

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY INSTITUTIONS IN ENSURING INTER-ETHNIC HARMONY IN MODERNIZATION OF THE COUNTRY

(In case of Uzbekistan)

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Abstract: The Republic of Uzbekistan is located in the heart of Central Asia and it is a dynamically developing democratic, sovereign state that guarantees peace and stability in the area. As a result of geopolitical changes in the last decade of the 20th century, the former Soviet Union collapsed and 15 independent states emerged on the world political map. Uzbekistan abandoned the administrative-command system based on planned economy and transited to free market relations, choosing an evolutionary path of development, based on experience of leading countries of the world and national mentality of its people. Establishing the legal, democratic state and civil society with a clear foreign policy based on free market relations, Uzbekistan has developed its own way based on “Uzbek model” of development, developing the state and society. This model of development is of great interest in the world scientific community. Hence, this path of development has made great progress over the years and has become a model for developing countries as a successful practice. This article analyzes wide-range and ongoing reforms in Uzbekistan in modernization of public administration and country. Furthermore, appropriate recommendations on experience of providing national interests and needs with the support of civil society institutions as a multinational society are given.

Index Terms: renewal, modernization, Uzbek model, democratic reforms, liberalization of economy, polyethnic composition, civil society, public associations, nongovernmental organizations, political parties, Strategy of actions, optimization and decentralization of public administration system, innovative ideas.

I. INTRODUCTION

Becoming independent on August 31, 1991, Uzbekistan set itself the goal of building a democratic legal state and forming foundations of civil society. The consistent implementation of the principle “From a strong state to a strong society” is being introduced in all spheres of public and state governance in accordance with democratic requirements.

"Our goal is to ensure the power of people, not only in words," -noted Sh. Mirziyoyev.- We must organize our activities under the motto "The Great Future Begins Today," and do our best to ensure the well-being of our people” [1].

From the very beginning of independence, the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, developed theoretical foundations of transition to civil society, legal state and market relations, reflecting historical traditions of the country, democratic principles and worldview of our people, as well as national interests of the country that incorporated in “Uzbek model”. The democratic values and civil society principles formed in developed countries have been gradually introduced into the reform processes in the country, not only because they have been tested in international experience, but because of national interests of Uzbek people.

In December 2016, the winner of the presidential election of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh. M. Mirziyoyev announced a Strategy of actions for further development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021. Wide-range reforms are being carried out to bring Uzbekistan to the top of the developed world.

This shows that Uzbekistan is actively pursuing the process of establishing true market relations and modernizing all spheres of society.

In the process of modernizing the society in Uzbekistan, it is important to study theoretical and practical aspects and experience of founding the civil society in various countries around the world. Also, the evolutionary development and establishment of Uzbekistan, and positive aspects of multinational civil society should be taken into account in building a civil society in countries with period of transition.

II. A unique way of Uzbekistan's transition to market relations

Human freedom is inseparably linked with its material welfare. It is hard to say that person, who suffers from hunger and poverty, is totally free. Personal freedom is fully manifested in conditions of private property and private entrepreneurship. At the same time, private property is not only an economic basis of civil society, it is also the basis for political, ethical and cultural transformation. The role of private property in growth of socio-economic consciousness of citizens is very important. For private property:

- It defines a person's private life style;
- Links initiative and business interactions;
- builds self-confidence in the owner;
- It awakens a creative approach to work and a love for the country;
- It cultivates social culture by teaching people a friendship;
- it strengthens the family as the economic “cell” of society and engages it in property relations;
- it increases a person's respect for the state;
- It shapes legal consciousness and culture of individual;
- It cultivates a sense of civic independence in the individual;
- It nurtures the right approach to political freedom [2].

Thus, the institution of private property positively influences individual freedoms, and it creates a sense of self-awareness of citizens. The main criterion for maturity of civil society is strengthening the legal equality of people in legislation and equal rights and freedoms in normative and legal acts.

In the context of economic fundamentals of civil society, freedom of property is also an important aspect. At first glance, the sign seems pretty straightforward. In any society, there are property owners of means of production, and these property owners are considered to be free. However, it is also known that the rights of property owners have been seriously questioned for many time periods. In civil society, free activity of individual contributes to realization of their interests in all spheres. First of all, the dream of people in the economic field comes true. The free will is manifested in private owner.

In fact, freedom of property owners' answers a number of important questions. In condition of property owners' freedom, the legal relations between the associations of free property owners, relationships between the owners within the associations and their relations with the political structures are regulated.

The first issue here is the amount of property available to the community and the value of the property they own. Secondly, what matters is the owner's exemption in order to become a subject of civil society. Ancient thinkers unanimously state that this issue should be free from interference and control of the state, political power in the production process [3].

