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As a multicultural and tolerant country, Azerbaijan has always been commended. Pope Francis highly appreciated religious tolerance and multicultural values in the country during his visit to Azerbaijan in October 2016. It was the first time in the history of the Council of Europe when the representatives of neighbouring regions, ministers from ALES CO and ISES CO states participated in the Council of Europe event - Conference of Ministers responsible for Culture held on 2-3 December, 2008 in Baku. At the Conference which was attended by high-level representatives from 48 countries, 8 international organizations and a number of international non-governmental organizations, “Baku Declaration on promotion of intercultural dialogue” was adopted upon Azerbaijan’s initiative and was lunched “Baku process” aiming at development of dialogue between civilizations. On 26-27 April 2010 Baku hosted the World Summit of Religious Leaders. The summit addressed important issues of interreligious dialogue. The members of the World Summit of Religious Leaders – heads and representatives of Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist and Hindu communities from 32 countries gathered in Baku to discuss topical issues of our time, among which was the impact of globalization on religion and traditional values. International Multiculturalism Center has been established in Azerbaijan in May 2014. The main purpose of the Centre is to make analysis of compatibility of social, political and other aspects of multicultural models of other countries with the multicultural environment of Azerbaijan. The year of 2016 was declared a “Year of Multiculturalism in Azerbaijan” by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Consequently, a special Plan of Actions had been developed that implied measures to safeguard and disseminate the ideas of multiculturalism both at national and international levels. The World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue regularly hosted in Azerbaijan have reached remarkable achievements by bringing together heads of governments and various international organizations, ministers, senior policy makers, cultural professionals, goodwill ambassadors, experts, journalists, practitioners, prominent intellectuals and activists. 4th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue was held on 4-6 May 2017 in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan (1st Forum - 7-9 April 2011, 2nd World Forum - 29 May-01 June 2013, the 3rd World Forum-18-19 May 2015). These World Forums have become an international platform to enable and encourage people, countries and organizations around the globe to take concrete actions to support diversity, dialogue and mutual understanding among nations by raising awareness on the importance of intercultural dialogue worldwide. Azerbaijan actively cooperates with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and is an active member of its Group of Friends. “Living Together In Inclusive Societies: A Challenge and a Goal” was the theme of the 7th Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), held on 25-27 April, 2016 in Baku, Azerbaijan. By stressing the “inclusive” aspect of “living together,” the UNAOC 7th Global Forum harnessed the multiple perspectives of various sectors to meet the challenge of, and progress towards, inclusive living in today’s increasingly diverse societies. The Forum brought together 4300 people from 147 countries, 40 round tables and panels were conducted within the conference.
On 12-22 May 2017 Azerbaijan will be hosting the 4th Islamic Solidarity Games in Baku, which will serve to the solidarity of Islamic States showing peaceful, merciful and fraternal sides of Islam. 24 disciplines from 20 sports will be contested in this event. More than 40 nations are expected to be represented during this multinational, multi-sport event. At present, there are more than 2 thousand mosques, 13 churches and 7 synagogues in Azerbaijan. In addition to houses of worship, Islam, Christian and Jewish religious educational institutions, as well as courses teaching Hebrew language, Jewish religion and culture are functioning in the country. In Azerbaijan 760 religious communities were registered as of May 10, 2017; 28 are non-Islamic, 17 are Christian, 7 are Jewish, 2 are Bahai and 1 is Krishna religious community.

The government created favorable conditions to celebrate religious ceremonies by the Muslim and non-Muslim communities such as Ramadan, Eid-Al Adha, Muharram month, as well as Christmas, Easter, Purim, Pesach, Shavout, “Saint-George”, “Saint Nino”, Kurmukoba, birthday of Baha’u’llah and etc.

The State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SCRA) continues conducting awareness-raising campaigns to promote inter-religious dialogue, religious tolerance and multicultural values. Throughout 2016, about 600 awareness raising events were carried out by the SCRA in cooperation with other institutions. Azerbaijan is a multiethnic and multi-religious country where the national policy is planned and carried out in the spirit of traditional tolerance and harmonic coexistence of different ethnic and religious groups. A proper legal framework has been established in the Republic of Azerbaijan in order to prevent the cases of national, racial and religious discrimination. The law “On freedom of religious belief” and the law “On fight against religious extremism” were adopted to regulate activities of religious associations, to ensure implementation of freedom of religious belief and to fight against religious extremism.

The SCRA cooperates with a number of international, regional and NGO organizations such as UNESCO, ODIHR, OIC, North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, EMISCO, Office of Religious Affairs and Foundation of Dayanat Affairs of Turkey, State Agency on Religious Affairs of Georgia, Council on Interaction with Religious Associations under the Office of the President of the Russian Federation, Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations of Iran, Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs of Qatar, Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Da'wah and Guidance of Saudi Arabia, State Secretary on Religious Affairs of Romania, Ministry of Civil Society and Religious Affairs of Kazakhstan and others. In accordance with the decree of the President of Azerbaijan financial aid is regularly allocated to Caucasian Muslims Board, Russian Orthodox Church of Baku and Azerbaijani Eparchy religious community, as well as Baku Mountain Jews religious community, Baku European Jews religious community, Apostolic Prefecture of Catholic Church religious community in Azerbaijan and Albanian-Udi Christian religious community. These religious organizations also provide small religious communities with the funds allocated to them.

In 2016 accordance with the presidential decree financial support to Caucasian Muslims Board, Russian Orthodox Church of Baku and Azerbaijani Eparchy religious community, as well as Baku Mountain Jews religious community, Baku European Jews religious community, Apostolic Prefecture of Catholic Church religious community in Azerbaijan and Albanian-Udi Christian religious community was allocated from the state budget. These religious organizations also provide small religious communities with the funds allocated to them.