

**The Role of Religious Factor in Forming Tolerance in Uzbekistan**

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**Abstract.** The article analyzes the role of the religious factor in the formation of a culture of tolerance in Uzbekistan. The article examines historical and modern aspects of religious interaction, as well as the contribution of Islam and other faiths to strengthening interethnic and interfaith harmony. Particular attention is paid to state policy on maintaining freedom of religion and interreligious dialogue. Educational and cultural mechanisms that promote tolerance in society are discussed. A conclusion is made about the importance of religious values and practices in ensuring social stability and peace in a multinational country.

**Key words:** Uzbekistan, tolerance, religion, Islam, interconfessional dialogue, interconfessional harmony, religious values, state politics.

**Introduction. Relevance of the topic.** Tolerance as a social and cultural phenomenon is becoming increasingly important in modern societies, where multi-confessionalism and intercultural interaction are becoming an integral part of social life. In the modern world, tolerance is becoming one of the key factors of stable social development, especially in countries with a multinational and multi-confessional population. Uzbekistan, with its rich history of intercultural interaction and diversity of ethnic groups and religions, is a vivid example of how religious values can contribute to strengthening social harmony. "Uzbekistan has long been a country of contact and peaceful coexistence of various peoples professing different religions." [1]

On September 19, 2017, at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly [2], the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh. M. Mirziyoyev attracted the attention of the entire world community with his initiative to adopt the resolution "Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance". This document calls on all countries to ensure the right to education for all, to help eradicate illiteracy and ignorance, and most importantly, to pay attention to ensuring religious freedoms. As the head of state Sh. M. Mirziyoyev said: "We value our sacred religion as an expression of our eternal values. We strongly condemn those who equate our sacred religion with violence and bloodshed, and we will never be able to come to terms with them. "Islam calls us to goodness and peace, to the preservation of true human qualities" [3]. The great thinker Abu Rayhan Beruni speaks with respect about the merits in the development of human thought and culture of the ancient Greeks, Khorezmians, Persians, Syrians, Arabs and other peoples [4]. In our country there are 2276 religious organizations belonging to 16 religious confessions, about 140 national cultural centers consisting of representatives of more than 130 nations and peoples, the Imam Bukhari International Scientific Research Center, the Center for Islamic Civilization of Uzbekistan, the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan, the Imam Termizi International Scientific Research Center, Islamic Institutes in Tashkent, Bukhara (Mir Arab) and Samarkand, religious educational institutions of the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan, Orthodox and Protestant seminaries. Tolerance is

an integral part of the life of a modern person. Tolerance is especially important today and in the processes that occur in the context of globalization in the Central Asian region. This is due to the fact that, firstly, today only on the territory of our Republic of Uzbekistan live representatives of 16 confessions and more than 130 nationalities. Uzbekistan is a multinational and multi-confessional state. Secondly, since ancient times the Great Silk Road passed through the territory of Uzbekistan, which stimulated the process of communication and mutual influence of various national and religious cultures. Since ancient times such religions as Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism coexisted on our land. Thirdly, tolerance is one of the main principles of the ideology of national independence [5]. In the context of globalization and the growth of interethnic and interreligious conflicts throughout the world, Uzbekistan demonstrates a unique model of coexistence of various ethnic and religious groups. The state policy of the country, aimed at strengthening interfaith dialogue, in combination with traditional religious values, contributes to the creation of a sustainable culture of tolerance. Studying the experience of Uzbekistan is relevant not only for understanding internal processes, but also for developing models of social stability in other multinational countries.

Islam in Uzbekistan has its own characteristics, different from other Islamic countries, due to the historical connection with Sufism, the wide influence of philosophical and cultural movements, as well as interaction with other religious traditions. Thus, the religious factor in Uzbekistan plays not only a spiritual but also a socio-cultural role, determining many aspects of intercultural communication. **The level of study of the topic and research methods.** The study of the role of the religious factor in the formation of tolerance is widely represented in the works of Uzbek and foreign scientists. Among them, one can highlight the works of R.Kh. Murtazaeva [6], R.R. Nazarov [7], K.Kamilov [8], as well as studies published in international journals by foreign scientists such as A.Yu. Grigorenko [9], G.U. Soldatova, T.A. Nestik, L.A. Shaigerova [10], A.S., Berdalina, L.M. Scarantino [11]. Particular attention is paid to the influence of religious traditions, tolerance, promoting the principles of love, peace and mutual respect. At the same time, there is a lack of systematic comparative studies covering the practical application of religious principles in public policy and public life. The research methods are the analysis of literary sources, including laws and government documents; sociological surveys and interviews with representatives of religious organizations; comparative analysis of tolerance models in Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries.

**Results and discussion.** Islam, as the dominant religion in Uzbekistan, promotes such principles as mercy, justice and respect for other religions. In particular, the Sufi tradition, widespread in the region, actively contributes to strengthening intercultural and interreligious dialogue. Great thinkers such as Abu Rayhan Beruni, Abu Ali Ibn Sina and Alisher Navai emphasized the importance of unity and harmony between different peoples.

An important aspect of religious tolerance in Uzbekistan is the development of interreligious dialogue. In recent decades, Uzbekistan has been actively working to create platforms for communication between representatives of different religious communities. This includes holding international forums, conferences and events aimed at strengthening mutual respect and understanding between religions. An example of such a dialogue is the regular holding of international forums devoted to issues of the Islamic world and interreligious communication. For example, the international forum "Dialogue of Declarations" was held in Tashkent, Samarkand

and Bukhara on May 16-20, 2022. The international forum "Dialogue of Declarations" is part of Uzbekistan's systematic and consistent efforts to practically implement the principles and provisions enshrined in the Special Resolution of the UN General Assembly "Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance", adopted in 2018 at the initiative of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev[11].

The education system also plays an important role in the formation of religious tolerance. Schools and universities in Uzbekistan are actively introducing courses aimed at studying religions, their culture and history. Islamic and interreligious education programs help students develop respect for various religious traditions and strengthen the spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation. School and university programs in Uzbekistan include courses aimed at studying world religions and their role in the development of culture. This helps young people realize the value of mutual respect and tolerance. It is necessary to emphasize that annual events such as the International Forum "Heritage of Great Ancestors – the Basis of the III Renaissance", organized by the Center of Islamic Civilization of Uzbekistan, create a platform for discussing issues of tolerance and cooperation between different faiths. Religious tolerance contributes to strengthening social stability and harmony in Uzbekistan. Respect for the religious beliefs of each person creates a healthy social atmosphere, where different ethnic and religious groups can coexist peacefully and mutually enrich each other. This creates conditions for the development of the economy, social sphere and strengthening of cultural ties within the country and abroad.

**Conclusions.** The religious factor plays a significant role in the formation of tolerance in Uzbekistan. Islam, as the main religion, promotes the development of values of peace and mutual understanding, while interreligious dialogue, state support and educational initiatives play a key role in strengthening these values. As a result, religious tolerance in Uzbekistan becomes the basis for the sustainable development of society and peace between its numerous ethnic and religious groups.

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