During the Soviet system, the monopoly of the state began to be dominated by all the means, and a notion that the state was the people, and therefore the property was also public, was established. The state monopoly in the economy abolished private and corporate production and, thus, ownership by means of production tools [4].

Therefore, one of the main problems of civil society development in most of the countries of the Soviet system is rapid formation and development of the ownership of owners of production means. Modern worldviews, with the development of production in their home countries, only a group of property owners with leading foreign experience form new national traditions and skills, doing a positive work which is done by homeowners in industrialized countries. In other words, their main task is to achieve parity with the state and to develop the economy.

At the same time, privatization of private property can also have negative consequences. In this case, when transitional phenomena occur, that is when there is a weakening of state control, there is a one-sided stratification in society, and a large mass of the wealthy and the poor is formed. In this case, private property will not be able to fulfill its mission of consolidating society. As a result, there is a sharp polarization occurs between social groups and society and are divided into three opposing groups. Although this is what happened

during the transition period in countries of the Soviet system, it is not worthwhile to completely ignore the importance of private property in civil society development.

In order to create the economic basis for civil society, the government faces a number of important issues.

Firstly, along with the implementation of economic reforms in the country, it is necessary to strengthen the formation of a middle class that can operate legally. In many countries of the Soviet system, entrepreneurship was understood as a fraud. In fact, in market-developed countries, especially in industrialized countries, the most favored and at the same time the most prosperous strata were the strata of property owners. Under these conditions, the state should not only create conditions for free activity, but it is also necessary to develop the skills to operate under the law.

Secondly, with the development of free market relations in society, preventing the polarization of social stratification is also one of the difficult challenges facing the state. In this regard, the government of Uzbekistan has successfully implemented the principle of "strong social protection".

Thirdly, in addition to the task of being the only institution responsible for regulating social relations, the state has to fulfill the task of developing free market relations as the main reformer. Concerning the fact that free market relations can also lead to various illegal activities in economic activity under new conditions, the complexity of the government's challenge is clear.

Fourth, the formation of a powerful, yet at the same time, a private sector that is at the heart of civil society is one of the major challenges facing the state to the extent that it undertakes the economic strategy of the country.

As it turns out, the economic fundamentals of civil society raise very complex questions. This is primarily due to the debate on free market relations. From the point of view of civil society, the role of the state in market conditions requires special attention.

The state has always been an independent, powerful institution, with structures ranging from small businesses to large enterprises. Certainly, when it comes to the unity of society and the state, of course, the leadership of the state is recognized. In transitional period, only the state is capable of drastic change in society, leading to major reforms.

Certainly, the socio-economic processes in the society can lead to the maturation of reforms. But the state can accelerate or, conversely, prevent any reform. In Uzbekistan, the government is in charge of reforms in all areas. However, despite the ongoing private sector development reforms, it is difficult to recognize the existence of an independent middle class. It is hard to argue that in a rapidly growing middle class, the membership culture has become an independent force capable of integrating into civil society institutions.

In some countries, it has been observed that while the free market economy has declined, the importance of the state has diminished, and as the private sector has become more popular, with the rise of social stratification, the majority of people have moved to the private sector. The development of the private sector cannot be interpreted as civil society. In other words, no matter how well the private sector develops, such a society cannot be called a civil society without the ability to integrate civil society institutions into protecting their interests before the state. In addition, it is desirable for members of society to develop new skills that are based on market laws. An active citizen pursuing his own interests, conducts specific policy before public authorities.

In this sense, a citizen acts not as an expression of selfish interests but as an expression of private owner's interests, who make up the majority of society. Here, the politics of a citizen comes not from his professional activities, but from his civic duty to represent society.

It is well-known that civil society is the result of the need for interaction between people and their common goals and objectives. It is ripened not by market laws, nor by the government's orders, but by the public initiative, as a result of independent activities of various groups and associations of free citizens. People are called citizens because of their ability to carry out socially useful activities.

While civil society has undoubtedly been of great importance to both the market and the state, it is not appropriate to confuse them. After all, the state can exist without civil society, but in the context of civil society, the state appears as an institution with different forms and methods.

In this regard, it is important to note that with the transition to market relations, building a civil society is a two-dimensional issue, and in terms of their goals and objectives they do not coincide. If it is possible to enter into market relations with authoritarian rule, it is impossible to go through civil society. The combination of these two tasks interferes with the implementation of economic reforms and the democratization process. Democratizing reforms and integrating civil society development with free market relations means blending civic feelings with a sense of selfish ownership. In fact, this issue should be seriously addressed. It is understood that the right of every person to own a private property, in most cases, is the basis for the formation of civil society. In fact, the labor force population, which does not own private ownership, comprises the majority of society. Thus, not only private property, but also the existence of civil society institutions, representing the interests of non-owners form the economic basis of civil society. Privatization of private life not only hinders civil society, but also requires a return to authoritarian rule.

