



**LEGAL BASIS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS
AND CIVIL SOCIETY INSTITUTES**

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the relations between the state, religion, and religious organizations, the lawful activities of religious organizations, the need to improve their role within the system of civil society institutions, the procedure for establishing religious organizations under the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan; and the content and key directions of the state policy in the religious sphere and the concept of ensuring citizens' freedom of conscience in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

KEYWORDS

Religious organization,
civil society, law, concept,
spiritual heritage,
confession, human, rights,
democracy.

INTRODUCTION

In the world, discrimination against members of religious organizations after accusations of extremism creates a bias between state bodies and civil society institutions, and strict regulatory and legal restrictions are imposed on their activities, limiting their ability to freely cooperate with civil society institutions. In particular, according to the UN, as of 2024, religious organizations and groups are under persecution in more ¹than 30 countries, Freedom According to House, restrictions on the activities of ²religious organizations are imposed in 56 countries. This situation leads to a weakening of trust between social groups, an increase in conflicts and contradictions, the radicalization of groups isolated from society, and their clandestine activities due to repression against religious groups, which leads to an increase in threats to global security. Such situations require religious organizations and civil society institutions to reform the system of solving social problems, regularly monitor relations between religious organizations and civil society institutions, and comply with international conventions and standards in protecting religious freedom and civil society rights. This, in turn, necessitates the improvement of the theoretical and legal framework for the interaction of religious organizations with other institutions of civil society.

The need for scientific research aimed at studying the role of religion in civil society and its impact on social life in the world, studying the role of religious organizations in creating social capital and

¹<https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-religion-or-belief>

²<https://freedomhouse.org/issues/religious-freedom>

their impact on the development of civil society, analyzing the role of religious organizations in providing social services and issues of cooperation with the state, and assessing the revival of religion in post- socialist societies and its impact on civil society is increasing. In particular, certain results have been achieved in increasing the importance of religious organizations in issues of human rights, peacekeeping and development, the effectiveness of religious organizations in protecting social justice and human rights, and improving organizational and legal measures for the role of religious organizations in providing social services and cooperation with the state . Nevertheless, today's conditions create the need for a comprehensive study of the theoretical, practical and legal issues of improving the legislation regulating the relations between religious organizations and other civil society institutions , identifying and solving existing problems in this area, and improving the practice of establishing regular dialogue between religious organizations, civil society institutions and the state Analysis of historical events shows that the relations between the state and religion, which have been formed for a long time , encompass the main aspects of the socio-cultural, political- legal , and spiritual- enlightenment life of society. Within the framework of existing traditions and state structures, the state – confessional relations have been regulated. In the independent Republic of Uzbekistan, since the 1990s, with the beginning of the process of socio-political and spiritual-ideological changes in society, the relationship between civil society institutions, in particular, the state and religious organizations, has become an important issue. This issue, in addition to having a historical and cultural nature , also revealed political, legal and ideological aspects in the life of the state and society .

Our people's legal The aspirations to build a democratic state and a free civil society necessitated the recognition of universally recognized norms of international law, as well as the implementation of the spiritual heritage of national statehood, which has been formed and refined over the centuries.

recent years, the attitude towards the state, religion and religious organizations in the Republic of Uzbekistan has changed radically. New approaches to religion and believers in accordance with international and national legal norms are reflected in the laws " On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations " (1991, 1993, 1998, 2021) ³.

