

## **Ethnic Policy Model of Republic of Uzbekistan**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Interethnic relations in the multiethnic society of Uzbekistan are relations between ethnic groups that cover all spheres of public life. The problem is multidimensional, including issues of history and modernity, the spiritual world of the individual, culture, education, sociology, psychology, economic, political, and legal relations. There are two levels of interethnic relations. The first is the interaction of ethnic groups in the sphere of public life: politics, culture, production, science, and art. Another level is the interpersonal relationships of people of different ethnic backgrounds in labor, family, educational, and informal types of relationships.

**KEYWORDS:** Ethnic policy, Ethno-political processes, Interethnic relations, Central Asia, Uzbekistan.

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**1. Introduction.** Ethno-political processes and interethnic relations are an important aspect of the socio-political life of any multinational, multi-ethnic society, an example of which is the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Ethnic politics in a broad sense is an integral part and a specific aspect of politics in a multi-ethnic, multi-ethnic state. Being included in the general context of politics, it has a certain independence, and in this capacity is able to both accelerate and slow down the course of social, and therefore national, development

Ethnic policy in the narrow sense is the strategic course of government structures, political parties, social movements of multinational (multi-ethnic) states in the national issue, which is enshrined in legislative acts, special programs and other relevant documents.

Equality, consolidation, interaction, joint prosperity of all ethnic groups – these are the basic principles of political management of ethno-social processes and interethnic relations in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Constitution [1] and other legislative acts (the Law “On the State Language” [2], the Law “On Citizenship” [3], etc.) state that all citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, regardless of nationality, are equal; the State guarantees the legitimate rights and interests of all nationalities, prohibits discrimination of any nationality, as well as actions aimed at undermining the unity of nationalities. The State opposes chauvinism and nationalism; each nation has the right to freely use and develop its own language and culture, and has the right to preserve its own beliefs, traditions, rituals, and customs. The main constitutional norms concerning ethnic aspects are enshrined in the articles 4, 8, 18, 21, 31, 57, 73, 74, 115 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Article 6 of the Labor Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Article 5 of the Law “On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations”, Article 6 of the Law “On Mass Media”, Article 24 of the Law “On the State Language”, etc.

Democratic ethnic policy is based on the following principles: equality of ethnic groups, interethnic, interethnic harmony and tolerance, a combination of ethnic and national interests, the prohibition of any form of undemocratic solution of the national question (nationalism, racism, fascism, apartheid, segregation, deportations, forced migration, forced assimilation, etc.), support for the rights of minorities to preserve their ethnic identity and identity. As noted by the National Center for Human Rights: “The state policy of Uzbekistan completely denies nationalism, racism, genocide, forced eviction or resettlement of peoples, infringement of other peoples and assimilation policies” [4].

One of the most important directions of the Development Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017–2021 is designated: “Ensuring security, interethnic harmony and religious tolerance” [5].

**2. Proposed techniques.** In the study of the developed problem, the author used general scientific methods – analysis and synthesis, ascent from the abstract to the concrete, generalization, abstraction, comparative analysis, observation, and a systematic approach. The author also relied on the dialectical principles of universal connection, development, unity of theory and practice, unity of ethnic and universal, as well as on the methodological guidelines put forward in modern works on ethnology, history, philosophy, sociology, political science, cultural studies, etc. The source and factual base of the study was

made up of published reference materials, state statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and international documents. The materials of the research conducted by the author as part of the groups of the Sociological Center “Izhtimoiy Fikr” in 2018–2021, the Department of “Modern History and International Studies” of the Institute of History in 2017–2020, the Department of “Foreign Language and Humanitarian Sciences” of the Tashkent branch Plekhanov Russian University of Economics in 2020–2021, the expert group of the Public Council for Modern History in 2017–2021. In theoretical terms, the research materials can be of some use in the further development of the problems of the theory of ethno-political processes and interethnic relations.

