

**MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN**

**CONTEMPORARY INTERETHNIC RELATIONS  
IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN**

**ASTANA -2007**

## **1.Legislative basis**

A rich and unique experience of peaceful coexistence of nations, civilizations, cultures and various faiths on the historical land of Kazakhs is accumulated in one State. This heritage defines roots of our unity and helps us to see our future clearer.

Today the basic principles of the State National Policy of Kazakhstan are:

Equality of rights and freedoms of people and citizens regardless their race, nationality, language, religious denomination, belonging to social groups and social unions.

The legal background of the Ministry of Culture and Information in the field of interethnic relationships is based on:

1. The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, ensuring rights and freedoms to the citizen of Kazakhstan
2. The long-term Strategy of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, adopted by decree by the President of Kazakhstan on 26<sup>th</sup> of April, 2002.
3. The program of advancement of the Kazakhstan model of interethnic and interfaith accord 2006-2008 approved by the decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2006.
4. The annual address of the President to the people of Kazakhstan “New Kazakhstan in the New World” concerning the increase of the role of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan for further strengthening of public accord and stability” of 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2007.

## **2. Basic principles of the Government’s interethnic policy.**

The strategically important direction of work of State bodies of Kazakhstan is to realize Governmental policy about preserving and strengthening of international and interfaith accord.

Since the time Kazakhstan gained its independence, the purpose of creating modern democratic society has become an integral component of the strategic course of the State.

Kazakhstan has not simply followed western patterns of economical liberalization and hurry up with the intensive democratization but has created its own political system based on optimal model and conditions for democratic reforms.

The dynamic development of economy based on the key principle “Policy after Economy,” the wise national policy, development of social society institutions, strengthening of public stability and national security of the State.

Kazakhstan is a unique country uniting about 130 ethnic groups. The Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan has significantly contributed the process of

turning multinationality into strategic advantage thus avoiding interethnic tensions and xenophobia.

The achievements of all nationalities of our country their openness to dialogue, innovations, interconnection and prosperity have become the common national wealth.

### **3. Contemporary interethnic situation in Kazakhstan**

Strengthening of internal political stability, ensuring strengthening of international concord in the society is one of the priorities of the State policy.

In order to elaborate and implement a complex and result-oriented policy for further harmonization of interethnic and interfaith relations, shaping up standards of tolerance and behaviour and putting them into the social practice the Program of Improving of Kazakhstan Model of Interethnic and Interfaith Accord for 2006-2008 was introduced by the Ministry of Culture and Information of Kazakhstan.

The aim of the Program is to create a complex system of strengthening of internal political stability, consolidation of the society through harmonization of interethnic relationships and strengthening interactions of state system and civil society to the cultural dialogue as one of the most important instruments of keeping peace and agreement in multifaith society. An amount of 948 million Tenge (about \$8 million) was allocated to implement the Program.

“The House of Friendship – Research Centre for Interethnic Problems” was founded under the Ministry of Culture and Information.

The main objectives of the Centre are:

1. to create stable research systems and mechanism of adequate resources' provision of the system;
2. to promote safeguards of law and organizational conditions, to ensure ethnic and cultural interests of people;
3. formation and spreading ideas of spiritual and cultural community of Kazakhstan people, patriotism and international consent;
4. to promote increasing of quality and effectiveness of informational-ideological work in interethnic relationship problems, to effectively counteract extremism ideas, intolerance and radicalism;
5. to update information database on national-cultural and religious organizations of Kazakhstan;
6. to develop system for obtaining, monitoring and analyses of information in the sphere of interethnic and interfaith relations;
7. to promote realization of the program of advancement of the Kazakhstan model of interethnic and interfaith accord for 2006-2008 with the purpose of strengthening interethnic and interfaith accord.

“The House of Friendship – Research Centre for Interethnic Problems” under the Ministry of Culture and Information was inaugurated in Almaty on 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2007.

The main purposes and tasks of the Centre are purposeful research of interethnic relationships holding of regular monitoring of basic social opinions to show the problems in the sphere of international relations, working out recommendations for authorities in realization of government policy in the field of interethnic relationships and increasing the role of the Assembly of Kazakhstani people in democratization of political system.

The representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan representatives of authorities, science-research centers, NGO and the leaders of national-cultural organizations from all regions of Kazakhstan took part in the presentation of the Centre.

In the purposes of further increasing the role of the Assembly of Kazakhstani people there were given a complex of actions by the Ministry of Culture and Information.

At first the project act “About insertion of changes and additions to the resolution of the government of Republic of Kazakhstan” from 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2006 year #593 “About program of improvement of the Kazakhstani model interethnic and interconfessional agreement for 2006-2008 years will be prepared.” By this act an additional financial support for 2008 year for leading organizational-practical and informational-propagandist actions that are directed for strengthening home political stability, harmonization interethnic and interconfessional relationships in the society, and also the growth of the Assembly of Nations of Kazakhstan’s role will be considered.

Secondly in the goals of essentially increase of the authority of the Assembly of Nations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, enlargement its practical activity and responsibility were prepared and directed the proposals to the Administration of the President and to the Government of appropriate normative rightful act.

Thirdly the goals of creating favorable conditions for solving strategical goals of uniting multinational nation of Kazakhstan and close interaction of the Assembly of nations of Kazakhstan with national-cultural centers by the Ministry of Culture and Information is being planned in 2007 year to take out the question for consideration of the Republican budget commission about leading the major repairs of the House of Friendship.

For today one of the directions of enlarging functions of the state language is imposition of business correspondence in the governmental language. For realization of this question the work of supplying of civil servant’s work places by various electronical dictionaries and computer programs is being held. At the present time the work on issuing computer programs by the system program software of the Kazakh language, coding state standard information, supporting the Kazakh language in the web “Internet”, multilanguage electronical dictionaries, checking texts in the Kazakh language is being held. Republican

seminar-counsel about problems of using industrial terms and imposition of business correspondence in the state language, presentation of electronical cultural-historical fond of ancient-Turk writing monuments is being held as well.

Learning of the state language and also languages of nations of Kazakhstan is being held at Sunday school as well. For today in 196 Sunday schools more than 7 thousand children and adults learn native language. Besides this 3 schools of national rebirth are being functioned in the cities of Petropavlovsk, Pavlodar and Ust-Kamenogorsk. In these schools presenters of more than 30 nationalities study. Within the limits

of the implementation of state program of function and development of the languages about 12 200 mln. tenge is allocated to 22 Sunday schools for learning native languages.

The courses for learning the state language for members of the republican and regional national-cultural centers who are constantly being taught at Sunday schools within the House of Friendship of the Assembly of People of the Republic of Kazakhstan are organized. 4 republican and 15 regional national newspapers publish, 6 national theatres (the Kazakh, Russian, German, Uigur, Korean and Uzbek) work in Kazakhstan.

Today 7483 printed and electronic media outlets are registered in Kazakhstan. 2493 among them are in action. From the registered mass media outlets 2479 is printed media outlets within which 320 media outlets or 13% publish in the national language.

The state support of the national newspapers has found a reflection in purchasing services for leading state informational policy through magazines and newspapers. Activities of the national newspapers is being contributed to the interpretation of the issues of the international accord, internal political stability, increase of the population's interest to the activities of the Assembly of the People of the Republic of Kazakhstan, support of the state program "Cultural heritage."

Among printed mass media outlets publishing in other languages, 4 of them are accomplishing the state order according to the results of the competition.

Among them: Uigur republican newspaper "Uigur Avazi," German newspaper "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung," Korean national newspaper "Kore ilbo," Ukrainian newspaper "Ukrainian news."

Due to modernization of the television broadcast of the TV channel "Kazakhstan" on the basis of the national programs a united program "We are the citizens of Kazakhstan" was created with the duration of 20 minutes with the daily broadcasting in different languages.

The program "We are the Germans of Kazakhstan" is broadcasting on Mondays, "We are the Koreans of Kazakhstan" on Tuesdays, "We are the Uigurs of Kazakhstan" on Wednesdays. The program "We are the nation of Kazakhstan" is broadcasting in Chechen, Ingush, Tatar and other languages on Thursdays.

