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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations presents its compliments to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and with reference to the letter's dated 13 January 2017, has the honour to present the progress report submitted by the Government of the Republic Azerbaijan in regards to the commitments made at the Global Leader's Meeting in 2015.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women the assurances of its highest consideration. GR



New York, 22 February 2017

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
New York

**Progress report submitted by the Government of Azerbaijan
in regards to the commitments made at the Global Leaders' Meeting
in 2015**

1. Education and training of women

- **The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan together with local authorities has been implementing awareness-raising Project "Our strength is in our unity" on regular bases, since 2015,. The purpose of the project is promoting healthy lifestyle, combating violence, proper organization of family - school relations.**
- **Awareness-raising project, "Sun for everybody" has been regularly implemented since 2015. The purpose of the project is to increase attention and care for children and women with disabilities, to involve society to their problems; and to provide their development and full inclusion into society and to ensure psychological and legal help to parents of children in need of special care.**
- **From September 2016, the Committee has started holding meetings for militants on family values and gender policy.**
- **Several meetings were held in the Family and Children Support centers of the regions of Azerbaijan and educational materials were distributed for the promotion of the European Convention on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Children.**
- **In accordance with paragraph 13.5.3 of the National Plan of Action on combating trafficking in human beings, in order to provide socio-psychological assistance and social-consulting to children under public care within the preventive measures social-consultations and community meetings were held in regions and urban communities, social awareness-raising videos and presentations related to trafficking in human beings were demonstrated and awareness raising materials were distributed among the participants.**
- **In connection with the execution of paragraphs 13.4.1 and 13.4.2 of the National Plan of Action to combat trafficking in human beings, in November 2016, awareness raising activities were conducted for pupils and teachers at rural schools of Central regions of the country. The main purposes of the activities were to conduct research on socio-psychological aspects of trafficking in the regions, revealing the reasons for becoming victims and reduction of risks of becoming a victim of trafficking. For this**

purpose, questionnaires were sent to 11 Regional Support Centers for Children and Families, and the results of the survey were summarized.

2. Women and health

- In order to raise awareness of women on reproductive health and sanitary-hygienic norms the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs in cooperation with Public Union on Support for Development of Gynecology and Perinatology published a booklet entitled **"Secrets of reproductive health of women"** within the framework of the Project on Reproductive Health which continued till the end of 2015. Under the awareness raising campaign the training/seminars were conducted with the participation of doctors and women in 8 regions.
- In April-July 2016, awareness raising campaigns for population, especially for young girls were conducted in regions and cities within the project **"Say NO to early marriage for a healthy life"** on trafficking in human beings, early marriages, consequences of marriages between close relatives and promotion of healthy lifestyle.
- In the framework of the project on **"Promoting Rural Women's Participation In Social and Economic Life"** the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) hosted an event entitled **"Women's health and the consequences of early marriages"** in Women Resource Centers in spring 2016. The event was attended mostly by high school children. During the event discussions were held on urgent contemporary problems.
- In May 2016, on the occasion of **"The International Family Day"** the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs together with **"Healthy Family"** Medical Center held awareness raising campaigns on promotion of a healthy lifestyle and medical examination before marriage for 161 families of refugees and internally displaced persons in Central regions of Azerbaijan, raising awareness of population and especially the youth on reproductive health, family planning, early marriages and problems caused by harmful habits (drug addiction, alcoholism, smoking, AIDS).

In the second part of the event, the specialists (therapists, endocrinologists, cardiologists, ENT doctors, pediatricians, gynecologists, and dermatologist) of the Medical Center conducted medical examination among women and children recorded totally 332 medical check-ups.

- Series of trainings were organized on "Maternal and child health", "Embryo training" and "How to treat minors in family". In Regional Women Resource Centers, In June 2016.
- the Project "I chose my life" was initiated with a view to implementing items 4.3.7, 4.4.30, 4.4.34 of "State Program to combat illicit circulation of narcotics, psychotropic substances and their precursors and drug abuse for 2013-2018" in 2016. The purpose of the project is promotion of a healthy lifestyle, strengthening the fight against harmful habits (drug addiction, alcoholism, and smoking) of population, especially among young people and increasing public control. In the regions awareness raising campaigns were held and such topics as consequences of harmful habits, healthy lifestyle, reproductive health and other issues were discussed.
- According to item 4.4.32. of "The State Program to combat illicit circulation of narcotics, psychotropic substances and their precursors and drug abuse for 2013-2018" a series of events were held in central regions with the purpose of effective organization of leisure time of children and the youth.
- In accordance with paragraph 13.5.7 of the National Plan of Action to combat trafficking in human beings for 2014-2018, in March-May 2016, meetings were held with monitoring groups working in regions and cities, with the purpose of training and instructing them on studying the situation in the families of children, who were adopted or given for guardianship and patronage, avoidance of children of education, as well as the cases of domestic violence.

