

## **Strengthening Of International And Religious Tolerance Is The Basis Of The Third Renaissance In Uzbekistan**

**Mukhammadolim Mukhammadsidiqov<sup>1</sup>, Soipov Bekhzod<sup>2</sup>**

*I* – Doctor Of Political Sciences, Professor, International Islamic Academy Of Uzbekistan, Tashkent,  
Uzbekistan E-Mail: [M.Muxammadsiddiqov@iiau.Uz](mailto:M.Muxammadsiddiqov@iiau.Uz)

### **Annotation**

This Article Analyzed Religious Tolerance And Its Role In Ensuring Social Stability. The Principles Of Ensuring Interethnic Harmony And Peace In The Country And Uzbekistan's National Policy In This Area Would Be Discussed. The Article Also Based On The Fact That People Of Different Nationalities And Religions Live In Peace In Our Society, And The Traditions Of Religious Tolerance Inherent In Our People Had Deep Historical Roots. Attention Was Paid To The Reforms Being Carried Out In The Country In Recent Years, Including Large-Scale Reforms In The Religious And Educational Spheres, Which Were The Basis For The Third Renaissance In Uzbekistan.

**Keywords:** Tolerance, Religious Tolerance, The Third Renaissance, Religious And Enlightenment Reforms, Enlightened Islam, Freedom Of Religion, Religious Confessions

### **Introduction**

Since Ancient Times, Peoples Had Lived On Earth With Different Cultures, Languages, Customs, And Lifestyles While Professing Different Religions. From A Geographical Point Of View, Our Country's Location Always Played The Most Crucial Role In The Vital Trade Routes. Its Cultural Ties With Many States Significantly Influenced Religious And Cultural Life And Became One Factor That Determined A Peculiar Way Of Life. Throughout Our People's History, There Were Many Examples Of Peaceful Coexistence And Cooperation Of Representatives Of Different Nations And Religions, Their Tolerance, Peacefulness, And Community Sense. That Is Why Conflicts On Religious Grounds Had Never Occurred Within The Territory Of Uzbekistan. A Warm Relationship Could Be Observed In The Relationship Between The Islamic, Christian, And Jewish Religious Communities.

Religious Tolerance Also Played An Essential Role In Ensuring Peace And Stability In Society. The Tradition Of Religious Tolerance That Was Inherent In Our People Had Deep Historical Roots. The Policy Of Independent Uzbekistan In Religion Also Served To Strengthen These Traditions And Enriched Them Meaningfully. In Its Relations With Religious Organizations, While Knowing Its Principles, The State Adhered To The Following Principles.

First, Respect For Believers' Religious Feelings, Recognizing Religious Beliefs As A Private Matter Of Citizens Or Their Legal Associations.

Second, The Guarantee Of Equal Rights And Citizens' Persecution Inadmissibility, Both Practicing And Non-Practicing Religious Beliefs.

Thirdly, The Need To Search For A Dialogue With Various Religious Associations To Use Their Spiritual Revival Capabilities And The Establishment Of Universal Human Moral Values.

### **Materials And Methods**

Tolerance Means Respect, Acceptance, And Correct Understanding Of The Rich Diversity Of Cultures In Our World, Forms Of Self-Expression, And Human Individuality Manifestation. "It Is Promoted By Knowledge, Openness, Communication, And Freedom Of Thought, Integrity, And Belief. Tolerance Is Unity In Diversity. This Is Not Only A Moral Duty But Also A Political And Legal Need. Tolerance Is What Makes It Possible To Achieve Peace And Leads From A Culture Of War To A Culture Of Peace," Article 1 Of The Declaration Of Principles Of Tolerance. With A Population Of Almost 34 Million, Uzbekistan, Both Geographically And Politically, Formed Central Asia's Backbone. One Of The Most Ancient Civilizations In The World Arose In This Region; The Great Silk Road Passed Through Central Asia. The History Of The Uzbek People Went Back Centuries And Had More

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Than Three Millennia.

The States Of Ancient Turan, Movorannahr, Turkestan, Which Flourished On This Territory, Left A Bright Mark On World Culture And Human Civilization. Since Ancient Times, Cities Such As Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent, Khiva, Shakhrisabz, Termez Had Been Known To The Whole World, Whose Connections In The Depths Of Centuries Stretched From China To Spain, From Europe To Asia. These Cities Were Famous For Their Majestic Architectural Ensembles And Were Cultural Centers To Which Prominent Thinkers And Creators Worldwide Aspired.

