

ORGANIZATIONAL AND LEGAL FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS- CONFESSIONAL RELATIONS IN UZBEKISTAN

Karimov Abdumannof Abdujabborovich

Head of the secretariat of the Department of Relations with public
and religious Organizations of the Tashkent City Government

Annotation:

This article examines the organizational and legal foundations of religious-confessional relations in the Republic of Uzbekistan. It analyzes the constitutional principles, legislative frameworks, and institutional mechanisms ensuring freedom of religion and the peaceful coexistence of various religious communities. Special attention is given to the role of state institutions, such as the Committee on Religious Affairs. The article also explores the balance between secularism and the promotion of interfaith dialogue, tolerance, and social stability within a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional society.

Keywords: religious-confessional relations, freedom of conscience, religious organizations, secularism, legislation, tolerance, interfaith dialogue, Committee on Religious Affairs, legal framework.

The phenomenon of independence initiated a period of renewal and radical changes in all spheres of social life, including spiritual life. The attitude towards religion changed for the better: the atheistic aggressive policy of the former Soviet system towards religion was abolished, and freedom of conscience was guaranteed by law.

The state policy on religion in the Republic of Uzbekistan is based on the following principles:

- respect for the religious feelings of believers;
- recognition of religious beliefs as a private matter of citizens or their associations;
- equal guarantee of the rights of citizens who adhere to religious views and citizens who do not adhere to them, and the prohibition of their persecution;
- the need to find ways of dialogue with various religious associations in order to use their potential in the work of spiritual revival and the establishment of universal moral values;
- recognition of the inadmissibility of using religion for destructive purposes.

In Uzbekistan, the separation of religion from the state embodies the principle of “secularism is not atheism”. The state also assumes the obligation to guarantee the rights and freedoms of believers. According to Article 35 of the Constitution, “Freedom of conscience is guaranteed to everyone. Everyone has the right to profess any religion or not to profess any religion. Forced indoctrination of religious views is not allowed.” On the basis of this constitutional norm, the Law “On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations” was adopted in our

country. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that the relationship between the state and religion, the issue of freedom of conscience, and the activities of religious organizations are regulated by certain relevant laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan and a number of resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as other regulatory documents.

Since 1992, the coordination of relations between the state and religious organizations in Uzbekistan has been carried out by the Committee on Religious Affairs (CRA) under the Cabinet of Ministers. This state organization is a state administration body authorized to ensure the right of every citizen to freedom of conscience and religious belief, equality of citizens regardless of their attitude to religion, as well as to resolve issues related to the activities of religious organizations in our country.

The Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PP-3668 dated April 16, 2018 “On measures to improve the activities of the Committee on Religious Affairs under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan” was signed. In accordance with the Resolution, a new system was introduced that provides for strong and constant cooperation between the Committee on Religious Affairs under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Youth Union of Uzbekistan, the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan, and the Republican Council for Coordination of the Activities of Citizen Self-Government Bodies in order to ensure guarantees of freedom of conscience and stability of the religious and educational environment in society.

In addition, a department for working with women was established within the Committee, and the position of deputy chairman was introduced to oversee work in this area. A Republican Propaganda Group was established to coordinate spiritual and educational work among women.

Also, the new composition of the Council for Confessional Affairs, a public advisory body operating under the Committee, was approved. The composition of the Council increased from 9 to 17 members - the members of the Council will discuss issues of further improving harmonious relations between representatives of different religions, ensuring peace and stability by representatives of confessions, and strengthening the ideas of tolerance among the population.

The updated composition of the Council for Confessional Affairs, a public advisory body under the Committee (established in 2004), was approved. The Chairman of the Committee is its chairman by virtue of his position. The number of members of the Council - representatives of religious confessions operating in our country - has increased from 9 to 17 - at the expense of representatives of religious confessions operating in Uzbekistan.