Monitoring was also carried out in totally 133 families of children, who were adopted or given for guardianship and patronage, in the regions where the Support Centers for Children and Families are located.

3. Violence against women

- The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs in cooperation with UN Population Fund held an international conference on "Prevention of domestic violence" on November 13, 2015. Coordination of activities on strengthening the reference mechanisms for victims of domestic violence, expansion of socio-economic potential of women and prevention of domestic violence by awareness raising on gender issues in society, investigation and analysis of the reasons of violence, protection of victims of violence and providing them with appropriate assistance and other issues were discussed at the conference.

- On October 12, 2016, State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Baku Metropolitan CJSC signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation**. The memorandum includes joint implementation of the social events aimed at enlightenment of population for prevention of problems regarding family, women and children.
- **"16 Days of Activism Campaign Against gender-based Violence"** starts in November (the International Day Combating Violence against Women) and continues until December 10 (the International Day of Human Rights) of each year. The campaign emphasizes that the violence against women is a violation of human rights. This activity is used as a joint strategy by individuals and organizations around the world to call for stopping the violence against women and girls.

Besides, a conference **"16 days of activism campaign against gender-based violence"** dedicated to combating violence against women, was jointly organized by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Program, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Drugs and Law Enforcement Bureau on International Affairs of the US State Department and the delegation of the European Union to Azerbaijan was opened on November 21, 2016,.

- On September 20, 2016, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs in cooperation with the State Committee for Work with Religious Organizations held an event entitled **"Attitude to violence against women in Islam"**. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss equality between women and men in Islam, position of women in Islamic society, and to assess the position of Islam with respect to family values and violence against women.
- Subparagraph 7.4 of the Development Concept **"Azerbaijan 2020: vision into the future"**, as well as paragraph 3.5.2.1. of the Action Plan (2011-2015 years) on the implementation of the "State Program on poverty reduction and sustainable development in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2008-2015" envisage establishment of a reliable monitoring mechanism (system) related to gender-based violence and violence against children, including domestic violence. To this end, currently, monitoring groups on gender-based violence and violence against children consisting of members of relevant local executive bodies are established by orders of chief executive authorities.

As reliable monitoring mechanisms, the local monitoring groups on gender-based violence and violence against children, implement the coordination of such activities as accessing the situation on places, testing the effectiveness of implemented activities, identifying and supporting of high-risk families, studying and analyzing the causes of violence, discussing especially the serious cases of violence committed, protecting the victims of violence and providing appropriate assistance to them.

Trainings were organized for monitoring groups on gender-based violence and violence against children during 2016. The gaps existing in practice in connection with the implementation of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on "Prevention of Domestic Violence" were discussed at the trainings.

- Taking into the consideration the necessity of strengthening the preventive measures in order to increase the effectiveness of measures taken on prevention of domestic violence, providing with urgent and full support the people who suffer from violence, and to this end, developing human resources in the field of domestic violence, "Joint Plan of Action on the prevention of domestic violence (for the period 2016-2018)" was signed by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population, Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health with the goals of strengthening inter-institutional cooperation.
- On November 13, 2015, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs in cooperation with UN Population Fund held an international conference on "Prevention of domestic violence". Coordination of activities on strengthening the reference mechanisms for victims of domestic violence, expansion of socio-economic potential of women and prevention of domestic violence by awareness raising on gender issues in society, investigation and analysis of the reasons of violence, protection of victims of violence and providing them with appropriate assistance and other issues were discussed at the conference.

4. Women, poverty and the economy

- A number of measures have been implemented within the framework of the State Program on the Implementation of the Employment Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan. One of the main goals of the program is to implement appropriate measures to promote the employment of adolescents and the youth;

The main activities on solving the employment problem of the youth (as well as the young and teenage girls) are the followings:

