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Features of the Development of Civil Society in Uzbekistan

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ABSTRACT

This scientific article analyzes the concept of civil society, the stages of its formation and evolution. The social and legal foundations of non-governmental non-profit organizations are disclosed in the framework of reforms for the development of civil society in Uzbekistan.

Keywords:

Civil society, Uzbekistan, democracy, NGOs, legal framework, development

For the first time, non-governmental non-profit organizations arose in ancient Greece and ancient Rome, they were called "communities of citizens of city-states." International non-governmental non-profit organizations arose at the beginning of the 19th century in Europe. Their activities were mainly carried out in a professional, educational, religious, pacifist direction.

The role of non-governmental non-profit organizations in the formation and development of civil society is quite huge. Non-governmental non-profit organizations are considered the most important institution of civil society, they do not belong to the state, they are not engaged in commerce, but they take part in government management. Their main task is to protect democratic values, rights and freedoms of citizens.

In the United Nations Memorandum, non-governmental non-profit organizations, after the state and the economy, are called the third sector. (The state is the first, the business sector is the second, and non-governmental non-profit organizations are the third sector).

The concept of "non-governmental non-profit organizations" is used in many countries (USA, UK, Austria, Bulgaria).

The concept of "non-state non-profit organizations", - says the UN Memorandum, - in its semantic content is the opposite of the concept of state organizations. Governmental organizations in the UN system are created on the basis of interstate agreements and consist of governments that are members of this international organization. While non-governmental non-profit organizations are not created on the basis of interstate agreements and do not consist of governments that are members of the UN. National and international non-governmental non-profit organizations can interact with UN entities through consultations and the exercise of operational authority. However, this does not mean that the state does not provide any assistance to non-governmental non-profit organizations at all. Each state, proceeding from domestic features and historical experience, provides them, especially at the present time, with effective assistance.

Non-governmental non-profit organizations can be classified according to the following three criteria:

Structures reflecting interests in the economic sphere, - companies operating on the basis of a lease agreement, joint-stock

companies, financial funds and associations, production corporations, concerns and associations, unions (chambers) of entrepreneurs, etc.

Structures that reflect interests in the social sphere are special organizations that protect the family and its interests, independent (non-state) media, institutions for the study of public opinion, structures involved in the elimination of various social contradictions, etc.

Institutions and structures that reflect interests in the political sphere - political parties, socio-political movements, institutions that protect human rights.

In accordance with Article 56 of the Constitution of Uzbekistan, trade unions, political parties, societies of scientists, women's organizations, organizations of veterans and youth, creative unions, mass movements and other associations of citizens registered in the manner prescribed by law are recognized as public associations in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Non-governmental non-profit organizations are engaged in activities in the social sphere, including education, science, culture, art, health care, employment, and also contribute to solving other problems[1].

Non-governmental non-profit organizations also exercise public control. As a result, the role of these organizations in exercising public control over state structures of power is increasing.

NGOs should contribute to the development of civil society institutions, including institutions that have evolved over many centuries, to strengthen and expand their influence on the population, to strengthen centuries-old spiritual and moral foundations, ideas of tolerance and interfaith harmony. For example, mahalla is a naturally formed traditional institution of self-government of citizens, capable of solving the pressing problems of residents. Self-government bodies of citizens carry out activities to promote in society the ideas of humanism and mercy, mutual understanding and good neighborliness, maintain public order, provide material assistance to those in need, improve

territories, and also contribute to employment.

To date, the number of NGOs registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan has exceeded 9,000. At the same time, the state of affairs in this area indicates the presence of a number of systemic problems and shortcomings that prevent the active participation of non-governmental non-profit organizations in ongoing large-scale reforms, raising the political culture, legal awareness of citizens, satisfaction of their spiritual and other non-material needs. Today, more than 40% of NGOs in the country provide social services to the population, such as the provision of psychological and legal assistance, vocational education services, employment assistance, social rehabilitation of the disabled, support for vulnerable groups of the population, and others.