The economic foundations of civil society are closely linked to free market economy. Democracies, along with other freedoms, require a system of economic development with their own laws. Successful business activities are possible only on the basis of these laws.

Most importantly, it is difficult to fight against individual market laws. Different business associations, such as civil society institutions, can facilitate these issues.

Without civil society, market can only be regulated by strict government control. Given the high likelihood of government interference in corruption, the emergence of a free market would prevent many officials from forming a free market under the influence of criminal gangs.

Clearly, in the absence of civil society, there will be cruel laws on the market. In many cases government officials caught up in corruption are often unable to cope with the crime. As the government seeks to combat this chaos, it often does not use civil institutions and it is again subjected to authoritarian methods and bureaucracy. This negatively affects the activities of many market participants. There is an opinion that it is necessary to rely on strong power in transition to free market relations. Strong government regulation of market relations also leads to different interpretations. After all, civil society seeks for free markets, political freedoms, and democracy, as well as solutions to the problems and conflicts that arise in society through independent courts. It is well known that market freedom naturally leads to monarchy and violates the laws of self-government. In some countries, companies that have achieved market dominance have united with the state apparatus and have opposed civil society. As a result, in such countries in the first half of the last century there was the formation of totalitarian systems that were "softer" than socialism (Italy, Germany). In societies with strong self-government, the state has taken a stand against civil society and opposed individual companies. The history of many Western European countries shows that the need for an end to chaos in free market relations has been recognized by the state. As a result, traditional free market relations have been abolished and the state has moved towards coordinating the market to protect the interests of diverse social groups. However, it should be emphasized that in order for the state-regulated market to succeed, there must be a free market relationship in country from the past. In other words, in countries that have not experienced free market relations and which do not have entrepreneurial traditions and skills that are based on free competition in a market of private property, the development of market relations is difficult if the market is regulated by the state. In these countries, the formation of a real economic elite is unlikely, and economic development remains entirely the responsibility of the state. Under these conditions, the proponents of economic development of the country cannot form a majority of society. Instead, specific semi-free market relations, that are governed by the state, will be formed.

Thus, the economic basis of civil society is a multifaceted market economy, based on private property. Therefore, it is necessary to accelerate the process of forming middle class ownership in any country seeking to build civil society. After all, with the development of civil society, the middle class assumes many tasks that the state has in transition period. This

is the basis for the development of a genuine civil society, with the help of optional and voluntary associations, where market values are based on healthy competition.

The “Uzbek model” of development was developed by the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, for the creation of a legal democratic state and civil society with open foreign policy, based on free market relations. Five principles that justified themselves in building a new state and society were based on following: Principle 1. Ideology of economy and its priority over politics. In other words, first economy, then politics; Principle 2. The State itself is the main reformer in the transition from the old system to a new one, assuming its role as the initiator of reforms aimed at modernization of the country in the state, social and economic spheres; Principle 3. Rule of law or equality of all citizens before the law; Principle 4. Implementation of strong social policy, responsibility of the state in supporting socially vulnerable groups and strata; Principle 5. Stage-by-stage reform, rejecting so-called shock therapy. In other words, the state should develop in evolutionary way. Human history testifies that any revolutionary path has always caused tyranny, violence, bloodshed and loss to people [6].

Reforms and changes associated with the formation of foundations of national statehood can be characterized as follows:

1991-2000 - the transition period that left a significant mark in the life of Uzbekistan and its people;

2001-2007 - the period of active democratic renewal and modernization of the country;

2008-2016 - Deepening of democratic reforms and development of civil society in the country;

2017-2021 - the period of further development of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Candidate from the Movement of Entrepreneurs and Businessmen - Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoev was elected as a President of the Republic of Uzbekistan for a five-year term on December 4, 2016.

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated February 7, 2017 “On Strategy of Action for the Further Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021” [7] outlines the most urgent tasks for the country's modernization.

The priority areas outlined in the Decree are: 1. Improving the system of state and public construction; 2. Ensuring the rule of law and further reforming the judicial and legal system; 3. Development and liberalization of economy; 4. Development of the social sphere; 5. Security, religious tolerance and inter-ethnic harmony, mutually beneficial and practical foreign policy.

The Strategy of actions is the program of systematic development of state and society.

The Strategy of Actions is important because of its comprehensive development of the state and society in Uzbekistan.

The Strategy takes into account the best international practices and international standards, outlines the prospects for all sectors of the country's development. If you look at the facts, since January 2017, Presidential Virtual and Public Reception has been established in all areas. The goal is to find out about people's concerns and worries, to gather problems over the years, to bring leaders into the public, and to help people as much as possible. From January 2017 to October 2017, more than one million residents solved their pressing problems through these reception centers.

