



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE STATE

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines the essence and significance of the relationship between civil society and the state. The influence of civil society institutions on state activities, public control, their role in shaping the rule of law, and their contribution to the process of democratic development are analyzed. Practical proposals for the development of civil society, based on global experience and the context of Uzbekistan, are also provided.

**KEYWORDS:** Civil society, public administration, social institutions, rule of law, public control, democratic development, cooperation, responsibility.

### INTRODUCTION

The emergence of civil society in practice was significantly influenced by the adoption of documents such as the Bill of Rights (England, 1689; USA, 1791) and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (France, 1789). Civil society emerged as a society of equal individuals free to express their identity and creative initiative, characterized by equal opportunities, free from excessive restrictions and unnecessary administrative regulation.

In the 20th century, the idea of civil society gained even greater importance, primarily due to the emergence of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes and the necessity of combating them in the struggle for democracy. The theory of pluralism became widespread. According to this theory, the main tasks of a democratic society include:

- Seeking ways to achieve harmony among citizens;
- Considering the interests of various social groups;
- Resolving conflicts and preventing disputes.

The abolition of class privileges and the establishment of civil rights were essential factors in the formation of civil society. The rule of law, ensuring individual rights and freedoms, serves as the political foundation of civil society.

Thus, the concepts of "rule of law" and "civil society" reflect various aspects of societal life. They encapsulate the interests of groups, individuals, and society as a whole, as well as the methods for realizing them. It is worth noting that the separation of civil society from the state occurred during the process of eliminating inequalities among classes and removing social relations from state control. This process was grounded in the formation of a representative government acting on behalf of the entire population.

A mature civil society is indispensable for building a legal democratic state because only conscious and free citizens can create the most rational forms of human society. Civil society

acts as a bridge between free individuals and the centralized will of the state, while the state's task is to counter disintegration, disorder, crisis, and decline by creating conditions for the realization of individual rights and freedoms.

The rule of law is a system of state governance that operates in accordance with legal norms and within their framework. It does not violate, annul, or restrict these norms but recognizes the natural and historically intrinsic rights of citizens and their associations.

After gaining independence, Uzbekistan set its primary strategic goal as establishing a free democratic state based on a market economy and forming a strong foundation for civil society. Such a society was recognized as the only one capable of ensuring a decent standard of living, rights, and freedoms for the people of Uzbekistan, restoring national traditions and values, and fostering the moral and ethical development of individuals.

The relationship between civil society and the state is an integral part of a democratic society. This relationship plays a vital role in ensuring social stability, protecting human rights and freedoms, and organizing effective public administration. Civil society actively participates in shaping public policies, urging the state to adapt to the needs and demands of the population. At the same time, the state must create favorable legal and organizational conditions to support the effective functioning of civil society institutions.

**The Nature and Functions of Civil Society** Civil society is a system of social institutions operating independently of state authority, primarily aimed at protecting citizens' interests.

**Main Institutions of Civil Society:**

- Non-governmental non-profit organizations (NGOs);
- Mass media;
- Public oversight bodies;
- Professional associations and labor unions.

**Key Functions of Civil Society:**

- Representing and protecting public interests;
- Monitoring state activities;
- Raising citizens' legal awareness;
- Protecting human rights and freedoms.

**The Relationship Between Civil Society and the State**

The interaction between civil society and the state is a bilateral process manifested in forms of cooperation, oversight, and opposition.

Civil society helps the state implement social programs. For instance, public oversight bodies contribute to improving the quality of public services. Civil society monitors state activities based on the principles of openness and transparency. For example, the 2018 Law on Public Control established the legal framework for involving citizens in governance.

Civil society is crucial for building the rule of law. Its role in protecting human rights, forming a fair judicial system, and ensuring the rule of law is unparalleled.

Democracy can be stable only through mutual trust between the state and society. Public participation improves the quality of state decisions. Through public oversight of governance, corruption can be combated, and transparency ensured.

In Uzbekistan, the Constitution and several laws have created the necessary legal framework for developing civil society. Notably, the 2022 Law on Supporting Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations marked an important step in this direction.

Significant positive changes have been achieved in strengthening cooperation between the state and civil society in Uzbekistan's experience.

Current Development Priorities:

- Enhancing legal literacy;
- Ensuring freedom of information;
- Expanding public participation.

Thus, the relationship between civil society and the state is vital for social stability and the consolidation of democracy. Balancing these relations increases transparency in governance and strengthens citizens' trust. The reforms underway in Uzbekistan create broad opportunities for civil society development.

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