### **3. Results.**

#### **3.1. Historical and demographic aspects**

Uzbekistan is traditionally multi-ethnic and multi-ethnic. The history of interaction of various ethnic groups here goes back to ancient times. For centuries, Tajiks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Turkmens, Karakalpaks, Central Asian (Bukharian) Jews, Persians (Ironi), Arabs, Uyghurs, Dungans, etc. have lived next to the Uzbeks. For a long time, ethnic processes and interethnic relations in Uzbekistan have been characterized by openness, friendliness, and good-neighborliness. Most of the indigenous ethnic groups of the region are united by a deep economic and household, linguistic, confessional, and ethno-cultural affinity. As the outstanding orientalist N. I. Konrad said: “The history of each nation is always connected with the history of its neighbors. This connection, of course, can be very different – both in nature, and in intensity, and in scale, but it always exists. Therefore, in the history of peoples, there are factors created precisely by the commonality of historical life. Such a community is usually regional, i.e. it covers a certain group of neighboring countries, but it can also become very broad, including entire groups of countries. In modern times, it is even global, that is, on the scale of all mankind” [6, p. 17]. The ethnic composition of the population of Uzbekistan has been changing for a long time in the direction of an increasing number of representatives of various ethnic groups.

Currently, Uzbekistan is inhabited by representatives of more than 130 nations, nationalities, and ethnic groups. At the turn of the XX–XXI centuries, new trends emerged in the ethnic structure of Uzbekistan: the number of a number of ethnic groups decreased due to departure from the CIS (European and Bukharian Jews, Germans, Greeks, etc.) or to other CIS republics (Crimean Tatars, Meskhetian Turks, Kurds, Slavs, etc.); the number of some groups, on the contrary, increased due to entry from other republics (Tajiks, etc.); there are some ethnic groups that were previously absent or represented in a small number (Afghans, Indians, Chinese, etc.); there is a certain influx of the Uzbek population from outside the republic [7].

In general, the ethno-demographic situation in Uzbekistan is characterized by the following: the outflow of non-ethnic population is stabilizing, the influx of non-ethnic population continues, and the emergence of new population groups in the ethno-demographic structure of Uzbekistan is not excluded. Uzbekistan largely retains its ethnic diversity, and the stability of the social situation in the republic

guarantees the successful development of ethnodemographic processes. The stability of interethnic relations in Uzbekistan is noted not only by domestic, but also by foreign researchers [8].

### 3.2. Legal aspects of the problem

The basis of the management system of ethno–social processes and interethnic relations in modern Uzbekistan is the following basic principles :

- \* full equality of all citizens, regardless of their ethnic, racial, linguistic, or religious affiliation;
- \* priority of human rights over the rights of all groups, including ethnic groups;
- \* respect for the rights, cultures, languages, traditions, customs, and confessional characteristics of all ethnic minorities, and create conditions for preserving their specificity;
- \* development of the market economy, the rule of law, civil society, reform, renewal and modernization in the interests of all ethnic groups;
- \* resolution of any complex and problematic situations in inter–ethnic relations exclusively by peaceful and legal means;
- \* development of the principles of interethnic and interfaith tolerance; preservation of ethno–cultural diversity [9, p. 72–75].

The main sources of ensuring the management of ethno–social processes and interethnic relations in the Republic of Uzbekistan are:

- ☐ The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and other legislative acts in this area (the Law “On the State Language”, the Law “On the Foundations of State Independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan”, the Law “On Citizenship”, the Law “On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations”, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On measures to further improve interethnic relations and friendly relations with foreign countries”, etc.);
- ☐ international treaties in the field of human rights and humanitarian law, ratified by the Republic of Uzbekistan (universal Declaration of human rights, the Convention “On the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination”, the Final act of the Helsinki conference, the OSCE, the Declaration “On the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief”, etc.);
- ☐ adopted and ratified the resolutions and recommendations of international organizations, is a member of the Republic of Uzbekistan (UN, OSCE, CIS, SCO, etc.);
- ☐ bilateral and multilateral intergovernmental agreements regulating the status of ethnic minorities;
- ☐ Development Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017–2021

As the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination states: “Any theory of superiority based on racial difference is scientifically false, morally reprehensible, and

socially unjust and dangerous, and there can be no justification for racial discrimination anywhere, either in theory or in practice” [10, p. 72].

The elements of the management system are: practical actions to create an atmosphere of interethnic and interfaith tolerance in society, improvement of legal institutions and legislative mechanisms to ensure individual and collective human rights, including those of minorities (ethnic, racial, linguistic, confessional, cultural), measures to preserve the ethnic and cultural identity of minorities and their integration into society, ensuring proportional representation of ethnic minorities in all spheres of public life: political, economic, cultural [11].

