

## **THE THREAT OF MISSIONARY ACTIVITY AND PROSELYTISM IN RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL PROCESSES**

**Umarov Sherzodjon Usmonovich**

Fergana Public Health Medical Institute  
Assistant of the Department of Social Sciences

**Abstract:** This article provides an in-depth scientific analysis of the threat posed by missionary activity and proselytism within religious and social processes. As a result of globalization, the rapid development of information and communication technologies, and intensified intercultural integration, missionary activities have begun to manifest in new forms, posing serious challenges to religious and spiritual stability. The essence and methods of missionary activity and proselytism, as well as their negative impact on social identity, spiritual values, religious tolerance, and national development, are comprehensively examined. In addition, the article analyzes legal, educational, information security, and civil society-based mechanisms for countering these threats. Using the example of Uzbekistan, the study highlights measures implemented to ensure religious tolerance, interfaith harmony, and the stability of national values. The article substantiates the necessity of strengthening spiritual immunity against missionary activity and proselytism in order to preserve social stability.

**Keywords:** Missionary activity, proselytism, religious threat, spiritual immunity, globalization, religious stability, interfaith harmony, identity crisis, spirituality, national values, legal mechanisms, religious expansion, information security, religious ideology.

### **Introduction**

The processes of globalization, the development of information and communication technologies, and the intensification of intercultural integration have given rise to new trends in the socio-religious environment. One of these trends is the expansion of missionary activity and proselytism, which has become a factor threatening religious, spiritual, and social stability. Religious expansion in the form of missionary activity and proselytism can, in certain cases, negatively affect religious tolerance, interfaith harmony, and the stability of national values. Therefore, an in-depth scientific and practical study of this issue is of significant importance.

Missionary activity refers to the promotion of a particular religion, the dissemination of religious beliefs into new territories, and the purposeful inculcation of religious doctrines among specific social groups by religious preachers.

Proselytism is an activity aimed at converting followers of other religions to one's own faith, often carried out through psychological, economic, or social pressure.

The difference: While missionary activity is primarily conducted through religious propaganda, cultural influence, and information dissemination, proselytism typically involves active conversion efforts and initiative-driven actions aimed at changing an individual's religious beliefs.

Main Methods of Missionary Activity and Proselytism

1. Educational methods – through religious schools, courses, and non-governmental educational institutions.

2. Information technology-based methods – via the internet, social networks, audio and video materials, and mobile applications.
3. Social assistance programs – promoting religious beliefs by providing material support to impoverished, orphaned, and socially vulnerable groups.
4. Cultural and integrative influence – introducing religious ideas through art, culture, cinema, and musical events.
5. Individual-oriented approaches – influencing personal beliefs and values through psychological methods, religious training, and motivational meetings.

#### Threats Arising from the Intensification of Missionary Activity and Proselytism

##### Crisis of religious identity:

- Alienation from national values and historical religious traditions;
- Spiritual void among youth during the process of self-identification.

##### Spiritual and educational deformation:

- Formation of a favorable environment for religious extremist groups;
- Politicization of religion and manipulation through religious ideas.

##### Escalation of social conflicts:

- Ideological confrontations;
- Interfaith disputes, family breakdowns, and the deterioration of kinship relations.

##### Threats to state and social stability:

- Undermining religious and national unity;
- Crisis of public trust and increased social instability.

#### Measures to Counter the Threat of Missionary Activity and Proselytism

- Strict control over the registration of religious organizations;
- Licensing and expert examination of religious materials;
- Administrative and criminal liability for illegal missionary activity;
- Enhancing religious literacy among the population, especially youth;
- Strengthening educational systems based on national and spiritual values;
- Prevention of religious extremism in the internet and mass media;
- Development of official religious information platforms;
- Cooperation with local communities, NGOs, and organizations such as “Nuroni,” “Mahalla,” and the Youth Union;
- Public oversight aimed at strengthening social cohesion.

#### *The Experience of Uzbekistan*

Based on the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Law “On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations,” and the activities of the Committee on Religious Affairs, strict legal standards ensuring interfaith harmony and religious tolerance have been established. While official religious denominations are granted full freedom of activity, clandestine missionary activity and proselytism are strictly prohibited.

Within the framework of Uzbekistan's experience: – The activities of religious and educational centers have been strengthened;

– The outreach and educational capacity of imams has been enhanced;

– Preventive measures are implemented through the deepening of religious studies and spirituality courses within the education system.

### **Discussion and Results**

Missionary activity and proselytism represent complex religious and social phenomena that are increasingly developing under the influence of global, geopolitical, cultural, and information-communication factors. Their modern forms exert influence on public consciousness through religious propaganda, information technologies, cultural integration, and social assistance mechanisms. In some cases, these activities are carried out under the guise of religious freedom, leading to ideological fragmentation, social division, and threats to traditional national belief systems.

Social and political balance within society is based on religious tolerance, interfaith harmony, and the integration of national values. Illegal forms of missionary activity and proselytism can directly undermine this stability. Therefore, counteracting these threats should not rely solely on prohibitive measures, but also on strengthening spiritual immunity, increasing religious and educational literacy, and reinforcing national identity among youth.

An important aspect is that the level of threat posed by missionary activity and proselytism varies depending on each society's historical, cultural, and religious context. In multi-confessional societies, religious tolerance is paramount, whereas in mono-confessional regions, the preservation of religious identity and national values becomes especially significant. In Uzbekistan, this balance is maintained by ensuring freedom of religion while applying strict legal measures against religious extremism, illegal missionary activity, and proselytism.

In conclusion, missionary activity and proselytism may constitute components of religious freedom and faith dissemination; however, their illegal, covert, aggressive, and ideological forms pose serious threats to religious harmony, social stability, and the spiritual immunity of the nation. Conclusion

Although missionary activity and proselytism are related to freedom of religion and belief, their hidden and manipulative forms disrupt religious and spiritual balance in society and threaten national self-awareness. Therefore, managing these phenomena from social, legal, and spiritual perspectives must be carried out through cooperation between the state, society, and citizens. The formation of an enlightened society remains the most effective tool in countering the threats of missionary activity and proselytism.

### **References**

1. Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
2. Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations."
3. Mahmudov N. Fundamentals of Religious Studies.
4. Huntington S. The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order.
5. Esposito J. L. Islam and Secularism in the Postmodern World.
6. Abdulazizov A. Missionary Activity and Its Social Threats.
7. Khayrullaev M. Spirituality and Religion.