Strengthening the role of the Parliament of Uzbekistan - the Oliy Majlis (Lower Chamber - Legislative Chamber, upper chamber - Senate) in the system of state power, strengthening the role of political parties, creating a healthy competitive environment among them, decentralization of public administration, ensuring transparency of activities of public administration bodies, reforms are also carried out to improve the "e-Government" system. The efficiency and quality of public services have increased over the past year, and the accessibility of public and business services has increased. Effective mechanisms for communicating with population are being introduced.

The strategy of action is aimed at strengthening macroeconomic stability and active attraction of primarily foreign investments in economic sectors and regions, creation of favorable conditions for development of private entrepreneurship on the basis of privatized state property, comprehensive socio-economic development of regions, districts and cities and other many tasks are outlined. The work on increasing the efficiency of free economic zones, industrial parks and small industrial zones, and to create a new ones aimed at development of the national economy in our country.

Today there are 14 free economic zones in the country. In free economic zones of Navoi, Angren, Jizzakh, Urgut, Gijduvon, Kokand and Hazorasp, 62 projects estimating \$ 486 million have been implemented and more than 4,600 jobs have been created.

According to the order of the President of Uzbekistan, \$ 100 million foreign currency credit line was opened at the expense of the Fund for Reconstruction and Development of Uzbekistan to accelerate the implementation of investment projects in free economic zones and purchase of high-tech equipment from abroad. 7 new free economic zones: Nukus Farm, Zaamin Farm, Kosonsoy Farm, Syrdarya Farm, Baysun Farm, Bostanlik Farm, Parkent Farm consistently working on development of attraction of foreign investments for establishment of new enterprises in free economic zones.

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated September 2, 2017 No PD-5177 "On Priority Measures for Liberalization of Foreign Exchange Policy" is primarily aimed at radical reforming of the current currency regulation system, liberalization of foreign exchange policy, and implementation of foreign trade activities for all business entities.

The main reason for adoption of this Decree is the presence of a number of problems and shortcomings that impede the development of export potential of the country, improvement of business and investment climate, and attraction of foreign investments. In particular, due to excessive administrative interference in foreign exchange regulation, special privileges and preferences for certain sectors of economy and economic entities in the implementation of foreign trade, uneven conditions for doing business between business entities and parallel foreign exchange market and turnover course were formed. The weakening of foreign exchange policy's role in facilitating foreign trade has reduced the competitiveness of domestic producers' goods and services in domestic and foreign markets.

Now legal entities and individuals can freely buy and sell foreign currency in banks to carry out international currency transactions. In particular, legal entities may freely convert their funds to foreign currency without restrictions on current international currency transactions in banks, including import of goods, works and services, repatriation of profits, repayment of loans, travel expenses and other non-trade operations. We believe that this historic step in economy will strengthen the position of national currency of the Republic of Uzbekistan and will facilitate the socio-economic development of the country, employment and living standards.

The Strategy of Action sets out a number of tasks for development of social sphere, in particular education and science. The document envisages provision of modern educational and laboratory equipment, computer equipment and educational-methodical manuals along with strengthening the material and technical base of educational institutions, construction, repair and capital repairs of new educational institutions. In 2017-2021, the further development of higher education institutions will be gradually carried out by elaborating a program on enhancing and improving of curricula. Independence of higher education institutions will be provided by expanding the competence and pursuing additional sources of paid services and financing. Previous year about seventy decisions, decrees and orders of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan were adopted. This has really accelerated the process of changes and updates in education system. For the first time in the system of secondary special education enrollment of students in 10th grade is organized. This will be followed by admission to academic lyceums and professional colleges. This was mainly because of the wishes of parents and students and demand of the time. For example, in 2016/2017 academic year, over 466,000 students graduated from general education schools, of which over 170,000 enrolled in vocational colleges. 288,000 pupils, that is, more than sixty percent - continue their education in the 10th grade. Particular attention is paid to the study of legacy of our great ancestors and the development of appropriate personnel. Establishing a specialized school for deepening of information and communication technologies named after our great ancestor Muhammad al-Khwarizmi was

also the first step towards this task. The establishment of this school will allow to train personnel from an early age, to train advanced and up-to-date specialists in this sphere.

The resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On establishment of a specialized public secondary school named after Mirzo Ulugbek and the "Astronomy and Aeronautics" park was adopted. According to the decree, the Mirzo Ulugbek State Specialized Boarding School will be established under the Institute of Astronomy, specializing in deep study of mathematics, astronomy, physics and computer science. One of the requirements for schools is to create a highly qualified and knowledgeable teaching staff and to teach foreign languages at schools. The establishment of such specialized schools helps to educate young people in the spirit of patriotism.

