



**UN Human Rights Council  
Thirty-ninth Session**

**Side event “The impacts of corruption in the full enjoyment of human rights at  
all levels”**

**Statement  
delivered by Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov, the Permanent Representative of the  
Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International Organizations  
in Geneva**

**September 18, 2018**

Mr. Moderator,

Corruption negatively affects and undermines the trust of people in national institutions, in particular civil service, law enforcement, judiciary, political parties, media, etc. On the other hand, impact of corruption on enjoyment of human rights is one of the few areas which has a very practical and applied character contrary to many other aspects of human rights promotion and protection theory which for general public still remains as something having a purely academic, vague and virtual character and is not always linked to their day-to-day life. Therefore, successful fight against corruption will increase understanding among general public that human rights is not only a theoretical exercise for diplomats in international organizations resulting in dozens of resolutions with no practical impact but something that can be dealt with on local and national levels and these results will define their own lives today and tomorrow.

In recent years, Azerbaijan has made progress in preventing corruption in several sectors, such as public services delivery, law enforcement, public education, customs and tax collection institutions, business licensing. However, serious and complex corruption challenges have yet to be tackled. Awareness of various forms of corruption and public trust towards selected institutions is increasing among general public in Azerbaijan. Contrary to international perceptions, Azerbaijani respondents perceive political parties as one of the least corrupt sectors alongside the media and religious bodies.

Azerbaijan holds a principled position that combating corruption should not be only limited to bringing persons involved in corrupted activities before justice, but it should also include preventive measures, as well as measures on identifying and addressing root causes of corruption, eliminating circumstances leading to corruption.

Therefore, Azerbaijan has **joined all the international documents on combating corruption**, including the Civil Law Convention on Corruption, Criminal Law Convention on Corruption of the Council of Europe, the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the UN Convention Against Corruption.

The **National Action Plan** for 2016-2018 on Promotion of Open Government (Action Plan), the fourth policy document addressing anti-corruption was adopted through public consultations and taking into account proposals of a number of local NGOs. The Action Plan has created a favorable legal framework for combining efforts of the state agencies and the public in implementation of preventive and other measures.

The fight against corruption in Azerbaijan is mainly carried out by the **Anti-Corruption Commission** established in 2005. Commission is composed of 15 members. 5 members of the Commission are appointed by the President of the Republic, 5 by the Parliament and the 5 by the Constitutional Court. The statute of it approved by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan of May 3, 2005. The Anti-Corruption Commission is entitled to take part in the elaboration of the state policy on corruption and coordinates the activity of public institutions in this area. The working groups of the ACC consist of representatives of state bodies, civil society, private sector and international organizations. The Anti-Corruption Department of the General Prosecutor's Office serves as a specialized prosecution authority on corruption cases.

In Azerbaijan, the Government and the civil society works hand in hand to combat corruption. On 9 September 2016 representatives of authorities and civil society came together to establish **Civil Society Dialogue Platform** aimed at promoting open government. The Platform consisting of 10 representatives of state agencies, parliament and 38 NGOs regularly holds public discussions on legislative proposals, reforms and policies implemented in Azerbaijan in different areas of life with the perspective of promoting open and transparent governance and combatting corruption. Azerbaijan OGP Platform implemented project titled "Open Government Platform in Action" in framework of "Human Rights, Democratization and Promoting Good Governance in Azerbaijan" program of Eurasia Partnership Foundation with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands during February – September, 2017.

The **Judicial-Legal Council** (JLC), established in 2005, is an independent body and has organizational and financial independence. It is financed from the state budget and its prospective year's budget cannot be less than the previous year's budget. The JLC has 15 members, nine of whom are judges, while five are from the Prosecutor General's Office and the Bar Association of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and one member is from the executive body. The JLC has the competence to carry out the selection of candidate judges and to undertake evaluation, promotion and transfer of judges.

On 25 May 2018, the **Financial Monitoring Service** was established as a separate state entity implementing single regulation, control and coordination activity for prevention of money laundering and terrorism financing.

## ASAN Service

As a part of public administration reforms, the Azerbaijani Service and Assessment Network (“ASAN Service”) was established by a Presidential Decree in 2012. Run by the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations, “ASAN Service” establishes a user-friendly, citizen-centric, responsive and digitally advanced public services delivery system for efficient and transparent access to key public and private services for citizens and foreign residents of Azerbaijan.

“ASAN Service” **has created an innovative model of public services delivery**, where more than **250 services are rendered by 10 government agencies**, together with private companies from single physical locations called “ASAN Service” Centers. Each “ASAN Service” Center serves more than **2,500 users daily**, while mobile “ASAN Service” Centers have served more than **1,050,000** citizens. More than **15 million applications** have been processed through “ASAN Service” Centers in 2013-2017. **Satisfaction** with “ASAN Service” stands at a rate of **98 percent**. At present, 11 “ASAN Service” Centers have been opened in the country.

