

Theatrical Performances: Celebrating Tolerance and Unity Event Report

Event Title: Theatrical Performances: Celebrating Tolerance and Unity

Date: February 4, 2025

Organizer: UNESCO Chair in Comparative Study of World Religions, International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan (IIAU)

Venue: International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan

Theme: "Uzbekistan – A Land of Tolerance" and "You Are Not Orphaned"

Target Audience: Students, faculty members, cultural representatives, and interfaith community members

Number of Attendees: Over 200 participants

From February 4 to 8, 2025, the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Study of World Religions at the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan (IIAU) organized a Week of Scientific, Cultural, Educational, and Sports Events dedicated to World Interfaith Harmony Week. Under the theme "**Human Fraternity and Interfaith Dialogue – A Factor of International Solidarity**," this initiative aimed to enhance interfaith cooperation, promote religious tolerance, and foster global solidarity.

As the third event of the week's celebrations, the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Study of World Religions at the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan organized a theatrical performance celebrating interfaith tolerance and cultural unity. This event was designed to highlight the importance of human fraternity, compassion, and Uzbekistan's longstanding tradition of peaceful coexistence among diverse religious and ethnic groups. Through the powerful medium of theater, students brought to life significant historical narratives and moral lessons, emphasizing the values of inclusivity, solidarity, and mutual respect.

The event featured a key theatrical performance presented by the Academy's student theater group: "**You Are Not Orphaned**" – A deeply moving play inspired by Rahmat Fayzi's novel and the renowned 1962 Uzbek film of the same name.

The theatrical productions captivated the audience through compelling storytelling, music, and dramatic expression. The performances not only entertained but also served as an educational tool to inspire discussions on interfaith cooperation and human solidarity.

"You Are Not Orphaned" – A Story of Compassion

The highlight of the evening was the adaptation of "You Are Not Orphaned," which narrates the true story of a Tashkent blacksmith, Shomahmud Shoahmedov, and his wife, Baxri Akramova, who provided shelter and care to 14 orphaned children of different nationalities and faiths during World War II. This story is a powerful testament to the Uzbek people's spirit of generosity and their unwavering commitment to humanitarian values.

The performance effectively conveyed themes of:

- **Compassion and Kindness:** Demonstrating how individuals can create a profound impact on society through small acts of humanity.
- **Interethnic and Interfaith Solidarity:** Showcasing how diverse communities can come together in times of crisis to support one another.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Encouraging a collective approach toward building a more inclusive and harmonious world.

The emotional depth of the actors' performances and the authenticity of the storytelling deeply resonated with the audience, eliciting both tears and admiration.

Impact of the Event

This theatrical event played a significant role in promoting the key messages of World Interfaith Harmony Week.

- **Educational Influence:** The performances provided an opportunity for students and attendees to reflect on the values of interfaith dialogue, tolerance, and humanitarianism.
- **Community Engagement:** By bringing together members of different religious and ethnic backgrounds, the event reinforced the importance of peaceful coexistence and cultural exchange.
- **Promotion of Cultural Heritage:** The adaptation of a classic Uzbek story highlighted the nation's commitment to preserving its historical narratives of unity and compassion.
- **Youth Involvement:** Over 200 students actively participated as performers and audience members, fostering a new generation of socially responsible individuals who value diversity and harmony.

Testimonies and Reactions

- *"This performance was not just a play; it was a lesson in humanity. The story of 'You Are Not Orphaned' reminds us of the importance of kindness and unity in our society."* – Arkadiy Isakharov, Chairman of the Jewish Religious Community of Tashkent
- *"I felt a deep emotional connection to the story. It inspired me to reflect on how we, as youth, can contribute to a more inclusive and tolerant world."* – Sunnatullo Rahmonov, Student Participant
- *"Uzbekistan has always been a land of tolerance, and tonight's event was a beautiful reminder of that legacy."* – Odiljon Ernazarov, Head of the Chair at the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan

The theatrical performances served as a powerful tribute to Uzbekistan's legacy of peace and coexistence. The event successfully demonstrated how theater can be used as a platform for interfaith dialogue, cultural celebration, and educational engagement. By reviving historical narratives that emphasize humanity's shared values, the UNESCO Chair reaffirmed its commitment to fostering interfaith understanding and global solidarity.

Photos from the event will be provided next.







