

Delegation of Uzbekistan

**WRITTEN CONTRIBUTION BY THE DELEGATION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN TO THE SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN
DIMENSION MEETING ON THE OSCE CONTRIBUTION TO THE
PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

Vienna, 29 to 30 October 2015

Session II: Integration of diverse societies and the Ljubljana Guidelines

Strengthening friendship and harmony in society and reviving and developing the values inherent in the peoples of Uzbekistan inherited from their forefathers are among the priority areas of development for this young independent State. The necessary legal and organizational conditions have been established in the country to support, safeguard and protect the human rights of all peoples and nationalities living on its territory.

First, the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 1992 is the basic law providing for the equal enjoyment of fundamental human rights and freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural and other spheres of public life.

Second, all legislative acts of the Republic of Uzbekistan enshrine for citizens equal rights and freedoms to equality before the law regardless of race, gender, nationality, language, religion, social background, convictions and personal or social status (Article 18 of the Constitution).

Third, having proclaimed in the Constitution the principle of supremacy of international law, the Republic of Uzbekistan has acceded to 70 international instruments intended to enshrine and protect the rights of various categories of citizens (women, children, disabled persons and national minorities) and undertaken to create the necessary organizational and legal conditions to promote and protect human rights and freedoms on its territory.

Fourth, with a view to creating the necessary conditions for the enjoyment of human rights by all peoples and nationalities living in the country, Uzbekistan ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1995 and also fully supports the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the Outcome Document of the Durban Review Conference as well as OSCE commitments.

Fifth, the State ensures a respectful attitude towards the languages, customs and traditions of nationalities and peoples living on its territory and creates the conditions necessary for their development by:

- Prohibiting the establishment of political parties along racial or ethnic lines and the organization of voluntary associations seeking to foment racial and religious division;
- Prohibiting the use of religion to incite hostility, hatred and inter-ethnic division;
- Preventing the use of the media to promote national, racial and religious animosity;
- Prohibiting the hindering of the exercise of the right of citizens to freely choose their language for communication and education.

Access to education is ensured in Uzbekistan for all national minorities, and secondary and higher education is provided in seven languages: Uzbek, Karakalpak, Russian, Tajik, Kazakh, Turkmen and Kyrgyz.

There are 9,779 general education schools in the country, of which 246 provide teaching in Karakalpak, 110 in Russian, 172 in Tajik, 207 in Kazakh, 28 in Kyrgyz and 34 in Turkmen. In addition, there are schools in which classes have been established to provide teaching in the aforementioned languages. There are 134 schools providing such classes in Karakalpak, 689 in Russian, 96 in Tajik, 265 in Kazakh, 33 in Kyrgyz and 22 in Turkmen.

The country has 1,536 specialized secondary and vocational training institutions, whose students belong to various nationalities and peoples.

The media in Uzbekistan covers 12 languages, 502 titles appear in Uzbek, 164 publications in two or more languages, and 84 in three or four languages (Uzbek, Russian, Karakalpak and Tajik).

National newspapers in Uzbekistan published in minority languages include the Korean *Kore Sinmun*, the Tajik *Ovozi Tojik* and the Kazakh *Nurli Jol*. Other periodicals such as the Armenian diaspora newspaper *Apaga, Tkhonil – Edinstvo*, published in Korean and Russian, and *Bulubulcha Dono*, in Tajik, have wide readerships.

Television and radio programmes such as “Under One Sky”, “In One Family”, “Uzbekistan Our Common Home”, “Chinsen”, “Didar”, “Striving to Be Just”, “Rondo” and “Elaman” illustrate the history and daily lives of the peoples, ethnic groups and minority communities living in Uzbekistan, and their distinctive cultures, art, customs and traditions, and seek to strengthen inter-ethnic understanding and harmony, cross-cultural relations and communication.

Uzbekistan currently has more than 150 ethnic cultural centres and associations established by 27 different ethnic groups, including 14 such centres that enjoy State-wide status.

Thirty-one such centres have been established by Koreans, 23 by Russians, 9 by Kazakhs, 6 by Tatars, 3 by Bashkirs, 6 by Kyrgyz, 7 by Turkmen, 4 by Armenians, 4 by Germans, 10 by Tajiks, 3 by Uighurs, 8 by Jews, 5 by Turks, 6 by Ukrainians, 8 by Azerbaijanis, 4 by Poles, 2 by Belarusians, 2 by Crimean Tatars and 1 each by Arabs, Bulgarians, Greeks, Georgians, Lithuanians, Karakalpaks, Chinese and Dungans.

One hundred and thirty-one ethnic cultural centres operate in the regions of Uzbekistan: 4 in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, 6 in the Andijan region, 5 in the Jizzakh region, 5 in the Qashqadaryo region, 10 in the Navoiy region, 5 in the Namangan region, 11 in the Samarkand region, 6 in the Sirdaryo region, 4 in the Surxondaryo region, 7 in the Fergana region, 4 in the Xorazm region, 33 in the Tashkent region and 22 in the city of Tashkent.

Various national holidays are marked each year by the ethnic cultural centres: Armenian Motherhood and Beauty Day, Catholic and Orthodox Easter and Passover, the Day of Slavonic Literature and Culture, Tatar-Bashkir Sabantuy, Korean Ovol-Dano and Chuseok, the Georgian Rtveli grape harvest festival, the Tatar national dish chak chak, and others.

Each ethnic cultural centre has contacts with its historical homeland through embassies and missions accredited in Uzbekistan. Through them many centres receive periodicals and newsletters, literary fiction in their own language, national costumes for amateur performance groups, and school materials for those wishing to study the language. Visits are organized for representatives of these centres to the historical homeland as well as meetings with delegations from back home. Furthermore, bilateral links are strengthened with art associations and voluntary organizations in those countries.

Representatives of cultural centres are elected to international voluntary organizations such as the Presidium of the Ukrainian World Coordinating Council, the Ukrainian World Congress, the World Kurultai of Bashkirs and the Humanitarian Association of Turkmen of the World.

The order of Dustlik (friendship) has been established in the Republic of Uzbekistan and is awarded to people working in the sciences, culture, education, public health, the media and the social sphere for their contribution to strengthening inter-ethnic harmony between peoples living in Uzbekistan.

Since independence, among the more than 100 of our compatriots to have been awarded the highest State honours are representatives of 24 nationalities.

Since 2000, around 700 ethnic Russians have been honoured for their services to the development of science, education, culture, literature, the arts, public health and sport, strengthening the independence of the country, making a valuable contribution to the development of the spirituality of the people, and also preserving peace and stability.

In implementing its international commitments regarding human rights and fundamental freedoms, the Republic of Uzbekistan is guided by the need to make targeted use of the experience of developed nations, to develop and intensify international co-operation in this area and to engage in a broad exchange of information on various aspects of human rights at different international events.