- gradually achieving a permanent job for the professionally trained youth providing them with methodological and practical assistance in organization of business activities, organization of special trainings;
- retraining the youth which is under the threat of liberalization, on profession or specialty demanded in labor market before being fired;
- Defining work places for young people by quotas in the manner prescribed by law and strengthening the encouraging mechanism for implementation of this requirement by employers;
- creation of favorable conditions for adolescents and young people in order to involve them into seasonal and public works;
- Restoration and development of folk arts and ancient art, and involving the youth into this work;
- preparation of young specialists to work in the tourism sector, and implementation of appropriate measures to improve professional training level of them;
- conducting sociological research related to unemployment problems of the youth;
- Establishment of the network of business centers to support young entrepreneurs, farmers and unemployed young people in the regions and cities;
- involving the youth into implementation of programs prepared on the basis of effective and new technologies in certain sectors of the economy;
- creation of new work places in cross-border and mountainous regions for the youth in order to prevent the flow of them into the cities, and provide them with advisory services related to business activities;

- Azerbaijan Micro-finance Association jointly with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs carried out training on "Financial literacy" and "Start your Business and Develop It" within the framework of the Project "Training women professionals and development of women entrepreneurs in the regions of Azerbaijan".

The main purpose of trainings on "financial literacy" is to provide necessary information on the basis of financial studies. The "Start your Business and Develop It" trainings are aimed at supporting women who want to engage or who is already engaged in small and medium business, who has business ideas and is preparing business plans. The trainings were held in April-May 2016 in 10 regions.

- A new project on "Enabling civil society to play a greater role in advancing gender equality and women's rights" in collaboration with United Nations Development Program, The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, Women's Association for Rational Development and the European Union was initiated in

2016. Two years project aims to increase the role of the civil society in advancing women's rights and promote rural women's economic and social participation. The project's target group will be rural women, the youth, local communities, and NGOs dealing with women's rights.

- **Technical assistance Project on "Promoting Rural Women's participation in the Social and Economic Life"** (currently the Project is entitled as **"Empowerment of Women and Young Girls with Disabilities in Economic and Social Life"**) was implemented together with UNDP and the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan to support rural women willing to increase the level of their economic activities, assess their need and problems related to their participation in economic and social life and strengthen the role of rural women in community-based decision-making through capacity development. The followings were implemented within the framework of the Project:
 - Until 2016, Women Resource Centers were established in 2 (Sabirabad and Neftchala) regions and in 2016, in 2 more regions (Masalli and Bilasuvar), as well. Currently, 7 micro projects are operating in Sabirabad region. The business entities are registered by the government.
 - On October 15, 2015, on International Day of Rural Women official opening ceremony of 4 business activities was organized in the center of Neftchala region.
 - In 2016, in Salyan 5, in Masalli 14 and in Bilasuvar 13 new business places were opened for women.
 - Azerbaijan Society of Disabled Women made agreement on partnership with UNDP, thus, the women with disabilities could benefit from the project;
 - Currently, it is planned to initiate 3 more agricultural business activities.

- Series of events were held in 5 central and south-western regions of the Republic, where the Child and Family Support Centers are located, with the purpose of preparation of training materials on "Management of Family Budget" and making presentations in regional communities. The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs has presented a video demonstrating the summarization of such topics as "Summing of income, monthly incomes, seasonal analysis of income and expenses, management of money and arrangement of spending in accordance with revenues, management of budget by the importance of expenditure, the ways to avoid unnecessary costs".

5. Women in power and decision-making

- In 2015, the Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs jointly with German Society for International Cooperation within the framework of "Dayaq" Mentoring Program has prepared a manual of practical recommendations "Be active" for women members of the municipalities. For the promotion of the manual, trainings were conducted for women members of municipalities and chairmen in 5 northern regions of the country.

In the first half of 2016 the project was continued, and trainings were conducted for women members of municipalities and chairmen at the districts of Baku city, as well as 18 regions from all directions of the country in order to promote the instruction booklet titled "Effective Communication". In the second half of 2016, trainings were conducted with the same purpose in 2 districts of Baku city, as well as, in 2 southern and 2 northern regions of the country.

- The Government tries to ensure the participation of women in Political processes, as well as, increase the representation of women in elections with the aim of promotion of the political leadership of women, by conducting such projects as "Women and Leadership", "Local Administration in the South Caucasus" and "Increasing the Representation of Women in Municipal Elections". Thus, according to the statistics for January 1, 2016, the number of registered female entrepreneurs in regions - has reached 113889 persons.