Considering the capacity and potential of regions in Uzbekistan, the issue of vocational guidance for students in grades 8-9 is also being revised. In other words, training of graduates of secondary schools in about 50 professions is being organized. For accomplishing this task, the state-of-the-art training and production centers will be established on the basis of vocational colleges and secondary schools. Also, some vocational colleges are attached to the relevant ministries and departments to enterprises and organizations. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 14, 2017 "On measures to further improve the activities of secondary special and professional educational institutions" will be an important factor in this regard. This will increase the share of these institutions in training and create guaranteed jobs.

However, the systematic analysis of implementation of the Action Strategy and the results of the dialogue with the population have shown that there are serious shortcomings in organization of activities of state authorities and local executive authorities. In this regard, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated September 8, 2017 No. PD-5185 "On approval of the Concept of Administrative Reforms" was adopted [8]. The Declaration notes that foundations for the work of executive authorities do not provide timely solution to accumulated problems that slows the development at places; declarative nature of the tasks assigned, insufficient organizational and legal mechanisms for their implementation, duplication of functions, and excessive state regulation have a negative impact on reforms effectiveness; mechanisms for evaluating their activities include simply recording cases and collecting statistics, which in most cases does not reflect the actual status of jobs in the field; clear delineation of the areas of responsibility of leaders, especially where there is no effective mechanism for intra-departmental and interagency cooperation between the executive authorities; insufficient transparency and transparency of executive branch, weak mechanisms of public control lead to excessive bureaucracy and various forms of corruption. The level of public services does not meet the needs of population and business, and it does not allow the government to increase its confidence.

Critical analysis shows that over the past years, a large number of problems in education and training have accumulated. For this reason, President Shavkat Mirziyoev proposed a conceptually new model of public administration.

The new model aims to address six priorities:

Firstly, to improve institutional and legal framework for the work of executive branch.

Secondly, to clarify the objectives (functions, powers) of the executive branch, the mechanisms for their implementation and the sphere of responsibility, to improve the process of coordination and cooperation.

Thirdly, further reduction of administrative influence on sectors of economy and expansion of market management mechanisms.

Fourth, improvement of mechanisms for cooperation between the vertical management system and the executive branch.

Fifth, the introduction of modern forms of strategic planning, innovative ideas, developments and technologies into the system of public administration.

Sixth, formation of effective system of professional civil service, introduction of effective mechanisms of fight against corruption in executive power system.

The expected result of administrative reform is the creation of public administration system that meets global trends in innovative development. In order to reach this goal, optimize and decentralize the system of public administration by eliminating redundant and unnecessary tasks, functions and powers, eliminating duplication and parallelism; freeing bureaucracy and reducing costs for public administration, increasing efficiency and transparency of the management decision-making system; strategic planning, implementation of innovative ideas, developments and technologies; further reduction of administrative influence on economic sectors and development of healthy competitive management environment, expansion of market mechanisms aimed at increasing the investment attractiveness of the country and business activity of the population should be carried out.

According to the State Statistics Committee of Uzbekistan, in January-September 2019, the gross domestic product of Uzbekistan amounted to 361.85 trillion soums at current prices. Gross domestic product per capita was 10.8 million soums.

In 2019, Uzbekistan was ranked 69th out of 190 countries in “Doing Business” rating and scored 69.9 points out of 100. Since 2018, the country has moved from 76th to 7th place. In the past year, Uzbekistan has implemented four reforms that have allowed it to be among the top 20 countries with the greatest success in improving the business environment. This is stated in the new annual World Bank Doing Business 2020 report [8].

This is also a new form of political modernization, and as a result of effective implementation of administrative reforms in Uzbekistan, the great idea "State institutions

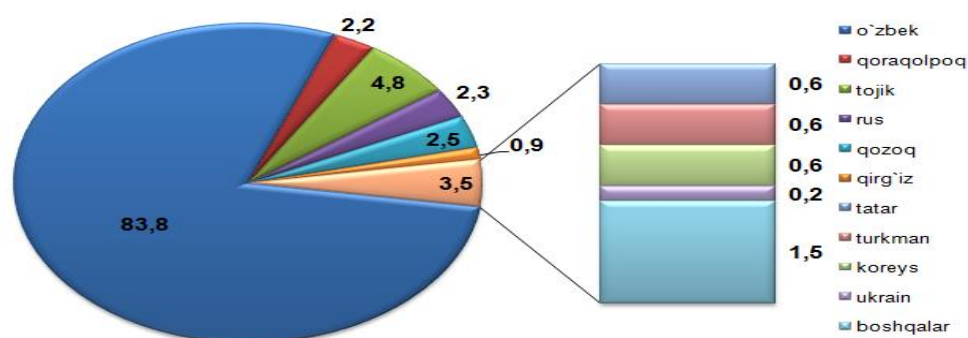
should serve to people, not the opposite" will be fully implemented. These political reforms indicate that Uzbekistan is consistently pursuing its modernization path.

