



# AZERBAIJAN

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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**STATEMENT BY  
THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN  
DR. ALI NAGIYEV**

**AT THE TWENTY FIRST SPECIAL SESSION  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FOR THE OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**1 July 1999  
New York**

Honourable Mr. President,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Before reporting on the progress in the field of population and development in Azerbaijan, let me express our deep gratitude to the UN Secretary-General for the comprehensive and coherent report, reflecting the progress in ICPD PoA implementation in last five years and providing the analysis of future perspectives. This report determines in detail responsibilities of the countries in implementation of the ICPD PoA and further encourages expansion of the implementation process.

Implementation of the economic reforms in Azerbaijan, formation of statehood, development of multistructural economy and its integration into the world market are taking place at a difficult time for the country when its every seventh citizen is either a refugee or internally displaced person, as a result of the Armenian aggression for the last ten years. These factors have substantively aggravated the population and development problems in Azerbaijan.

Current political and macroeconomic stability and increasing level of investment have created favourable environment for social reforms. These reforms are being supported by the **firm** commitment of the Government of Azerbaijan to implement the agreements, achieved at series of the important International conferences which took place in **90-es**, including agreements adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development.

In the past 5 years reforms were taking place in the field of **labour** relations, social protection, education and health. Population issues are being considered in the process of building of democratic state, which is based on the Constitution of the Azerbaijan Republic, which was adopted on 12 November 1995 and guarantees equal rights and freedoms for men and women. Basic principles agreed in the international conventions have found their reflection in more than 30 laws, determining the basics of the social protection of the population, health and education. Major international organizations such as UNDP, WB, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNICEF, ILO, WHO and IOM do support various projects and initiatives for development of the reproductive health sector, regulation of the migration processes, expansion of employment opportunities for the vulnerable groups, particularly for refugees and displaced persons, women, youth and disabled, programmes for expansion of educational opportunities and social protection of children.

In the meantime, the considerable decrease in the population growth rate and increasing mortality (particularly among the able-bodied population), increase of the maternal mortality and abortions, reducing number of marriages and increasing number of divorces, negative growth of migration, declining fertility – all these are characteristics of the deepening demographic crisis in Azerbaijan which has determined the necessity of the development and implementation of the national demographic policy and population development programme.

In view of the above active measures are being taken to implement the comprehensive approach to address the issues of population and development in the context of Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference for Population and Development. Therefore, for the period which has passed since the time of the conference the national Reproductive Health and

family planning programme was developed and is being implemented with support of the United Nations Population Fund. Within the frameworks of this programme the first national network of family planning institutions was established and training of specialists for this programme have started, NGO-s and CBO-s became involved in RH activities and as the result of that the access of the population to the modern methods of family planning has increased.

Another important initiative was launching of programmes in the field of gender and development, incorporation of gender concerns in working plans of the **sectoral** Ministries, introduction of gender sensitization programmes in various government structures and elective bodies as well as among NGOs and CBOs.

Regardless of all the mentioned above, the comprehensive population development policy, the one which recognizes the interrelationship and interdependence of various social factors and impact of these factors on the population issues is yet to be developed in Azerbaijan. Country is missing sufficient financial and human resources, as well as experience in design and implementation of programmes in area of population and development. But there is a strong political will of the Leadership of Azerbaijan to develop and implement these policies. One of the signs of this will was hosting of an international conference of the ECO (Economic Cooperation Organization) member countries on the subject of the role of men in the population programmes, which took place in September of 1998 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

To avoid social and economic cataclysms, connected with the unsolved nature of the demographic problems and in order to determine national policy in this field, a special State Commission was established in December of 1998 by the decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. This Commission has developed the Concept of Demographic Development of Azerbaijan which determines the state policy in this field and is based on the principles and objectives set out in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. To support the implementation of the concept a programme of cooperation between the Government of Azerbaijan and the United Nations Population Fund is being developed.

Mr. President,

As Minister of Labour and Social Security, which has a leading role for the population and development issues in our country, I would like to take this opportunity and stress that recognizing the crucial importance and priority of the national efforts in achievement of the ICPD PoA goals, we do hope that the international cooperation and assistance for our country will further expand.

The Republic of Azerbaijan accepting Proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development will put forward all possible efforts for its implementation.

Thank you for your attention.

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