TV channel “Kazakhstan” subsequently is planning to increase a number of national programs though it is necessary to solve the issue of its filling with the qualitative and interesting programs that depends on common work of the national-cultural centers and national mass-media.

On 14<sup>th</sup> May the memorandum on mutual understanding and cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and Information and the Association of the social union of the Germans of Kazakhstan “Rebirth” was signed at the joint meeting of the leadership of the Ministry and representatives of collective body of the association of Germans of Kazakhstan. The practice of similar mutual meetings of state bodies with representatives of the national unions will be continued.

Financial support from the government was noticeably increased. Every year the state renders financial support to the activities of the national cultural unions and small assemblies, the Presidential grants are established for the heads of the national cultural centers.

For the last twelve years the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan has transferred in authoritative public institution of interethnic relations harmonization.

The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan received acknowledgement in the world. Thanks to its activities it became possible to make multinationality as a strategic advantage, which allowed to avoid radical types of interethnic relations and xenophobia.

This deliberative body was established in 1995 on the initiative of the President of Kazakhstan.

Candidates to the members of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan are nominated by the decisions of small assemblies on proposals of the national cultural centers. Those proposed by the regional and republican public associations are recommended according to the decisions of their superior bodies.

The state is striving to create the highest possible favorable environment for activities and development of the National Cultural Associations. Thus, the charges for state registration of the republican and regional National Cultural Non-governmental Organizations was decreased from twenty to two month estimate indicators.

The main priorities in the activities of the National Cultural Associations are the following:

- assistance in stimulating activities of diaspora in the process of establishment of democratic and legal state in Kazakhstan;
- revival of language, popular customs and traditions; learning the history of the people;
- development of original culture, art, literature;
- protection of rights and interests of diaspora representatives in Kazakhstan;

- strengthening of friendship between the peoples, development of international cultural and economic ties.

One of the main peculiarities of the Kazakh people, its mentality is respect of the culture, religion, traditions and customs of other nation. Achievements of all people of our country, their openness for dialogue, innovations, mutual influence and enrichment became a nation-wide common property of the people.

Nowadays, the Assembly plays the main role in consolidation of Kazakhstani people based on the Speech of the Head of State and enhancement of the sustainable development of society.

It is known, that proposal of the State Commission to increase the number of the members of the Upper Chamber of the Parliament – the Senate thanks to the enlargement of the President’s quota from 7 to 15 delegates was adopted. Part of them will be designated after corresponding consultations with the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. At the special session of the “Nur Otan” party, its leader, President N.Nazarbayev highly estimated a constitutional innovation, according to which some delegates will be elected from the Assembly for further development of public consensus and provision of participation of all ethnic groups representatives in the highest legislative body. The number of Mazhilis members is also proposed to increase up to 107 delegates, 9 of which will represent the Assembly.

In the result of constitutional reforms, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan gets real instruments for influencing legislation with respect to the compliance of the bills with the interests if interethnic concord and tolerance.

Providing the Assembly with a new status, allocation of the parliament mandates, and increase of the number of delegates from the Assembly – result of the great confidence of the state in this institution of the civil society, which has proved its significance and relevance in consolidation of Kazakhstani society. But this is not only a great confidence in the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan but also a highest civil responsibility of both the Assembly and its every member.

Alteration of the Assembly name aims at establishing a single civil community. And now the APK is setting itself new tasks. The primary one is linked with creation of identity of the Kazakhstani people as a single nation.

#### **4. Cooperation in the field of interethnic relations**

For Kazakhstan as a country with a distinctive multiethnic and multiconfessional population, achievement and strengthening of social stability, harmonization of interests of individuals, social groups and society

as a whole is closely connected with the task on searching for new optimal forms of ethnic communities interaction, strengthening of interethnic and interfaith concord, enriching the culture of interethnic and interfaith relations, prevention of extremism and xenophobia.

