaith dialogue and religious tolerance - a guarantee of social stability"**.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh. Mirziyoyev, has identified 7 directions for the development of Uzbekistan, and **the fifth direction** is based on the development of spiritual and educational spheres and, for this purpose, the implementation of the concept of «New Uzbekistan - an enlightened society», the promotion of culture and art, the upbringing of youth in the spirit of healthy faith, the strengthening of interethnic harmony and mutual respect. To summarize, in our country, a period of strengthening the close connection between the state and the people has begun. From now on, our development will continue to rely on the unity of this state and the people. And we need to implement this through the normative and legal documents adopted in our supreme constitution and legislation. Strengthening independence, ensuring religious tolerance, and protecting it will never lose their relevance. We all need to deeply understand that preserving the peace and tranquility that reigns in our country, preserving the integrity of our borders, and living in constant vigilance and vigilance are the most important and urgent tasks that today's life demands.

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