III. The legal basis for formation and functioning of Civil Society institutions in modernization process

Democratization processes of society life influence further improvement of all spheres. Uzbekistan is a polyethnic state with over 130 nationalities and ethnic groups living in harmony. The resident population of the Republic of Uzbekistan as of October 1, 2019 was 33.7 million people [9].

National composition of permanent population of the Republic of Uzbekistan

(As of October 1, 2019; in %)



In this process, it is important to pay close attention to national traditions and values, and to ensure that the reforms in all areas are aligned with national interests as a result of combining national interests through non-governmental structures such as civil society institutions.

“Civil society is a social space for us, mentioned I.A.Karimov, The law prevails in this space, and it does not impede human development [10].

The essence of conceptual political program "Strengthening from a strong state to a strong civil society" is the liberalization of community building based on gradual transfer of certain powers of central government to the local government, self-government and public organizations. Within the framework of this concept, the constitutional and legal framework governing the activities of civil society institutions has been created.

Article 12 of the Basic Law states that social life in the Republic of Uzbekistan can be developed on the basis of political institutions diversity, ideologies and opinions, and it also states that no ideology can be established as a state ideology. Article 34 states that citizens of Uzbekistan have the right to form trade unions, political parties and other public associations, and to participate in mass movements.

In addition, Article 18 of the Constitution states that all citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan have equal rights and freedom, and they are equal before the law, regardless of sex, race, nationality, language, religion, and social origin, and belief, personal or social

status. Article 35 states that each person has the right to submit applications, proposals and complaints himself or together with others to the competent public authorities, institutions or public representatives. The constitutional foundations of activities of public associations are given in Article 56, "Trade unions, political parties, scientists 'societies, women's, veterans' and youth organizations, creative associations, mass movements and other associations of citizens registered in the manner prescribed by law in the Republic of Uzbekistan are considered as public associations ".

At the same time, freedom of association to public organizations is within certain limits. At the same time, this right cannot be used for anti-social purposes. In this regard, "To forcibly change the constitutional order, oppose sovereignty, integrity and security of the republic, the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens, promoting war, social, national, racial and religious hatred, encroach on health and spirituality of the people, establishment and activities of associations, national and religious political parties and public associations, as well as secret societies and associations are prohibited in Constitution" [11].

The above constitutional principles were further developed in a number of legislative acts and other documents adopted by the President and the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan [12].

In recent years, a number of measures have been taken to further improve of organizational and legal framework of civil society institutions.

The President of Uzbekistan Sh.Mirziyoev addressed the issue: "In 2017, such nongovernmental nonprofit organizations as Nuroniy Foundation, the Youth Union, the Council of Farmers, dehqan farms and homeowners of Uzbekistan, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Republican Council for Coordination of the Activities of Self-Governing Bodies" and adopted separate decrees and resolutions aimed at improving and supporting the activities of non-profit organizations" [13].

Improvement of these legal frameworks has not only created an independent sphere of legal regulation of social relations in the national legal system, but also gave a systematic nature [14].

For purpose of further development of independent nongovernmental nonprofit organizations and civil society institutions and assistance to their active participation in implementation of democratic changes and liberalization of the country, creation of independent system and objective conditions for the formation of sources of funding under the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan; the activities of the Parliamentary Commission on Funds Management enable the civil society institutions to support the so-called "third sector" to ensure a more transparent, focused and, most importantly, democratic distribution of public funds. This has a positive impact on strengthening the organizational, technical and economic basis of the activities of nongovernmental nonprofit organizations.

According to the dynamics of development of civil society institutions operating in Uzbekistan, the number of nongovernmental nonprofit organizations registered with the Ministry of Justice was 6226 in 2012, 7866 in 2013, 8,190 in 2014, and 8417 in 2015 respectively [15]. Today this number is 9,200 [16].

The distribution of nongovernmental nonprofit organizations by organizational and legal forms is as follows: public associations - 71%, other organizational and legal forms - 19%, public funds - 6%, institutions - 4% [17].

The changes taking place in all spheres of life in the country require further development of a cultural tolerance and understanding interfaith, equal rights and opportunities for all citizens of the country, and rising friendly and cultural-enlightenment relations to a higher level.