Sahibkiran Amir Temur, Who Made Samarkand The Capital Of His State, Patronized And Supported Scientists, Philosophers, Architects, Poets, And Musicians Worldwide. Spiritual, Cognitive, Aesthetic, And Legal Values Occupied An Essential Place In The Way Of Life And Our People's Traditional Culture. We Honor And Are Proud Of Our History And Great Ancestors - The Thinkers Of The East Al-Bukhari, At-Termizi, Ahmad Yassavi, Bahouddin Naqshbandi, Al-Khorezmiy, Beruni, Ibn Sino, Navoi, Ulugbek, And Others Who Made A Respected Contribution To The Development Of World Civilization. Over The Past Three Years And More, The Country Had Undergone Significant Changes And Implemented Large-Scale Reforms In Many Areas, Including In The Religious And Educational Sphere.

In Particular:

- For An In-Depth Study Of Islam And Teaching Its Scientific Foundations, The International Islamic Academy Of Uzbekistan Was Founded;

- The Higher Madrasah "Mir-Arab" In The Bukhara Region And The School Of Hadith Studies In The Samarkand Region Began Their Activities. As A Result, The Number Of Higher Religious, Educational Institutions In The Republic Had Reached Three Along With The Tashkent Islamic Institute;

- The Charitable Foundation "Waqf" Was Created, The Center For Islamic Civilization Of Uzbekistan, The International Research Centers Of Imam Bukhari, Imam Termizi, And Imam Moturidiy Were Organized;

- 8 Decrees Of The President Of The Republic Of Uzbekistan Were Adopted On Acquitting Persons Who Committed Crimes On Religious Grounds, Within The Framework Of Which More Than 4 Thousand People Were Released From Detention Centers;

- Over 20 Thousand Citizens Involved In Extremist Groups Had Been Removed From The "Special Register," Thus Discontinued The Practice Of Further Maintaining Such "Blacklists";

- The Specialized Penal Colony "Zhaslyk," Located In The Village Of Zhaslyk Of The Republic Of Karakalpakstan, Was Closed;

- In 2019, Humanitarian Actions "Mehr-1" And "Mehr-2" Were Successfully Carried Out.

As Part Of These Events, 261 People, Mainly Women, And Children Were Returned To Their Homeland From The Territories Of Armed Clashes In The Middle East And Afghanistan. The Government Provided Medical, Psychological, Material And Moral Assistance To The Returned Compatriots. To Return To A Peaceful Life, Re-socialization, As Well As To Participate In Educational And Social Programs Actively, All Conditions Had Been Created, And Measures Had Been Taken To Provide Them With Work And Housing;

- 35 Religious Organizations Were Registered, Of Which 26 Are Mosques And Nine Churches. At The Same Time, I Would Like To Emphasize That The National Legislation Did Not Provide For Any Restrictions On The Number Of Religious Organizations Or The Timing Of Their Registration;

- Canceled The Quota (Restriction) On The Pilgrimage Of Umrah. Every Day 490 Uzbek Citizens Travel To Saudi Arabia For The Umrah Pilgrimage;

Together With The Muslim Board Of Uzbekistan, A Regulatory And Legal Framework Was Created To Implement The Activities Of The "Otinoya," Whose Legal Status Was Granted By The Same Board.

Only 2,298 Religious Organizations Of 16 Religious Confessions Operated In The Republic Of Uzbekistan. Of These, There Were 2107 Muslim Organizations, Which Was 92 Percent Of The Total. In Uzbekistan, 174 Christian Organizations, 8 Jewish Communities, Six Communities Of The Bahá'í Faith, One Hare Krishna Society And One Buddhist Temple, And The Interfaith Bible Society Of Uzbekistan Operate. Believers Annually Made Pilgrimages To Holy Places: Muslims To Saudi Arabia To Perform The Rituals Of Hajj And Umrah, Christians To Russia, Greece, And Israel, And Jews To Israel. During The Years Of Independence, 308 Thousand Muslims Made A Pilgrimage To Saudi Arabia, Incl. 130 Thousand - Hajj And 178 Thousand - Umrah, More Than 2.5 Thousand Christians, And Jews Visited Religious Shrines In Israel, Russia, Turkey, Italy, Georgia, And Greece.