Activity In 2015
Types of individual
entrepreneurs gender distribution

Activity type	Women		Men	
	number	%	number	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	23193	20,4	79749	17,2
Mining industry	35	0,0	641	0,1
Processing industry	2233	2,0	13478	2,9
Energy, gas and steam production, distribution and supply	4	0,0	54	0,0

Water supply, waste treatment and disposal	21	0,0	203	0,0
Construction	120	0,1	4869	1,1
Trade; repair of motor vehicles	41326	36,3	159825	34,5
Transportation and storage	947	0,8	71861	15,5
Accommodation of tourists	4890	4,3	29542	6,4
Information and communication	1037	0,9	5023	1,1
Financial and insurance activities	350	0,3	1112	0,2
Real estate transactions	3202	2,8	7796	1,7
Profession, scientific and technical activities	3712	3,3	7498	1,6
Administrative and support service activities	747	0,7	1810	0,4
Education	2414	2,1	1348	0,3
Public health and social services	820	0,7	1626	0,4
Rendering services in the sphere of rest, entertainment and art	902	0,8	6803	1,5
Providing other types of service	23394	20,5	57019	12,3
Activity of households;	4542	4,0	12760	2,8
Total	113889	100,0	463017	100,0

public health and social services

Statistical data:

The level of participation of women among Members of Parliament (elected women)			
2000	2005	2010	2015
10,7 %	11,2%	16,0 %	16,8 %

The number of women deputy chief executive				
2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
35	44	68	71	78

Level of participation of women in work of municipal members (elected women)		
2004	2009	2014
4 %	26,7 %	35%

6. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

- The event dedicated to the international women day was held by the State Committee for Family, Woman and Children Affairs in 2016. The president awards were presented to a group of women who has made contributions to public and political life of the country and played important role in development of Azerbaijani science and culture. At the same time, women who works in Child and Family Support Center were awarded by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs for useful activities
- The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs together with a number of women entrepreneurs held meeting with a group of alumnus from state institutions for children deprived of parental care on 17 March, 2016. During the meeting choice of professions of young people, employment, development of young people in sport and social life, the consequences of bad habits and other topics were discussed.

7. Human rights of women

- On October 21, 2015, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs held a round table on "CEDAW: Say NO to All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in Azerbaijan!" dedicated to the discussion of recommendations of the CEDAW Committee on the V periodical report of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- Within the framework of the regional program on support for "Legal approximation towards European standards in the South Caucasus" The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs jointly with the German Society for International Cooperation has launched a project on the "Rights of women". Book on "Guidelines on

Women rights" was published within the Project. Women rights in family relationships, marriage contract, child rights, pensions and social allowances, trafficking in human beings, reproductive health, domestic violence and other topics are reflected in the book. As a continuation of the project, workshops for women on "Domestic violence and women rights" were held for two days in 7 regions (north and south) since 2015 until November, 2016.

The book published by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and the German Society for International Cooperation about "Guidelines on Women rights" and the manuals that also published by the Committee on the "Set of the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence in the Republic of Azerbaijan" were distributed among the participants of the workshops.

Participants were given detailed information about the "Law on Guarantee of Gender Equality" and the "Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence" towards the formation of equal rights system and the prevention of violence in society, as well as about the rules to refer , protection order etc. in the cases of domestic violence.

- Since 2016, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs together with the UN Population Fund and US Agency for International Development started 2 years project on "Combating Gender-Based Violence in Azerbaijan". Under the project, evidence-based intervention strategies were prepared in order to combat more effectively. The inter-agency database on gender-based violence was established on the basis of collected data related to this project. As well as, special implementation mechanism and strategy was established which would reflect the proper separation of duties of participant sides for the protection and promotion of women rights.

The main interests of the Project include the strengthening institutional capacity of relevant state bodies and representatives of NGO in order to provide victims of gender-based violence with protection and support service. Also, under the project, available services for the victims of violence and wide range of awareness raising workshops on women's rights was carried out among public. So, the Project serves to improve inter-institutional cooperation for effective management of data on gender-based violence and improve standards and services within the guidance and protection mechanism.

- As part of the regional project "Improving Women's Access to Justice in Five Countries of the Eastern Partnership" the Justice Academy of Azerbaijan and the Council of Europe organized a training seminar for 18 judges on "Ensuring Access to Justice for Women" in Baku on 31 May 2016.

The training seminar was part of efforts to address some of the prevailing obstacles to women's pursuit of justice, such as gender stereotypes in the justice system, fear and shame of women victims of gender-based violence to report and/ or provide testimony or lack of adequate legal aid or legal representation.

Topics that were discussed include international standards on women's rights and gender equality and, in particular, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), examples from judicial practice, case law of the European Court of Human Rights on gender equality issues, and main barriers to women's access to justice in Azerbaijan, including in cases of gender-based violence.

The Justice Academy of Azerbaijan and the Gender Equality Unit of the Council of Europe organized a second training seminar on "Ensuring Access to Justice for Women", which took place in Baku on 9 December 2016. A local and an international trainer led this seminar with 23 judges to discuss international and European standards on access to justice for women.