Article 8 of the Constitution states: “The people of Uzbekistan are citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, regardless of their nationality”. Article 4 of the Constitution establishes the principle of ensuring the cultural development of minorities: Uzbekistan “ensures respect for the languages, customs and traditions of the nations and nationalities living on its territory, creating conditions for their development” [12].

According to article 15 of the Law “On the Foundations of State Independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan”: “All citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan, regardless of nation, nationality... have the same civil rights and are protected by the Constitution of the Republic and its laws” [13].

Important indicators of the democratic ethno-politics are:

- \* the ban on the organization of political parties on the basis of national and racial principles (Article 57 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan) ,
- \* prohibition on the establishment of public associations whose activities are aimed at promoting ethnic, racial, and religious discord (Article 3 of the Law “On Public Associations”),
- \* prohibition of discrimination in labor relations based on race, nationality, language, attitude to religion, etc. (Article 6 of the Labor Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan) ,
- \* prohibition of the use of religious slogans for the purpose of inciting enmity, hatred, inter-ethnic discord (Article 5 of the Law “On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations”),
- \* inadmissibility of the use of mass media for the purposes of propaganda of ethnic, racial, religious hatred, war and violence (Article 6 of the Law “On Mass Media”),
- \* prohibition of hindering the exercise of the right of citizens to freely choose the language of communication, upbringing, and education (Article 27 of the Law “On the State Language”).

For example, the high title “Hero of Uzbekistan” was awarded to more than 100 people, including not only Uzbeks, but also Arabs, Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Koreans, Russians, Tajiks, Ukrainians).

### 3.3. International aspects of the problem

The Republic of Uzbekistan regularly submits reports to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which provides for the following:

- further improvement of state policy in the field of non-racial discrimination and strengthening of social partnership in this area;

- study of the best foreign experience in the legal regulation of issues of protection from racial discrimination in order to better implement the relevant international standards in the country's legislation;
- to increase awareness-raising, educational and publishing activities in order to inform citizens and civil servants about the provisions of the Convention and other international documents, to form a culture of the rights of national minorities in society;
- strengthening of monitoring and sociological studies of the state of implementation of the Convention by the relevant state bodies, both in the center and in the field;
- improving the system of collecting and analyzing disaggregated data on the situation in the field of ensuring the rights of representatives of various nations and nationalities living in Uzbekistan;
- specification of the powers of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities in the field of implementation of the country's international obligations to prevent racial discrimination [14, p. 5-7].

In 2017-2020. Uzbekistan was visited by President of the Republic of Tatarstan R. Minikhanov, OSCE Secretary-General T. Greminger, Chairman of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly G. Tsereteli, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Z. R. Al-Hussein, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs M. Jenca, Head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia (RCPCA) N. German, Secretary General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States B. Amreev, President of the Turkish Agency for Cooperation and Coordination (TICA) Serdar Cham, Special Rapporteur of the UN Human Rights Council on freedom of religion and belief A. Shaheed, OSCE / ODIHR delegation headed by Deputy Head of the Department N. V. Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, delegation of the Republic of Korea headed by Ambassador for Foreign Koreans and Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Lee Jong-Gwan, delegation of the Congress of Bukharian Jews of the United States and Canada headed by President B. Kandov, President of the Turkestan-American Association Abdullah Khoja, delegation of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan headed by E. L. Tugzhanov, Governor of Lombardy (Italy) A. Fontana, Chief Minister of Gujarat (India) V. Rupani, Governor of St. Petersburg G. Poltavchenko, Head of Chechnya R. Kadyrov, Seoul Mayor Park Won-sun, Dushanbe Mayor R. Emomali, etc.

### 3.4. Ethnolinguistic aspects of the problem

An important role in improving the ethnolinguistic situation in the republic was played by the adoption in 1995 of a new version of the Law "On the State Language". According to experts, "This law defines the legal basis for the functioning of the Uzbek language as the state language, as well as other languages, and guarantees for their protection. The use of languages is regulated, taking into account the linguistic state of the population at the place of residence, work, and study... Responsibility for the promotion of hostility and disregard for other languages is established" [15, p. 13].

Important indicators of the effectiveness of ethnopolitics are the functioning of the education system in 7 languages, and the mass media in 12 languages. There are 9,765 schools in Uzbekistan, including those with a language of instruction : 8867 – in Uzbek, 739 – in Russian, 505 – in Kazakh, 383 – in Karakalpak, 267 – in Tajik, 62 – in Kyrgyz, 50 – in Turkmen.