Such A Qualitative State's Achievement Was A Natural Result Of Uzbekistan's National Policy, One That Was Based On Civil And Universal Values. Speaking About This Policy's Essence Should Be Noted That From The

First Days Of Independence, The Country's Leadership And Solving Social, Economic, And Political Problems Began To Attach Priority Importance To The Restoration Of Ethno Cultural Values Traditions. The Legal Basis For Such A Policy Was Enshrined In The Republic Of Uzbekistan's Constitution And The Legislative Framework Created On Its Basis.

### **Discussion**

The National Policy Of Uzbekistan In This Area Was Based On The Following Principles:

Firstly, Ensuring Equal Rights And Freedom Of Citizens And Their Equality Before The Law, Without Distinction Of Sex, Race, Nationality, Language, Religion, Social Origin And Beliefs, Personal And Social Status.

Secondly, Ensuring Public Life Development Based On The Diversity Of Political Institutions, Ideologies, And Opinions.

Thirdly, Ensuring Respect For The Languages, Customs, And Traditions Of Representatives Of Various Nations And Nationalities Created The Necessary Conditions For Their Development.

Based On The Constitutional Provision That "The People Of Uzbekistan Are Citizens Of The Republic Of Uzbekistan, Regardless Of Their Nationality" (Article 8), We Can Say That All The Rights And Freedoms Preserved In The Basic Law Are Equally Applied To Representatives Of All Nations And Nationalities, Without Exception. The Basic Principles Of The National Policy Of Uzbekistan Found Their Absolute Embodiment In Life. So, At Present More Than 140 National And Cultural Centers Function In Our Country. It Should Be Noted That The Complex Spiritual And Educational Activities Of National Cultural Centers Were An Essential Factor Contributing To The Establishment Of The Spirit Of Mutual Respect And Interethnic Tolerance In Our Typical Home - Uzbekistan.

Summarizing All Of The Above Should Be Noted That Uzbekistan's Social And Political Stability Results From A Profoundly Thought-Out Policy Aimed At Ensuring Interethnic Peace And Civil Harmony In The Country. For, As The World's And Uzbekistan's Own Experience Accumulated Over The Years Of Independence Showed, The Essential Condition For The Successful Implementation Of Full-Scale Transformations In The Economic, Political, And Spiritual Spheres, And The Fundamental Reform Of Social Relations Was To Ensure Social And Political Stability, Civil Peace And Interethnic Harmony In The Country. In 1991, Having Proclaimed Its State Independence, Uzbekistan Entered The Era Of Revival Of Its Spiritual And Intellectual Values, Drastic Transformations In The Economic, Political, Social, And Legal Spheres.

More Than A Century Later, The Uzbek People Once Again Became Independent, Had The Opportunity To Decide Their Destiny, Revived Their Culture, And Ensured Spiritual Rebirth. Uzbekistan Was Building A Democratic Rule Of Law And A Secular, Fair Civil Society With An Open Market Economy And A Robust Social Protection System. In The Difficult Years Of The Transition Period, We Reached A Widespread Consensus On The Need, Directions, And Forms Of Development Of Political Institutions That Had Made Tangible Shifts In Democratic Reforms And Preserved Political Stability, Peace, And Interethnic Harmony. The Uzbek People Were Historically Characterized By Communal Social Self-Organization, Rooted In The Traditional Way Of Life. It Manifested Itself In The Priority Of The Interests Of The Family, Commitment To The Communal Nature Of The Population's Life, And Left An Imprint On Society's Entire Social Structure. Many Forms Of The Existing System Of Organization Of Production And Labor Also Had Community Features. Uzbekistan Itself Can Be Viewed As A Kind Of Community Where It Is Impossible To Live Prosperously And With Dignity Without Mutual Respect And Lasting Order, Without Strict Fulfillment Of One's Duties And Mutual Concern. Therefore, Uzbekistan's Choice Of Its Path Of Transition To A Socially-Oriented Market Economy Was To A Certain Extent Related To The National-Historical Way Of Life, Way Of Thinking, Folk Traditions, And Customs.