As a result, the Committee on Interethnic Relations and Friendship with Foreign Countries under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan was established on the basis of the Republican International Cultural Center and the Center for Friendship Societies under the Decree of the President of the country dated May 19, 2017 PF 5046.

The Committee is committed to ensure peace and harmony among citizens of different nationalities, strengthening the sense of a single multinational family in the minds of our compatriots, supporting and further developing the activities of national cultural centers and friendship societies, expanding cultural and educational ties with foreign countries, promotion of essence and significance of achievements of our country in various spheres of society, as well as the work done in this direction and implementation of the state policy aimed at effective coordination of the activities step-by-step [18].

Today, 138 national cultural centers operate in the Committee. There are 14 national cultural centers in the country: 23 in Tashkent, 6 in the Republic of Karakalpakstan and 95 in regions. Currently, the Committee operates friendship societies with 34 foreign countries, as well as its partners from 18 countries.

In addition, the committee has established contacts with 29 Uzbek emigrants and Diasporas abroad, in conjunction with them to discuss Uzbek cultural days, language, national traditions, customs, conferences, seminars, round tables, exhibitions, quizzes and concerts and other events. This activity will have a positive impact on further strengthening of interethnic relations.

While the activities of civil society institutions cover different areas of society, there are still a number of issues that need to be addressed. "... there is insufficient involvement of these organizations in the systematic study of population's problems, their exact solution, especially in support of vulnerable women, prevention of crime among youth and women, and their employment," notes Mirziyoyev Sh.M.- They are just busy with holding useless meetings " [19].

In turn, there are no effective and constructive mechanisms of dialogue between the state and civil society, the systematic analysis of the needs of nongovernmental nonprofit organizations and the lack of effective platforms for exchange of views on important issues of further development of the state and society have a negative impact on sustainable development of relations.

Sh. Mirziyoev also believes that it is advisable to set up a Civil Society Advisory Council under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan to further enhance the effectiveness of cooperation and legal dialogue between the legal state and civil society [20].

On May 4, 2018, the Decree No PD-5430 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Measures for Radical Increase of the Role of Civil Society Institutions in the Democratic Renovation of the Country" was adopted [21].

These efforts and initiatives show that the role of civil society institutions is unique and that these issues are addressed at the state level.

The President of Uzbekistan notes the following problems: "Upto this date there are no clear legal mechanisms for effective public control over the activities of state bodies. This hampers the unbiased assessment of activities of state bodies and officials by nongovernmental nonprofit organizations. In this regard, it is necessary to adopt the Law «On public control» in order to introduce effective and practical mechanisms of public control in the state and public administration» [22].

In this regard, the Law "On Public Control" was adopted on April 12, 2018, with the aim of introducing effective and practical mechanisms of public control in the state and public administration. The purpose of this law is to regulate relations in the field of organization and implementation of public control over the activities of state bodies and institutions [23]. There are also public councils operating under government agencies. According to the President of Uzbekistan Sh.Mirziyoev, "... these public councils should serve as a bridge that ensures transparency of activities of state bodies and directly connects them with population" [24].

The legal basis and the charter of public councils are defined by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated July 4, 2018 No PD-3837 "On measures to organize the activities of public councils under public authorities" [25].

Therefore, in order to create effective mechanisms of parliamentary and public control in modernization of the country, reforming and democratizing our society, the President of Uzbekistan will study the real situation in cities and districts, introduce the order of relevant leaders' reports to the sessions of the councils. Emphasizing that experience should be introduced, he showed that: "Their main purpose and function is to maintain a regular dialogue with all categories of population, not only to study the legal demands and needs of citizens, but also to provide them" [26].

III. The process of transfer of centralized state powers

In the process of improving the system of state and social construction, the transfer of centralized powers to local bodies of state power, self-government, and public organizations is an indication of a new phase of civil society development. "One of the most difficult problems for us is the over-centralization of functions and powers of the state," Sh. Mirziyoyev said.

To do this, however, it is necessary to give up "excessive centralization of public administration. For this purpose it is necessary to solve a number of tasks related to the transfer of many powers from the central state bodies to the territorial bodies "[27].

Licensing functions for 9 activities within the framework of the State Program on implementation of the Action Strategy in the "Year of Active Entrepreneurship, Innovative Ideas and Technology Support" from the Cabinet of Ministers. territorial administrations and local authorities, district khokimiyats from the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, regional and Khokimiyats of Tashkent have been granted a two-way authorization function for district khokimiyats [28].

If we look at the dynamics of the number of mass media in Uzbekistan, there were 1,218 media outlets in 2009, 1437 in 2015 and more than 1,500 at present respectively. Television and radio broadcasts in 12 national languages and print publications in more than ten languages are functioning.

On initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.Mirziyoev, the University of Journalism and Mass Communication was established in accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated May 24, 2018 to address a number of problems in the system of training of qualified personnel in this area.