The Council will operate on a public basis in accordance with the regulations approved by the Committee. Its main task is to constantly discuss the current state of religious and social

processes in the regions of the republic and foreign countries, as well as the relevant part of the information and analytical materials prepared by the Center, and to make recommendations to the Committee based on the results.

In recent years, it can be seen that the attitude towards religion has been developing on the basis of completely new principles and full freedom of conscience is being guaranteed for citizens. The state has legally created equal opportunities for all religions and all believers. The fact that relations with religious organizations are conducted on the basis of law, respect and protection of their rights and freedoms, practically ensures freedom of belief. At the same time, religious organizations are also required to fulfill their duties and obligations before the law.

Religious organizations acquire the status of a legal entity after registration with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan or its local bodies and may carry out their activities in accordance with the procedure stipulated by legislative documents. State registration of new religious organizations belonging to religious denominations is carried out on the basis of studying the religious needs of citizens belonging to these denominations.

The word “confession” (Latin – “confessio”), when translated into Uzbek, literally means “to believe”. In general, a religious denomination is understood as a belief formed within the framework of a certain religious doctrine and having its own characteristics, and a community of followers of this belief. Communities that have arisen within the framework of one religion but differ in their beliefs are also included in the category of religious denominations.

Voluntary associations of citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan (religious societies, religious educational institutions, mosques, churches, synagogues, monasteries, etc.) established for the purpose of practicing religion, worship, and jointly performing rituals and ceremonies are recognized as religious organizations.

The following are the officially registered religious denominations in the Republic of Uzbekistan:

1. Islam;
2. Russian Orthodox Church;
3. Roman Catholic Church;
4. Full Evangelical Christian Church;
5. Evangelical Christian Baptist Church;
6. Seventh-day Adventist Church;
7. Novoapostol Church;
8. Evangelical Lutheran Church;
9. "Golos Bojii" Christian Church;
10. Church of Jehovah's Witnesses;
11. Korean Protestant churches;

12. Armenian Apostolic Church;
13. Jewish religious communities;
14. Baha'i religious communities;
15. Society for Krishna Consciousness;
16. Buddha temple.

Currently, 2,301 religious organizations belonging to these denominations are operating. 2,113 of them are Islamic and 188 non-Islamic organizations.

The diversity of the religious confessions can also be seen in the example of the officially registered religious confessions operating in Uzbekistan. The fact that, although they belong to Christianity, each of the 11 directions in our country considers itself a separate religious confession serves as proof of our opinion.

It should be noted that this situation is not observed in Islam. In no country is the Hanafi school of thought registered separately, and other schools of thought are not registered as separate confessions. For example, although there are several Shiite communities in Uzbekistan, they do not consider themselves a separate religious confession.

More than 94 percent of the population of Uzbekistan is Muslim. Accordingly, Islam is the largest confession in the country.

References

1. Torchinov E.A. Religii mira. Opyt zapredelnogo. Psychotechnics and transpersonal sostoyaniya. Center "Peterburgskoe Vostokovedenie", 1998.
2. Dworkin A. L. Sektovedenie: Totalitarian sect. ... Nizhny Novgorod: Izd-vo Bratstva vo imya Sv. Princess Alexandra Nevsky, 2000.
3. S. Agzamkhodjaev, D. Rahimjonov, N. Muhamedov, J. Najmiddinov. History of world religions. Study guide. - T.: Tashkent Islamic University, 2011.
4. Ochildiev A. and others. Fundamentals of religious studies. Study guide. - T.: Tashkent Islamic University, 2013.
5. Hasanboev Otkir. Relations between the state and religion in Uzbekistan: religious organizations, currents, current directions of ideological struggle / O'Hasanboev; editors K.Kamilov, A.Mansurov. –Tashkent: Tashkent Islamic University, 2014.
6. Religious tolerance and fanaticism (a hundred questions - a hundred answers). – T.: “Tashkent Islamic University” publishing and printing association, 2017.