At The Beginning Of The Xxi Century, It Became Apparent That There Are No Universal Models Of Socio-Political And Socio-Economic Development That Were Equally Acceptable For Any Country. The Boundaries Between The Orthodox Concepts Of "Capitalist" And "Socialist" Had Practically Disappeared; The Time Had Ripened For The Formation Of A New Thinking, Free "From Ideological Dogmas, Revealing All The Varieties Of Forms And Ways Of The Transition Of Each Country To A Qualitatively New State." The Fundamentally New First Constitution Of Sovereign Uzbekistan, Adopted On December 8, 1992, Was Highly Appreciated By Independent International Experts. And Met The High Criteria Of A Democratic Constitution And Guaranteed Fundamental Human Rights And Freedoms. Article 18 Of The Constitution Reads: "All Citizens Of The Republic Of Uzbekistan Have The Same Rights And Freedoms And Are Equal Before The Law Without Distinction

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Of Sex, Race, Nationality, And Language Of Religion, Social Origin, Beliefs, Personal And Social Status."

National Referendums, Complementary And Alternative Elections Of The Head Of State, Parliament, Local Representative Bodies, And Citizens' Self-Government Bodies Were Regularly Held In Uzbekistan, There Was A Clear Division Of Powers, A Multi-Party System, And Civil Society Institutions Were Developing, Including Non-Governmental, Non-Profit Organizations And Religious Organizations. For Democratic Reforms, Tolerance, Society's Security, And Security Of The Individual And The State Are Vital. Without It, It Is Practically Impossible To Solve Other Important Issues. Uzbekistan Firmly And Consistently Stands For Ensuring Security And Stability In All Regions, And Primarily In Central Asia. Naturally, The Essential Guarantee And Foundations For Forming New Social Relations In This Region's States Are Stability, Peace, Ethnicity, And Civil Consent.

Today In Uzbekistan, There Is A Complex But Dynamic And Consistent Process Of Liberalization Of All Spheres Of Public Life, The Formation Of Political And National Self-Awareness Of People, The Spiritual Revival Of New Democratic Values, The Construction Of An Open Democratic Rule Of Law, And The Formation Of Civil Society Institutions. Successful Progress Along The Path Of Democratic And Market Reforms Required Taking Into Account The Specifics Of The Region's Cultural And Historical Heritage And The Mentality Inherent In The Uzbek People.

"Our Greatest Asset In Recent Years Was Peace And Stability; Interethnic And Civil Harmony In Our Typical Home. Understanding This Value And Its Enduring Significance Is Growing Every Day In The Minds Of Our People. "A Distinctive Feature Of Modern Uzbekistan Is The Uniqueness Of Its Multinational Composition. The Overwhelming Majority Of The Populations Are Uzbeks - Over 80%. The Ethnic Palette Of The Republic's Population Includes Representatives Of More Than 130 Nations And Nationalities With Their Own Unique Culture And Traditions Hallowed For Centuries. Based On This, The Main Priority Of The National Policy Pursued By The President Of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev And The Government Of The Country Was The Creation Of Equal Conditions And Opportunities For The Development Of Representatives Of All Nations And Harmonization Of Interethnic Relations."

"The Republican International Cultural Center Activities And More Than 140 National Cultural Centers Operating In The Republic Were Aimed At Reviving National Traditions, Customs, Rituals, Developing Spirituality And Culture, And Harmonizing Interethnic Relations. Their Active Participation In The Preparation And Holding Of Large National Holidays, Significant Events In The Cultural Life Of The Country Created An Amazing Atmosphere Of Spiritual Generosity And Warmth, Which Again And Again Can Allow You To Experience The Feeling Of A Single-Family, To Realize The Deep Meaning That Was Embedded In The Words: "Uzbekistan Is Our Common House!"

The Richness And Diversity Of Peoples' Cultural Traditions, Interethnic Harmony, And Citizens' Spiritual Unity Were Especially Clearly Manifested During Public Holidays. During The Holidays, National And International Concerts, Cultural Centers Held Meetings With Creative Intellectuals. They Were Complemented By Festive Programs At City Squares, Parks, And Palaces Of Culture, Creative Unions, Gymnasiums, Lyceums, And Libraries. The National Cultural Centers Considered Such Festive Activities As Main Attractions And Opportunities To Contribute To The Reunion And Mutual Understanding Of People Of All Diverse And Spiritual Backgrounds. National Cultural Centers' Very Existence And Active Activity Convincingly Proved That Today Without These Public Associations, It Could Be Practically Impossible To Successfully Solve The Problems Of Improving Interethnic Relations, Strengthen International Education, Foster Friendship And Mutual Understanding Between Peoples.