The “ASAN Service” centers operate on the basis of **efficiency, transparency, accessibility, courtesy and comfort**. Before the establishment of the “ASAN Service” Centers, citizens had applied to various ministries/departments for one or more services, which created a significant loss of time and money. “ASAN Service” has succeeded in establishing a totally new, qualitatively **exemplary relationship between service providers and citizens** whilst **increasing the level of confidence and trust towards state entities** and their activities. Together with the application of the most advanced information technology, the use of services is now simpler, time-effective and more transparent.

“**The citizen is always right**” approach is applied throughout the “ASAN Service” system. Its primary objective is the convenience and satisfaction of customers. No cash payments of service fees are handled by civil servants, and payments are made directly to bank branches that are located in the centers. **To ensure transparency, all contact points are video-recorded**, and an automatic queuing system ensures efficiency.

The provision of new technologies to support service access and delivery increases both efficiency and quality all “ASAN Service” Centers are equipped with **advanced technology. Modern technologies and innovations** applied in “ASAN Service” are intended to meet citizens’ best expectations.

The State Agency has developed a mobile service which involves **well-equipped large buses that travel to the regions to deliver services in rural and remote areas** that do not host “ASAN Service” Centers. This type of service is unique in Azerbaijan and beyond. The main objectives of this service are to ensure the universal accessibility of state services for all and to increase public satisfaction. Since its establishment in May 2013, state services have been provided to more than 1.050.000 citizens in almost all the regions of Azerbaijan.

“ASAN Radio” 100 FM: The State Agency has also launched a ground-breaking project - “ASAN Radio” 100 FM – that began broadcasting on 24 December 2015. The first-ever FM radio station dedicated to public services delivery issues aims to delivery true, useful and immediate information to a wider audience, strengthen the public confidence to state structures.

On June 1, 2018, the process of simplification of the e-visa issuance and the creation of the “ASAN Visa” system has been launched. The “ASAN Visa” system envisages simplification of the procedure of issuing visas to foreigners and stateless persons arriving in Azerbaijan, as well as creation of an e-visa system ensuring transparency and efficiency by means of use of modern information technologies. A person applying through the portal for a single-entry visa with a period of stay in the country for up to 30 days, receives a visa in three working days to his/her email address.

“ASAN Service” is the winner of the 2015 United Nations Public Service Award. “ASAN service” model was presented at the 7th session of the EuroNest Parliamentary Assembly in June, 2018 in Brussels.

Azerbaijan is ready to share its experience with other countries at regional and global levels through bilateral and multilateral cooperation formats. The State Agency has received a number of assistance requests from—and is presently interacting with—countries wishing to modernize their public services delivery systems based on the “ASAN Service” model.

On July 12, 2016 Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in establishing advanced public services delivery mechanism was signed between the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Afghanistan. The aim of the Memorandum is to establish a public services delivery mechanism in Afghanistan based on Azerbaijani model ““ASAN Service””.

### **Promotion of transparency, accountability and efficiency in delivery of public services in HRC**

It is widely known that efficient, accessible, accountable and transparent public services delivery consistent with citizen’s needs and feedback is one of the key components of building an anti-corruption environment in the public sector. Application of innovative approaches and the use of technological innovations by states in the delivery of public services simplify the life of people, ensure their easy access to public services and minimize the risks of corruption which eventually lead to better protection of their human rights.

Inspired from the groundbreaking positive impact of establishing ASAN Service on citizens, Azerbaijan decided to promote transparency, accountability and efficiency in delivering public services worldwide.

During the 36th session of the HRC (September 2017) Azerbaijan together with Kenya drafted a Joint Statement on the matter which was supported by more than 80 UN Member States.

During the 37th session of the HRC (March 2018), with the proposal of a cross-regional core group comprising of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kenya, Thailand and Turkey HRC adopted with consensus the resolution 37/7 of 22 March 2018 entitled “Promoting human rights and Sustainable Development Goals through transparent, accountable and efficient public services delivery” which was supported by 92 Member States.

The Resolution underlines that non-discrimination, efficient, accessible, accountable and transparent public services delivery contributes to the promotion and protection of human rights and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In the resolution, HRC encourages the states having established effective models of public services delivery to share their best practices with other states through bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation frameworks.

The adoption of the Resolution is a clear indication of the support given by the international human rights community to the on-going reforms carried out in the field of human rights and the fight against corruption in Azerbaijan, as well as the establishment and expansion of the "ASAN Service".

In cooperation with the OHCHR, we are working on organizing an international conference that would give the states opportunity to share their best practices on public services delivery.

Thank you.