The activities of mass media are important in combining the efforts of state and civil society institutions to further accelerate and diversify the country with multinational nation, and as a kind of modern, democratic and open space, and to establish a high level of systematic and effective dialogue between them.

Also, activities related to preservation and development of national culture, language, traditions in the development of interethnic relations should be dedicated to the development of scenarios, preparation and presentation of cultural programs by national cultural centers in the media; assistance with information support in conducting ethnocultural events; effective use of the media's capacity is essential to promote best practices in the promotion of national policy principles, and to create an uncompromising public opinion against the threats that threaten national unity is very significant.

In improving interethnic relations, civil society institutions are committed to protect the lives of different ethnic groups, while pursuing its goals and interests through specific community organizations, social institutions and other associations.

These institutions of civil society, in turn, help the individual to feel that he or she is the source of power, regardless of their particular ethnicity, and to ensure that his or her worth and reputation are recognized as the highest value in society.

"Our goal is to ensure the power of the people, not in words, but in practice"- says Sh. Mirziyoev,- We must organize our activities under the motto "The Great Future Begins Today," and do our best to ensure the well-being of our people" [29]. Successful implementation of these tasks is important in ensuring the interests of nationalities and ethnic groups that make up the ethnic composition of multi-ethnic state, including social partnerships and public control in cooperation with state bodies and civil society institutions, and creating favorable conditions for enhancing the participation of these institutions in government and public administration.

In our view, in further strengthening the role of civil society institutions in improving inter-ethnic relations, we must consider the following:

organization of conferences, seminars, webinars, consultations, round tables, discussions, workshops, for training of activists and leaders of national cultural centers;

assistance in ensuring consensus and peace in society through the development of intolerant attitudes towards xenophobia and extremism by enhancing the political culture and legal awareness of citizens of different ethnic groups;

assistance in the development and implementation of innovative projects and programs for the development of ethnography;

formation of communication platforms for training of active leaders of national groups, conducting seminars, creative activities with students of different nationalities studying in higher educational institutions and organization of youth internship in national cultural centers;

monitoring of interethnic and interfaith relations;

establishing constructive dialogue of various forces in social and political arena;

to get acquainted with methodical literature (brochures, bulletins, methodological manuals, etc.) on the development of interethnic relations, and modern scientific literature on interethnic issues, to organize exhibitions on social partnership between state bodies and non governmental non-profit organizations in improving interethnic relations and others.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is important to note that civil society institutions are now an important factor in ensuring inter-ethnic harmony in the protection of democratic values, human rights and freedoms, as well as the conditions for realization of their potential, increasing their

social, political, economic activity and legal culture. It promotes a balance of interests in society.

The following theoretical conclusions were reached regarding the role and importance of civil society institutions in improving interethnic relations:

Civil society institutions represent the interests of different groups of population, including different ethnic groups;

It ensures unity and solidarity among members of society and forms a culture of reconciliation;

Strengthening democratic values in the minds of citizens, enhancing their political and civic engagement, and expanding and deepening the democratic changes taking place in the country is an important factor;

It is the main tool for public control over the activities of state and authorities;

Use of its potential in understanding national identity, enhancing political and legal culture and national outlook of society, introducing national ideas and ideas of national independence;

Civil society institutions are equal social partners in the implementation of issues of public interest;

Adoption of more than 200 regulatory and legal acts aimed at increasing the effectiveness of non-governmental non-profit organizations, [30] and the establishment of institutional framework necessary for their comprehensive support creates favorable conditions for increasing the number of non-governmental non-profit organizations and public associations representing various interests in the society.

For further enhancement of participation and effectiveness of civil society institutions in improving inter-ethnic relations in the democratization of society, it is recommended:

Development and implementation of a perspective roadmap for government agencies and civil society institutes under the leadership of the Committee on Interethnic Relations and Friendship with Foreign Countries under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan on social partnership for improving social relations, promote inter-ethnic harmony and religious tolerance, and build national solidarity;

supporting the expansion of social services to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; initiation of fundamental and applied research with the participation of scientific and expert groups on improvement of inter-ethnic relations in conditions of democratization of society by non-governmental and non-profit organizations;

organization of systematic study, generalization and analysis of public opinion on the state policy and its practical results in development of interethnic concord and religious tolerance and preparation of appropriate proposals;

effective use of capacity of non-governmental non-profit organizations in addressing environmental and ecological issues, improving public health and social rehabilitation of stray youth;

discussing relevant issues concerning various nationalities and ethnic groups living in Uzbekistan by civil society institutions, as well as preparing and providing analytical reports to relevant authorities on status and trends of emerging conflicts in interethnic relations.

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