Emphasis was given to challenging gender stereotypes in judicial practice concerning access to justice for women victims of gender-based violence (domestic violence, sexual violence). Supporting documents included the regional report on barriers, remedies and good practices on women's access to justice in five Eastern Partnership countries, the Istanbul Convention and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights on women's rights.

8. Women and Mass Media

- Every year regularly the Committee holds conferences in connection with the International Day on Violence Against Women, in the framework of the "16 days of activism" campaign "Women empowerment, social progress" and "The role of the media in prevention of domestic violence and early marriages".
- Traditionally, in April and May 2016 the Committee held competition for journalists "Women are our state, our independence, our future".
- Under the National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings of the Republic of Azerbaijan (2014-2018-years), in July 2016, enlightening TV program on prevention of trafficking in human beings (trafficking of women) was prepared and broadcasted on ARB TV.
- The State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs is organizing discussions on "Women and Violence" by experts on regular bases, once a month on Public

Television on "Talk Time" program". In addition, representatives of the Committee gave an interview on ASAN Radio on "Parent-child relationships" and also gave an interview to Bakıpost.az site on "The causes of suicide among the Youth".

- On 20 July 2016 the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs together with the Azerbaijan Press Council organized a conference on "The role of media in family, women's and children's issues, highlighting: achievements and perspectives" in the International Press Center. The Government professionally highlighted family, women's and children's issues in the media, as well as studies and analyzes in these areas. Every year the committee held a conference on this issue regularly.
- The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs signed a memorandum with the Asan Radio in order to prepare social video shots and radio programs which cover the socially sensitive areas for the issues regarding families, women and children. After the competition started 7 scenarios were chosen of all and the authors were awarded. The video shot for the scenarios which took 1st place was prepared and broadcast.

Within the agreement on cooperation with Asan Radio and the Committee 2 social videos devoted to the International Day of Disabled Persons and International Day on the Elimination of Violence against Women were prepared and are regularly broadcasted on the radio.

9. Women and environment

One of the recommendations arising from the obligations of the UN Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women is the implementation of the special approach targeting women and children in emergency situations. The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs together with the Ministry of the Emergency Situations conducted trainings for the women of communities in the regions sensitive to emergency situations, including lowland and rural areas. The importance of the trainings was stressed during the trainings and the reactions of people in the extreme situations, protection of their psychological health were among the topics discussed and participants were provided with psychological advices. Representative of the Ministry of Emergency Situations has demonstrated video on the activity of the ministry and presentation on safety measures during the emergency situations and gave instructions on the personal safety rules in the case of earthquake, floodwater, natural disasters. The women of 4 villages involved in the training held discussions on the importance of the safety measures and asked questions interested them.

10. Teenagers (girls)

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs holds regular awareness-raising events in the schools of cities and regions.

- The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs together with regional executive powers conducted a range of events dedicated to the International Day of Girls where the problems of early marriages and its consequences, girls dropping out school, human trafficking, reproductive health were discussed in 2015.
- Large scale project "Don't become the victim of human trafficking" was launched for raising awareness among population, especially among youth in the framework of "The National Action Plan for the years 2014-2018 on combating trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Azerbaijan" in 2016 with the participation of teachers, high school students and parents.
- In accordance with Article 13.5.6 of "The National Action Plan for the years 2014-2018 on combating trafficking in human beings", the community meetings were organized in the secondary schools of rural areas to prevent children, specially girls to drop out of school, violation of reproductive health and negative psychological environment in the family. The results of survey conducted on early marriages were discussed.
- Project on "Say No to violence against Women" was launched in 2016 together with Azerbaijan Future Studies Society to prevent early marriages, domestic violence through the implementation national and international legislation and projects conducted by The State Committee.
- The Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in cooperation with UNESCO and ASAN Service involved youth and juveniles to the trainings held under title "No to violence".
- The Children and Family Support Centers acting under the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs has contributed to the "ASAN letter" project launched by the ASAN Volunteers Organization. The aim of the project is to realize wishes of children under 14 from vulnerable groups. The Children and Family Support Centers and regional executive powers collected letters of the children from low-income families. During the visit to 75 families, The State Committee provided food and clothing assistance to families in need and held discussion with these families, the elderly persons, especially women and children, members of martyr's families. Totally, 194 letters were written by the children where they mainly asked for clothes and school uniforms. Part of wishes was realized with the help of charitable persons. The presents for 135 children were delivered by ASAN volunteers and employees of the Committee.