

**Speech of Minister of Youth and Sport of the
Republic of Azerbaijan Mr.AzadRahimov**

**At the Fifth IPU Global Conference of Young
Parliamentarians**

**Promoting sustainability, protecting the interests of
future generations**

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Dear ladies and gentlemen.

I have the honor to welcome you on behalf of the ministry of youth and sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan and present information about youth policy. First of all I would like to say that state youth policy is one of the top priorities of His Excellency President IlhamAliyev and the government.

Azerbaijan has one of the youngest population in Europe. Today we have more than two thirds (2/3) of citizens under 30.It is a big privilege as well as a big challenge.

Ministry of youth and sport was established in 1994 by decree of National leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev.

Ministry has regional branch in every district of our country.

We have adopted a law on youth in 2001, but it was amended and changed in 2007. The first national youth forum which is the biggest national youth policy gathering was held on the 2nd of February of 1996 and since 1997 this day-the second of February - we celebrate as the day of youth. 2007 was declared as a year of Youth. This was first thematic year in our country.

Youth foundation was established by decree of the President in 2011. Permanent committee on youth and sport stands among other committees of our parliament since 2015. Special department on youth and sport policy was established in the office of the President in 2017. Budget for youth policy increases every year.

41 youth centers was built in last decade. More than 300 youth NGO's currently participate in the implementation of youth policy. Ministry holds youth fairs with NGOs. It helpstopromotethemamongyoungpeopleaswellasitstim

ulates NGOs for improving their activities.

Students movement is very active in Azerbaijan, every university has its own organization and they have their own union. Ministry also cooperates with this union in implementation students oriented programs. Beside this, different structures such as ministry of education, labor and social protection, transport and communication, and recently the ministry of agriculture also have youth dimension. I would also to mention that in all these organizations and in youth movement in general gender balanced is completely provided, in some cases even violated in favor of our young women.

Projects of youth and youth NGO's are having support from governmental structures. Azerbaijani young people have unique opportunity in getting individual grants from youth foundation. Young entrepreneurs are having subsidized loans for starting and developing businesses.

Since 2007 government provides full scholarship for those who get into the university from list of top 100

universities of the world. More than 3600 students were awarded with this scholarship.

For providing crosssectoral discussions on youth policy we have social council under the ministry of youth and sport. This is some kind of consultative youth body where main stakeholders such as government, parliament, NGO and relevant international organizations are having platform and tribune to discuss different legislative initiatives, programs and other important documents related to youth policy.

So, as you see, legislative and infrastructural base of the youth policy on local level is provided. Such issues as housing, employment, social care are finding its' solutions. But we are also participating in the implementation of youth policy on international level. Azerbaijani youth NGO's are also participating in different programs of UN, Council of Europe, European Union and the others. Their cooperation covers more than 30 international and regional organisations. With an honor I have to say that Azerbaijan was among the firsts who supported the establishing of United Nations

youth envoy office and we have contributed also in the functioning of the office. In October of 2014 Baku became the center of the global youth policy discussions. We had gathered more than 700 youth policy makers from all over the world. This forum was held in cooperation with United Nations Organization, Council of Europe, UNESCO and other organizations. Azerbaijani youth NGO's were among the establishers of several international NGO's, such as Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum in 2004, Youth Forum of GUAM member states in 2006, world Turkic youth union in 2010 and Great Silk way – international youth union in 2012.

As minister responsible not only for youth but also for sport I would like to share some information about our sport policy. As you probably aware Azerbaijan today is one of the most popular sport destinations of the world. Inaugural European Games, World chess cup and world chess Olympiad, Islamic solidarity games, 1 world championship and 2 European championship on Olympic disciplines, 3 years of Formula1 city circuits – these are just the few events that were held since 2015.

Azerbaijani athletes left Summer Olympic Games in Rio of 2016 with 18 medals. This was one of the biggest number of medals for the team among the participating countries. 44 Olympic standard centers were built since 2001. Thousands of young people and children are using these centers on daily base.

Dear Ladies and gentlemen,

As you see, Azerbaijani young people have been provided with different opportunities for development in different fields. But we are continuing our work in this direction. I am sure this forum will bring also value to our youth work, young parliamentarian will share with our experience as well as they get information about your country achievements in these fields and will contribute to our national policies.

I wish you all successfull and fruitful conference.

Thank you for your attention!