



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

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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and with reference to the Latter's request dated 23 October 2018, has the honour to transmit the information of the relevant authorities of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the implementation of the Human Rights Council resolution A/HRC/RES/37/38 on "Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief".

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Enclosure: 2 pages

Geneva, 28 November 2018



**Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights
GENEVA**

Information on implementation of paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Human Rights Council resolution A/HRC/RES/37/38 on “Combating intolerance, negative, stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons based on religion or belief”

Azerbaijan has traditionally been a place of peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding and tolerance between different religious communities. There were no cases of confrontation registered among religious communities in the country; on the contrary mutual assistance prevails in inter-communal relations. Representatives of different religious communities assist each other financially in construction of places of worship and in organization of religious holidays. Unity prayer is performed at “Heydar Mosque” which is the biggest of its kind in the Southern Caucasus.

861 religious communities (830 Islamic, 20 Christian, 8 Jewish, 1 Krishna and 2 Bahai) are registered in Azerbaijan. The State has created necessary conditions for all religious communities. Regular financial aid is allocated to various religious organizations, including for the purposes of renovation and reconstruction of places of religious worship. In 2018, under the Presidential Decree 1800 000 AZN (1 058 000 USD) was allocated to religious organizations functioning in Azerbaijan from President’s Reserve Fund.

Civil society organisations also take active part in preserving and protecting cultural and religious diversity. By way of example, various religious places were constructed or restored both within Azerbaijan and internationally within the framework of “Address of Tolerance - Azerbaijan” project. These included several mosques, Russian Orthodox Church in Baku, restoration of churches in the regions of France and catacombs in Rome and erecting a monument in honour of St. Prince Vladimir in Astrakhan, Russia. Moreover, educational complex for Jewish children “Khabad Or-Ovner” was set up in Baku by Heydar Aliyev Foundation which attaches great importance to promotion of inter-cultural relations and dialogue.

Azerbaijan hosts regular international forums and conferences dedicated to issues of multiculturalism, fostering inter-religious dialogue and understanding. Thus, 2016 was announced a “Multiculturalism Year” and in 2017 Baku hosted IV Islamic Solidarity Games within “Islamic Solidarity Year”. The World Religious Leaders Summit, Intercultural Dialogue Forum and Baku International Humanitarian Forum have been held in Azerbaijan.

The State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan carries out state policy and implements various awareness-raising measures aimed at protecting and strengthening traditions of multiculturalism, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, friendship and mutual respect between various religious communities. The State Committee together with relevant state authorities and NGOs regularly addresses topics such as prevention of intolerance, discrimination, confrontation, violence among members of difference religion and belief as well as strengthening of tolerance in the activities of religious communities. Religious leaders, representatives of executive authorities, law enforcement agencies, as well as religious scholars, intellectuals and youth leaders actively participate in debates conducted in Baku and other regions of Azerbaijan.

In Azerbaijan individuals irrespective of their religion are represented in all spheres of society, including members of Milli Majlis (Parliament) of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Milikh Yevdayev, chairman of Mountainous Jewish religious community was awarded with "Shohrat" (Glory) order by President of Azerbaijan for his contribution to social life of Azerbaijan.

According to Article 1 of the "Law on Freedom of Religious Belief of the Republic of Azerbaijan" "... Propaganda of religious beliefs and religious way of life through the use of force or threat to force, as well as incitement to racial, ethnic, religious, social animosity and hostility are prohibited. It is prohibited to disseminate and promote religions (sects) degrading human dignity or contradicting the principles of humanity".