In addition, many national cultural centers (Armenian, Jewish, German, Polish, Tatar, etc.) have Sunday schools where young and mature people learn their native language, literature, national history, customs, rituals, and traditions of their people.

As noted by Western researchers Barbara Kellner-Heinkele and Jacob Landau, “Language attitudes and language activities have different consequences for members of the ethnic majority and members of ethnic minorities. In the first case, we are talking about national revival, and in the second – about successful survival” [16, p. 20].

Uzbek and Russian languages are taught in all higher education institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and Karakalpakstan – in Karakalpak, Uzbek and Russian languages. In addition, many universities have departments and groups with training in the languages of the indigenous ethnic groups of the Republic of Uzbekistan: Kazakh (Karakalpak, Gulistan State Universities, Tashkent Pedagogical University, Jizzakh, Navoi, Nukus Pedagogical Institutes); Tajik (Bukhara, Samarkand, Termez State Universities); Turkmen (Karakalpak State University); Kyrgyz (Andijan State University).

Newspapers in Uzbekistan are published in 8 languages: English, Karakalpak, Kazakh, Korean, Russian, Tajik, Turkmen, Uzbek (including the republican publications “Pravda Vostoka” and “Narodnoe Slovo” – in Russian, “Nurly Zhol” – in Kazakh, “Ovozi Tojik” – in Tajik, “Uzbekistan today” – in English); magazines–also in 8 languages: English, Armenian, Karakalpak, Kazakh, Russian, Tajik, Uzbek, French.

TV programs are broadcast in 11 languages: Azerbaijani, English, Karakalpak, Kazakh, Korean, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, Tatar, Uzbek, Uyghur. Radio broadcasts are also broadcast in 11 languages: English, Bashkir, Kazakh, Karakalpak, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, Tatar, Turkmen, Uzbek, Uyghur.

During 2017–2021, opportunities for higher education in Russian have significantly expanded. Thus, branches of the following Russian universities were opened: the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO, Tashkent), the National Research Nuclear University MEPhI (Moscow Institute of Engineering and Physics, Tashkent), the Russian State University of Physical Culture, Sports, Youth and Tourism (Samarkand), the Russian Chemical and Technological University (RSTU). Mendelev (Tashkent), National Research Technological University – Moscow Institute of Steel and Alloys (MISiS, Almalyk), Astrakhan State Technical University (Tashkent region, 2019), etc.

In 2021–2022, it is planned to open branches of such universities as St. Petersburg Mining University, Kosygin Russian State University, Bauman Moscow State Technical University, Pirogov Russian National Research Medical University, Perm State Pharmaceutical Academy, Moscow Architectural Institute, and the Pushkin State Institute of Russian Language.

Russian language teachers arrived in Tashkent in September 2020 as part of the Russian–Uzbek project to improve the quality of teaching Russian and general education subjects in Russian in Uzbekistan. Teachers of Russian language and literature work according to the methodology used in the Herzen State Pedagogical University. One of the main tasks is to assess the knowledge of the Russian language among both students and teachers in Uzbekistan. This project is implemented by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan,

the Art, Science and Sport Foundation, and the Avloni Central Institute for Advanced Training of Public Education Workers.

During 2017-2021, opportunities for higher education in English have also significantly expanded. Branches of South Korean universities (Yeju University of Technology, Korea International University, Gachon Medical University, Aju Research University, Shinhan University) and Indian universities (Amiti, Sharda) were opened, as well as such universities as Webster University (USA), Malaysia University of Technology, University of Medical Sciences (Turkey), Higher School of Information Systems Management of Latvia (ISMA University, Latvia), etc.

### 3.5. Ethno-cultural aspects of the problem

Currently, there are 138 national cultural centers (NCC) in Uzbekistan, covering 27 nationalities, representing both large ethnic groups numbering hundreds of thousands of people (Russians, Tajiks, Kazakhs, etc.) and small groups numbering only hundreds of people (Lithuanians, Dungans, etc.). “Most researchers and experts note the stability and favorable dynamics of the development of interethnic relations in our country” [17, p. 4].

There are 26 Korean NCC's in Uzbekistan, 21 Russian, 9 Tajik and Kazakh, 7 Azerbaijani, Turkmen and Bukharian – Jewish, 6 Tatar, Kyrgyz and Ukrainian, 5 Turkish, 4 Armenian, German and Polish, 3 Bashkir and Uyghur, 2 Belarusian, Jewish, Crimean Tatar, 1 Arabic, Bulgarian, Greek, Georgian, Dungan, Karakalpak, Chinese, Lithuanian .