Religious Organizations, adopted in 2021, simplified the procedure for registering and liquidating religious organizations. This includes local religious organizations, including mosques and other denominations. The number of citizens who can initiate the establishment of places of worship was halved to 50. Services related to the state registration of religious organizations were fully electronic . The number of documents submitted to the justice bodies registering religious organizations was reduced , and the period for their consideration was reduced from 3 months to 1 month. The grounds for refusal to register religious organizations were established by law, and it was ensured that refusals on grounds not specified in it were not allowed. The issue of suspending or terminating the activities of religious organizations was provided for only through the court. The professional status of religious education was recognized, and it was noted that citizens in the country would be provided with the right to receive secular education regardless of their attitude to religion . Providing religious education outside a religious educational institution was defined as an illegal activity , a religious activity, in the law . Since the current legislation does not contain a legal definition of the concept of “worship dress”, this norm was excluded from the legislation. The procedure for obtaining the consent of the mahalla

³ Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations" // National Database of Legislative Information, 06.07.2021, No. 03/21/699/0635.

citizens' assembly regarding the establishment of religious organizations was abolished. In order to protect the population from the negative impact of the activities of groups promoting various alien views in society and the destructive ideas disseminated by them, it was determined that the preparation, import and distribution of materials of religious content is allowed only after receiving a positive conclusion from the religious expert. Definitions were given to the concepts of religious educational institution, religious organization, central governing body of religious organizations, local religious organization, missionary work, illegal religious activity, religious professional education, and proselytism, and these concepts were clearly and clearly stated.

Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations, the Concept of State Policy in the Religious Sphere and Ensuring Freedom of Conscience of Citizens in the Republic of Uzbekistan was adopted as an appendix to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. O'RQ-1037 dated February 25, 2025. The Concept is aimed at ensuring the rights of citizens to freedom of conscience, implementing constitutional provisions related to the country's secular nature, and ensuring the state's religious It defines the goals, objectives, principles, and priorities of its policy in the sector.

the right of citizens to freedom of conscience and bringing activities in the religious and educational sphere to a qualitatively new level are priorities for the development of religious education in society. It is envisaged to introduce advanced mechanisms to further strengthen tolerance and interfaith harmony, to deeply study and widely promote the religious and philosophical heritage of our great ancestors, who made a great contribution to the development of science and world civilization, based on universal and noble ideas such as humanity, goodness, peace and tolerance, to train specialists in line with the requirements of the time by radically improving the system of training personnel in the religious and educational field, to strengthen the spirit of solidarity, mutual respect and kindness among the population, to support relevant scientific research aimed at ensuring the stability of the socio-spiritual environment, to further develop and increase the effectiveness of international cooperation in the religious and educational field, etc.

was developed based on the rich national-historical experience of the development of Uzbek statehood and universal human values, and is aimed at realizing the interests of society in multinational and multi-confessional Uzbekistan, ensuring a stable environment necessary for living in harmony and consistent development on the basis of democracy, secularism, freedom, equality, social justice and solidarity.

the state's policy in the religious sphere are clearly defined and the correct interpretation of the foundations of a secular state is based on the prevention of conflict situations in society.

these legal reforms, the number of scientific and technological achievements will increase, attention will be paid to their importance in the development of the state and society, and as a result of keeping up with the times, our country will strengthen its position in the global competitive arena. It is envisaged that stability will be ensured and the rights of citizens to freedom of conscience will be more reliably protected on the basis of the rule of law.

In Uzbekistan, state bodies and civil society institutions have different religious affiliations. The systematic work carried out by representatives of religious denominations to exercise their right to freedom of conscience is a major step towards the establishment of a religious order in our country. It will bring new results in promoting tolerance and interethnic harmony.

In this regard, various government and non-governmental organizations, civil society institutions:

to establish cooperation between state and public organizations in the strict implementation of the goals, main tasks and principles of state policy in the religious sphere;

ensuring the right of citizens to freedom of conscience , respecting the diversity of religious beliefs in society supporting the coexistence and harmony of representatives of different faiths ;

To ensure that the population of Uzbekistan, regardless of religion, belief, nationality, or social origin, can fully realize their rights and legitimate interests;

It is necessary to prevent any other manifestations of favoritism, discrimination, and violations of the guarantees of freedom of conscience based on one's attitude to religion.

Accelerating work in this area will ensure that Uzbekistan fully complies with universally recognized international law while ensuring the inalienable right of a person to freedom of conscience and belief

. It will further strengthen Uzbekistan's global position in the field of freedom of conscience and belief .

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