Uzbekistan Had Always Been Distinguished By The Spirit Of Inter-Ethnic Respect And Harmony In A Multinational And Multi-Faith Environment. The Preservation Of Interethnic Harmony In Uzbekistan Is Facilitated By The Legislative Framework That Corresponds To International Democratic Principles: Geared Towards Resolving And Strengthening Civilian Equalities In The Republic.

History Showed Many Examples Of People Of Different Nationalities And Religions Had Lived As One Family For Many Centuries. Uzbekistan Was One Such Proof As To The Center Of The Most Diverse Nationalities, Religions, Cultures, And Traditions That Had Peacefully Coexisted For Millennia. Since Ancient Times, Different Civilizations - Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, And More Ancient Ones - Had Closely Coexisted Here And Complemented And Enriched Each Other.

On This Land, The Global Mutual Enrichment Of World Cultures Had Taken Place For Many Centuries. Therefore, It Was No Coincidence That 16 Religious Trends And Confessions Were Represented In Uzbekistan. We Can Proudly Say That We Had Not Had Any Manifestations Of Persecution Of People Throughout The History Of

Our People On A National Or Religious Basis. Throughout Its History, The Uzbek People Had Always Shown Tolerance And Respect Towards Representatives Of Other Peoples And Faiths. Ethnic, Cultural, And Religious Tolerance And Openness Had Become Natural Norms, Characteristics Of The Uzbek People.

Peace, Religious And Ideological Tolerance, The Participation Of Representatives Of Various Nations And Nationalities On An Equal Basis In Society's Life Had Become The Hallmark Of Uzbekistan Today. Democracy And Human Rights Fully Met The National Interests Of Uzbekistan And The National Idea Of Our Freedom-Loving People. Tolerance Had Centuries-Old Roots In Our Country. Therefore, It Was Not Surprising That Along With Islam's Immortal And Eternal Shrines In Uzbekistan, The Japanese Archaeologist Kato Discovered The Unique Buddhist Cultural Monuments In The Surkhandarya Valley. As Well As Led To The Discovery Of Jewish Monuments And Places Of Pilgrimage For Christians. Uzbekistan Had Actively Supported The Adoption Of The "Declaration Of Principles Of Tolerance" By The Unesco General Conference On November 16, 1995. And In This Sense, It Is Noteworthy That The "Declaration Of Principles Of Tolerance" In The Uzbek Language Was Published In 2000, Celebrated As The International Year Of The "Culture Of Peace."

On November 16, The International Day Of Tolerance Was Widely Celebrated By Organizing Special Events And Programs. It Aimed To Spread Tolerance Among Citizens Through Joint Efforts Pioneered By State And Non-Governmental Organizations And The Media. In 2000, The Unesco International Congress Participants On Interfaith Dialogue And A Culture Of Peace Had Adopted The Tashkent Declaration, Which Aimed To Promote Interreligious Dialogue And Cooperation As An Essential Step In The Struggle For A Culture Of Peace. First Of All, Tolerance Is An Enthusiastic Attitude Formed Based On The Recognition Of Universal Human Rights And Fundamental Freedoms. Tolerance Forebears The Responsibility To Promote Human Rights, Pluralism (Including Cultural Pluralism), Democracy, And The Rule Of Law.

The Culture Of Uzbekistan, Which Had Absorbed The Best Achievements Of Previous Times, Had, In Turn, A Tangible Impact Not Only On The Subsequent Development Of Islamic Culture But Also On The Western Renaissance, On The Development Of The Principles Of Tolerance On A Global Scale. Therefore, Our Peoples' Cultural Achievements Are Considered An Integral Part Of Not Only Muslim But Also World Culture. The Collection Of Hadiths "Al-Jomi 'As-Sahih" (Ix) Of Imam Al-Bukhari, Created During The 9<sup>th</sup> Century, Was Recognized By Contemporaries As The Best Among The Traditional Sunni Collections And Remained One Of The Leading Books Of Reference For Muslims Of The World.