In addition to the national and cultural centers of the nationalities of Uzbekistan, there are others related to the activities of foreign countries and international organizations: the Russian Center for Science and Culture, the Egyptian Cultural Center, the Indian Cultural Center, the British Council, the Goethe Institute (Germany), the Hugo Institute (France), the Confucius Institute (China) and others.

An important element of the democratic management of ethno-social processes is the preservation of the culture of ethnic minorities. Culture as a universal phenomenon is the property of humanity as a whole. Universal culture is a unifying principle that promotes mutual understanding and harmony of ethnic groups. Its relation to ethnic cultures is the relation of the general to the individual: just as the general exists in and through the individual, so the universal exists in and is expressed through ethnic cultures. Therefore, it is so important to preserve all ethnic cultures, since each of them is one of the facets of the expression of universal culture.

As noted by academician R. A. Ubaidullayeva: “The results obtained in the course of the study “Uzbekistan – our common home” allow us to state the existence of civil and interethnic harmony in society. The absolute majority of respondents consider it the most valuable asset of independent Uzbekistan. The materials of the study show the complex, contradictory processes of consolidation of Uzbek society and its integration, manifested, in particular, in the formation of a holistic public consciousness, the formation of a general civil mentality characteristic of representatives of all nationalities” [18, p. 94].



Isolation within the ethnic framework is dangerous for the development of the culture of any ethnic group, as it leads to disconnection from “the cultural field” of the planet, contributes to the growth of stagnation due to the lack of cultural information. Any attempts to form an ethnically “pure” culture have not been successful, except for primitive isolated communities (island, highland, desert, tropical, etc.).

The culture of Uzbekistan has significant objective prerequisites for progressive and dynamic development. When we say “culture of Uzbekistan”, we do not mean exclusively Uzbek ethnic culture. The concept of “Uzbek culture” includes the culture of all parts of the Uzbek ethnic group living in any region of Uzbekistan, or Uzbeks living in any state near or far abroad. At the same time, the concept of “culture of Uzbekistan” includes the culture of all ethnic groups and ethnic groups inhabiting the republic.

The culture of all ethnic groups and ethnic groups of Uzbekistan is included in the broader concept of “culture of the peoples of Central Asia”, since cultural realities are subject to much slower changes than political or social ones.

Ethnic cultures of Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Kyrgyz, Turkmen, and Tajiks make up the Central Asian regional block of the culture of the peoples of Eurasia. Within the broader ethno-cultural framework, the cultures of all these ethnic groups (and others – Tatars, Bashkirs, Crimean Tatars, Uyghurs, Turks, Azerbaijanis, etc.) are included in the Muslim super-ethnic system. Also, the cultures of almost all Muslim ethnic groups in Uzbekistan (with the exception of the Iranian – speaking ethnic groups – Tajiks, Iranians, Kurds) are included in another super-ethnic system – the Turkic one.

The emergence of the Crimean Tatar diaspora in Uzbekistan is associated with the processes of the Second World War, when the Crimean Tatars were resettled to Central Asia in 1944 on far-fetched political charges of collaboration [19]. According to the 1989 census, 189,000 Crimean Tatars lived in Uzbekistan; by 2000, their number had fallen to 90,000 [20]. After 1991, the process of gradual return of the Crimean Tatars to their historical homeland, the Crimea, began. Despite the repatriation, Uzbekistan is still home to a significant Crimean Tatar diaspora, numbering, according to various estimates, from 30,000 to 50,000 people. In Uzbekistan, the Crimean Tatar national Cultural Center “Avdet” (“Revival”), vocal and instrumental ensembles “Vetan” (“Homeland”), “Haitarma”, “Karanfil” are active, traditional national holidays of the Crimean Tatars are celebrated: Navrez (the arrival of spring), Khydyrlez (the holiday of the end of spring sowing), Oraz-Bayram and Eid al-Adha (Muslim holidays) [21].