One of the significant problems of NGOs is the lack of material and technical base, which is relevant in their activities. Representatives of non-governmental non-profit organizations repeatedly applied to the relevant state bodies with a request to provide them with empty premises. However, these issues have not yet been resolved[2].

All these problems were reflected and resolved in the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to radically increase the role of civil society institutions in the process of democratic renewal of the country" dated May 4, 2018.

In accordance with the decree, the Consultative Council for the Development of Civil Society under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan was established, the task of which is to establish a systematic and effective dialogue between the state and civil society institutions at the highest level as a modern, democratic and transparent platform to consolidate their efforts aimed at further comprehensive development countries.

In addition, "Houses of non-governmental non-profit organizations" will be created in the regions on the basis of empty and inefficiently used state-owned objects with the use of a "zero" rental rate[3].

Funds and property received from foreign states, international and foreign

organizations, citizens of foreign states or on their behalf from other persons to the accounts of NGOs for the implementation of the tasks provided for by their charters (regulations) are used without any obstacles after agreeing on their receipt with registration authority in the prescribed manner.

If earlier the draft regulatory legal acts concerning the NGO sphere received by the National Association of NGOs of Uzbekistan were considered and proposals were made on them, but not all of them were reflected, then from now on all draft regulatory legal acts affecting the rights and legitimate interests non-governmental non-profit organizations, must be coordinated with the National Association of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations of Uzbekistan.

Based on the adopted decree, it remains to be said that the development of civil society has received a "second wind" and will be one of the main instruments of the country's socio-economic development.

The institutions of civil society are called upon to promote the growth of civic activity, national self-awareness, political culture and high spirituality of members of society, to educate them in self-esteem, independent thinking, the desire to realize their potential, build their future with their own hands.

The most important activity of civil society institutions should be the protection of democratic values, rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of people. The developed structure of non-governmental and public organizations is designed to ensure and maintain a balance of interests in society, to act as a partner of state structures in the political and social sphere.

Civil society institutions, in cooperation with independent, free media, should not only express but also shape public opinion and public consciousness. Without the strengthening of democratic values in the minds of people, democracy by itself or through external efforts cannot be developed.

In the course of the ongoing reforms in the country for democratic renewal and modernization of the country, a number of

measures have been taken aimed at creating organizational, legal, material conditions for the formation of civil society institutions. The Program adopted in Uzbekistan to implement the goals and objectives of democratization and renewal of society, reform and modernization of the country, which provides, in particular, measures for the further development of a strong civil society, is being implemented.

Regional and republican stages of the National Forum of NGOs of Uzbekistan are held annually, where issues of cooperation between NGOs and government agencies are discussed and joint action plans are adopted.

A special fund has been established under the Parliament of Uzbekistan to support the activities of NGOs. All the necessary regulatory and legal framework has been developed. It is very important that this positive process, in partnership with civil society institutions, continues. Civil institutions are actively involved in the implementation of socio-economic policy in the country.

In Uzbekistan, civil society institutions are becoming an important factor in protecting democratic values, rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of people, create conditions for citizens to realize their potential, increase their social, socio-economic activity and legal culture, and help maintain a balance of interests in society.

One of the feedback channels between government bodies and non-governmental non-profit organizations has also become the National Association of NGOs of Uzbekistan, which uses various forms and mechanisms of organizational, financial and material support for its members. More than 10,000 self-governing bodies of citizens are making a great contribution to local development, in the regions, to the implementation of the profound democratic reforms being carried out in the country. Such an important institution of civil society as the mass media is also developing dynamically. The number of media outlets in the country exceeds 1,500, and many of them are non-state[4]. Democratization of the information sphere is facilitated by the Public Fund for Support and Development of Independent Print Media and News Agencies of

Uzbekistan and the National Association of Electronic Media.

Civil society is a society of conscious individuals who actively participate in solving social and political problems, where law prevails, excluding arbitrariness and state interference, where citizens and the state act on the basis of partnership. Although the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan does not provide a definition of civil society, it establishes the legal basis for the creation and operation of civil society institutions, and defines the principles of their interaction with the state.

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