In "Al-Jomi 'As-Sahih," The Absence Of Ideas That Could Become The Basis For Religious Rejection Shows The Principles Of Tolerance Prevails Throughout Uzbekistan's History. The Tolerance That Existed At That Time Allowed Representatives Of Religious Thought, Such As Imam Bukhari, Imam Termiziy, And Representatives - Possessors Of Secular Knowledge And Bearers Of The Idea Of The Prevalence Of Scientific Values, Such As Farabi, Khorezmi, Beruniy - To Create And Live Side By Side At The Same Time.

The Mongol Invasion In The Xiii Century Had A Peculiar Influence On Islam's Post-Invasion Development In The Region. The Sufi Currents Formed By That Time Became A Factor Uniting The People Against The Non-Muslim Invaders. The Sufis Later Actively Participated In The Sarbadar Movement. It Was In Such A Religious Atmosphere That The Great Amir Timur Was Born. During The Timurid Rule, Islam Played An Essential Role In Central Asia's Social, Political, And Cultural Life. In His "Tuzuk," Amir Timur Wrote The Following: "I Helped The Religion Of Allah And The Sharia Of Muhammad To The Best Of My Ability." He Understood Islam As A Religion Free From Fanaticism And As A Universal Religion. His Understanding And Mastery Of The Faith Enabled Him To Take Care Of Other Religious Minorities On His Land. Distinguishing The Importance Of This Aspect, King Charles Vi Of France Wrote To Timur The Following: "I Express My Gratitude To You For Your Concern, Disposition And The Blessings Presented To Many Christians. We Are Ready, In Turn, To Serve For The Benefit Of Your People In Accordance With Your Help, Or Even More".

Amir Timur's Ambassador To The States Of Europe, Archbishop John, In His Book "Memoir Sur Tamerlan Et Sa Cour" Gives The Following Characterization Of Amir Timur's Personality: "Timur Welcomes Foreign, In Particular French And Christian Merchants, Provides Them With Security, Care And Assistance Throughout The Country." It Was This Statement That Made It Possible For Lyanglu, Who Translated "Timur's Foundations" Into French, To Write That "Incorrect Commenting On History Prevented The Correct Interpretation, Perception, And Assessment Of Amir Timur's Personality." Uzbekistan, Which Had A Substantial Spiritual Heritage And Traditions Of Tolerance From The First Days Of Independence, Had Fundamentally And Accurately Defined Its Attitude Towards Religion.

Article 31, Of The Republic Of Uzbekistan's Constitution Guaranteed Freedom Of Conscience, The Possibility Of Unimpeded Performance Of Religious Rituals, The Practice Of Any Religion, Or Generally Not Belonging To Any Religion. On June 14, 1991, In The Country's Legal Practice, The Law "On Freedom Of

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Conscience And Religious Organizations" Was Adopted. Based On These Legal Documents, The State Created An Opportunity For Freedom Of Conscience Without Interfering In Religious Leaders' Religious Affairs. The Importance And Necessity Of Religion In The Education Of A Person With The Highest Qualities Were Recognized. Simultaneously, The State Took Measures To Prevent The Politicization Of Religions And The Emergence Of Extremist And Fundamentalist Movements.

Religious Leaders Could Help Establish Harmony, Calmness, And Mutual Respect. Confirmation Of This Notion Was Embodied By Holding An International Muslim-Christian Conference In Our Region In The City Of Tashkent Under The Slogan "Under One Sky." The 125th Anniversary Of The Establishment Of The Tashkent And Central Asian Diocese Of The Russian Orthodox Church Was Solemnly Celebrated. At The Invitation Of The President Of The Republic Of Uzbekistan, The Patriarch Of Moscow And All Russia, As Well As Alexei Ii, Who First Visited Central Asia, Took Part In The Celebrations. In His Speech, He Said The Following: "I Think That Good Cooperation And Prolific Ties Between Government Agencies And Religious Organizations In Uzbekistan Would Become A Good Example For Other Republics Of The Commonwealth Of Independent States." In December Of That Year, The 100th Anniversary Of The Evangelical Lutheran Church Was Widely Celebrated In The Capital City Of Tashkent.

It Should Be Noted That The World Community Positively Assessed The Reforms Aimed At Ensuring Religious Tolerance And Freedom Of Religion In Uzbekistan. In Particular, The Us Commission On International Religious Freedom (Uscirf) Had Removed Uzbekistan From Its List Of "Countries Of Particular Concern." In A Report Released On April 28, 2020, The Commission Recommended That The Us State Department Added Uzbekistan To Its "Special Watch List Countries." This Decision Reflected The Tremendous Positive Changes That Had Taken Place In Uzbekistan In This Area. In The Introductory Part Of The Report, Two Countries That Had Made Positive Changes In This Area Had Been Highlighted.