The ethnic and cultural ties of the peoples of Uzbekistan are not limited to “the cultural fields” of Eurasia, Islam and the Turkic world. The multicolored ethnic and cultural palette of Uzbekistan provides cultural pluralism, connectivity in the context of globalization to the “cultural fields” of other super-ethnic systems. Through the Russian and Russian-speaking culture, a living connection with the Slavs is provided. Through Slavs, Armenians, Georgians, Greeks, etc. – connection with a broad superethnic cultural system – Christian (Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Gregorian, etc.). Through the Western ethnic groups (Germans, Balts, Poles), the connection with the culture of Europe is made, through the groups of Eastern origin – the connection with the Middle East (Jews, Central Asian Jews, Arabs) and the Far East (Koreans, Dzungars, Chinese), etc. In contemporary Uzbekistan, as the Ukrainian political scientist

Valentin Yakushik correctly noted, “feeling oneself as a citizen of Uzbekistan, a citizen of the world, and part of the Turkic, and Turkic-Slavic (Turkic-speaking and Russian-speaking) world, part of the Muslim spiritual world and the whole world of Abrahamic spiritual values is a worthy and promising goal, to maintain the balance, avoid extremes, and to use as much as possible the creative potential of a multi-ethnic society and multifaceted contacts with the pluralistic global community” [22, p. 88].

The entire history of human civilization is the history of ethno-cultural contacts at the regional, state, group, and individual levels. From the very possibility of transplanting elements of culture (language, religion, customs, features of economy and life, etc.) from one ethnic soil to another, from the real possibility of organic synthesis of elements of various ethnic cultures, we can draw conclusions about the presence of deep universal foundations in the culture of any ethnic group [23].

The presence of elements of a single universal culture in each ethnic culture is a real basis for interethnic cultural integration, which always contributes to the enrichment of the spiritual sphere of society. We are dealing with a combination of two trends in the development of ethnic cultures: the trend towards independent ethno-cultural development and the trend towards intercultural integration. Only at first glance, these trends are opposite, but the higher the level of integration, the richer the content of each of the participating cultures. And the richer this content is, the stronger the desire for interaction.

In general, the ethnopolitics of the Republic of Uzbekistan has sufficient theoretical, historical, demographic, legal and cultural grounds for its further development and improvement in the context of the systemic transformation of society, democratization, modernization and renewal, the development of the rule of law and civil society.

**4. Discussion and Conclusion.** The Strategy of Action on the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021 specifically emphasizes: the peace and tranquility reigning in the republic, friendship and unity, mutual respect and interethnic harmony are priceless wealth and the main achievement of independence.

In May 2017 The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On measures for further improvement of interethnic relations and friendly relations with foreign countries” was adopted, according to which on the basis of such organizations as the Republican International Cultural Center (and the 138 national cultural centers supervised by it) The Council of Friendship Societies and Cultural and Educational Relations of Uzbekistan with Foreign Countries (and 34 friendship societies with various countries) established the Committee on Interethnic Relations and Friendly Relations with Foreign Countries under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Among its main tasks are identified: consistent implementation of the state policy to ensure interethnic harmony and tolerance in society, strengthening the atmosphere of friendship and a sense of a multinational family, educating young people in the spirit of respect for national and universal values; effective coordination of work to establish international relations, develop cooperation, strengthen friendship with the civil community of foreign countries, including with compatriots abroad; ensuring the relationship and cooperation of state bodies with national cultural centers and friendship societies; assisting in the preservation and development of national traditions, customs, rituals of various nations

and nationalities; assisting in the promotion of peaceful policies in foreign countries, the goals and objectives of Uzbekistan in building a democratic state of law, a strong civil society, success in all spheres of life; assistance in the organization and direct participation in the conduct of research work aimed at the development and harmonization of interethnic relations and friendly relations with foreign countries [24].

In the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On measures to radically increase the role and authority of the Uzbek language as the state language” of October 21, 2019, among the main goals and objectives is noted: “creating equal opportunities for the development of languages of all nations and nationalities living on the territory of our country” [25].

In November 2019, the Concept of the State Policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the field of interethnic relations was approved. This document is aimed primarily “at ensuring the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of a person and citizen, strengthening the unity and integrity of Uzbekistan, preserving the ethno-cultural identity of the nations and nationalities living on its territory, maintaining interethnic tolerance, harmony and peace in society” [26].

The most important priorities of the ethnic policy of Uzbekistan were and still are the development of a culture of tolerance and humanism, the strengthening of interethnic, inter-confessional and civil harmony in society, as well as the strengthening of friendly, equal and mutually beneficial relations with foreign countries.

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