

**Azərbaycan Respublikasının  
Cenevrədəki BMT Bölməsi  
və digər beynəlxalq təşkilatlar yanında  
Daimi Nümayəndəliyi**



**Permanent Mission  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
to the UN Office and other  
International Organizations in Geneva**

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## **2nd session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law**

### **Parliaments as promoters of human rights, democracy and the rule of law**

**Remarks by Marziyya Vakilova-Mardaliyeva,  
second secretary of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN  
Office and other International Organizations in Geneva**

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Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, we would like to thank the organisers for providing a platform for such fruitful discussions and all the panellists for their insightful statements.

The national parliaments play a huge role in ensuring and promoting human rights, fundamental freedoms, rule of law and democratic values. After regaining independence by Azerbaijan in 1991, the national parliament (Milli Mejlis) has significantly contributed to setting the policies related to the democratic development of the country through numerous legislative initiatives, including adopting laws ensuring human rights, ratifying many international conventions in the field of protecting and promoting human rights, as well as reviewing and making amendments in the light of the international human rights obligations.

The Parliament of Azerbaijan is a truly representative body of all groups. We have 20 women members of Parliament, which is around 20% of the total number of MPs. The members of minority communities have their seats in Milli Mejlis. Parliament of Azerbaijan closely cooperates with National Human Rights Institute (Ombudsperson's Office) in its work and most importantly the civil society members are engaged with the work of the Parliamentary Committees and take part in debates on relevant legislative initiatives.

Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights is a leading committee responsible for formulating legislative policy in the field of ensuring and protecting human rights and freedoms. Parliamentary Committee on Family, Woman and Child is responsible for drafting legislation on the protection of rights of women and children, gender equality, fight against domestic violence. All the Committees receive regularly individuals and review their requests, complaints and proposals. These communications are subsequently

referred to competent governmental agencies for consideration and most importantly for the prompt addressing the issues under review.

The Azerbaijani Parliament pays special attention to the participation of young people in political and decision-making processes and through its Committee on Youth and Sport draws up legislation in the field of youth inclusion. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that 5th Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians on the theme of *Promoting sustainability, protecting the interests of future generations* is going to be held in Baku on 14-15 December 2018 to highlight the role that young parliamentarians can play as drivers of inclusion. This conference is being jointly organized by the IPU and the Parliament of Azerbaijan.

This event is also a bright example of the importance attached by Milli Mejlis to inter-parliamentary cooperation. Azerbaijani Parliament is also closely engaged with the work of other Parliamentary Assemblies. Joint events related to women's rights, including elimination of violence against women, as well as child's rights have been organised in the Azerbaijani Parliament together with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. With a view to supporting the implementation of the strategy through parliamentary action, children's rights in the digital environment was the focus of the 1st meeting of PACE Sub Committee on Children held in Baku last year. This meeting was the first initiative undertaken in the framework of the new PACE project on *Parliaments and Social Rights* aimed at promoting Council of Europe standards, including those relating to children's rights.

The realization of Sustainable Development Goals also remains high on the Milli Mejlis' agenda. At present, there is an initiative to establish a group of parliamentarians on promoting SDGs.

In conclusion, let me inform you that, this year, we, in Azerbaijan, solemnly celebrate the indeed historical occasion in our history - 100th anniversary of the Azerbaijani Parliament. In 1918 the Azerbaijani Government was formed on the basis of accountability and separation of powers and the Parliament was a democratically-elected, multi-party and truly representative legislative body, the first of its kind in the entire Muslim Orient. It was exactly 100 years ago that the women were granted electoral rights for the first time in the Muslim world, even much more before than in many European countries.

Thank you for your kind attention.