The Us State Department Had Excluded Uzbekistan And Sudan From Its Special Watch List For Religious Freedom. "I Am Pleased To Announce That Sudan And Uzbekistan Had Been Removed From The Special Watch List Based On Significant, Concrete Progress Undertaken By Their Respective Governments Over The Past Year. The Bold Reforms Of Their Laws And Practices Stood As Models For Other Nations To Follow", Said Us Secretary Of State Michael Pompeo. Uzbekistan Was First Included In The List Of Violators In 2006. In November 2018, The State Department Placed Uzbekistan On A Watch List For Progress In Religious Freedom. These States Were Involved In Systematic, Ongoing, Egregious Violations Of Religious Freedom Or Tolerated Them, The State Department's Head Stressed. It Should Be Noted That The Achievements Of Uzbekistan In Ensuring Religious Freedom Were Recognized. This Was A Huge International Recognition For Uzbekistan.

As A Result Of The Consistent Policy Pursued Over The Past Four Years To Ensure Human Rights And Freedoms In Uzbekistan, Special Attention Was Paid Not Only To Uzbekistan Citizens Living In Our Country But Also To Other Countries In Difficult Situations, Protecting Their Interests, Honor, And Dignity. Our Compatriots Who Had Gone Abroad Under The Influence Of Foreign Ideas And Lost Their Spouses Or Parents In A Foreign Country Had Not Been Left Out Of Such Care. Following The President Of The Republic Of Uzbekistan's Instructions, A Total Of 220 People - Women And Children - Were Brought From Syria And Iraq In 2019 As Part Of The Humanitarian Operation "Mehr," And 96 People Were Brought From The Troubled Regions Of Afghanistan. It Was Especially Gratifying That Women And Children, Who Had Been Returned From The "Hot Spots" Over The Past Period, Were Finding Their Place In Society With The Help Of The State, Public Organizations, Our Kind Citizens. In General, Measures To Return Our Compatriots Detained In Camps In War-Torn Areas Of The Middle East Are Continually Being Carried Out By Special Services. As Part Of The Next Phase Of Operation Mehr-3, Which Was Being Carried Out Under The President's Direct Control, On December 8, 2020, 98 People, Including 25 Women And 73 Children, Were Returned To Uzbekistan From The Ongoing Fighting In Syria.

### **Conclusion**

The Following Points Characterize Sovereign Uzbekistan As A Country Of Historical Tolerance And Cultural Pluralism.

First, The Fundamental Element For All National, Ethnic, And Religious Groups In Uzbekistan Understood Uzbekistan As Their Homeland.

Secondly, Representatives Of Various National, Ethnic And Confessional Groups Coexist In An

Atmosphere Of Completed Agreement And Mutual Respect.

Thirdly, Regardless Of Their Nationality, The Citizens Of Uzbekistan Are Unanimous In The Opinion That The Phenomenon Of Tolerance And Interethnic Harmony That Took Place In Sovereign Uzbekistan And Considered As One Of The Factors Of Stability And Civil Peace In Our State.

Fourthly, The Phased And Consistent Advancement Of Uzbekistan To A Democratic Rule-Of-Law State And A Socially-Oriented Market Economy Was Directly Interconnected With The Further Development And Harmonization Of Interethnic And Interfaith Relations, Mutually Beneficial Partnership Of The T titular Nation, As A Leader, And National Communities And Communities, And Their Social Solidarity.

Fifth, The State Had Created Conditions For All Citizens' Legal Equality, Economic And Social Freedom, Regardless Of Their Nationality.

Sixth, The T titular Nation, Together With Other Ethnic Groups, Constituted A Powerful Potential For Stimulating And Accelerating The Processes Of Forming An Integral Social Consciousness. The Existing Interethnic Relations Were The Guarantor Of Ensuring Peace And Stability, Worthy Of Every Family's Life.

Seventh, Interethnic And Interfaith Harmony In Uzbekistan, Combined With The Growth Of National Identity And Spiritual Revival Of The Uzbek People, Was A Powerful Impetus For The Renewal Of Society, Its Democratization And Creates "Favorable Conditions For The Integration Of The Republic Into The World Community."

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