In this connection, according to the item 7 of the Activities Schedule on implementation of the Program on improvement of the Kazakhstan model of interethnic and interfaith concord for the years 2006-2008, “To organize activity aimed at strengthening of relations with the countries of the ethnic historical origin of the ethnos living in Kazakhstan, and promotion of the Kazakhstan model of interethnic and interfaith concord in the RoK” and basing upon concordance with the President’ Administration, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan together with the Ministry of Culture and Information, as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued a special image-building program in the main European capitals and organized a trip of the APK delegates - heads of the national cultural associations, delegates of the Parliament, scientists and cultural workers to Bulgaria and Greece from the 21st to the 27<sup>th</sup> of May, 2007.

The main objective of this event is information and promotion of the Kazakhstan model of interethnic dialogue in the capitals of the countries-members of the European Union, clarification of economic, social, and political changes in the country and representation of our achievements, explanation of political and constitutional reforms, strengthening of the President’s image among the primary upmarket groups abroad.

Thereupon, in both countries meetings in the Parliament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture were conducted.

Moreover, there were meetings:

- in Bulgaria with the Administration of the President and the Agency on working with Bulgarians living abroad;
- in Greece with the Ministry of Economic links Development, Menidi district administration of the city of Athens, where 30 thousand Kazakhstanian Greeks live.

One of the main events in the capitals of both countries became meetings with experts, businessmen, social and political circles. In these meetings the delegates read out their reports, represent the books “N.A.Nazarbayev – founder of the Kazakhstan model of interethnic and interfaith concord”, “N.A.Nazarbayev – 10 years anniversary of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan”, “Dostyk. Alem!” – Planet of Friendship” published by the Ministry of Culture and Information in English.



Besides, there was a show of the film on the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, concerts of the national artists and ethnic music performances “Modern ethnic cultural tunes of the Great Steppe”.

The events conducted distinctly and in a convincing way reflected concern of the country with maintaining and development of multicultural Kazakhstani society, language, culture, and traditions of the ethnic groups representing a single nation of Kazakhstan.

The trip of delegates of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan to Bulgaria and Greece was accordingly responded in Bulgarian and Greek state, public and cultural circles.

In their speeches, outstanding Bulgarian and Greek politicians expressed their admiration of our country successes and highlighted an important role of the President of Kazakhstan in implementation of democratic processes in the Republic. Some of them went to the Republic among the international observers of the Presidential elections and noted a high political activity of Kazakhstani voters. It was stressed that a path of democratic reforms chosen by Kazakhstan is unique since it is based on historical traditions, reflects modern reality and takes into account the People living in the country.

Conferences, round table discussions, press-conferences and briefings were arranged.

The results of this trip were widely written about in Kazakhstani and foreign mass media.

Within the framework of the delegation activity some agreements, which found support of our Embassies in these countries, have been reached.

Specifically in Bulgaria – on participation of the Bulgarian representatives in events on celebration of 100 anniversary of living and development of Bulgarian Diaspora in Kazakhstan which are supposed to take place in the beginning of September this year in Pavlodar city; on organization in Sophia of a photographic exhibition devoted to the activity of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan.

In Greece: an agreement was reached between Menidi district administration of the city of Athens and the city of Shymkent the on becoming sister cities; development of cultural and economic cooperation programs; arrangement of exhibitions of the Greek sculptors in the cities of Astana and Almaty.

Now Secretariat of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan processes all the materials received during the trip.

The Ministry of Culture and Information finishes its work on a documentary film, the participants of the trip publish their articles in mass media. TV channels “Khabar” and “Kazakhstan” showed a number of devoted programs.

Work on high level became possible thanks to support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Embassies in Bulgaria and Greece, especially thanks to the personal contribution of His Excellency Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Mr.A.Khamzayev.

The Ministry of Culture and Information has scheduled to organize in August this year International conference “Cultural heritage of Nomads and Contemporaneity” with participation of prominent public figures of foreign countries and the countries of the CIS, culturologists, ethnographers, archeologists and delegates of Mazhilis and Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In order to realize the Twenty sixth course of the Message of the President of the country to the People of Kazakhstan “New Kazakhstan in the New World” “ON increasing the role of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan for further strengthening of the social concordance and stability” dated February 28, 2007, the trip of the leaders of the Youth divisions of the National Cultural Centers to the foreign countries is scheduled with the aim to promote the Kazakhstan model of interethnic and interfaith concord (Germany, Turkey, Bulgaria – 20 people).