



**Statement by the Delegation of Azerbaijan
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for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the
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Democratic reforms contribute to effective protection of human rights

**Madam Moderator
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Taking into consideration of obligation which adopted in international documents, including International Covenants Azerbaijan has undertaken several legal reforms to protect of human rights and freedoms.

Azerbaijan gained great achievements due to sustainable strategy carried out for increasing transparency and combating corruption. Principles of open government, formation of democratic institutions have always been parts of this strategy and the actions carried out in this direction considers enhancement of usage of information-communication technologies in public administration, provision of access to information, increasing of public participation, and close cooperation with civil society organizations. Our country also contributed to international efforts for promotion of open government principles and was one the first countries to adhere to Open Government Partnership initiative.

ASAN Service as a Azerbaijani brand is a successful example of this approach which is used in public service delivery and was awarded with the United Nations Public Service Award 2015.

The main aims of National Action Plans for Promotion of Open Government and Combating Corruption in 2012-2015 are to ensure the consistency of actions taken for increasing transparency in the work of state bodies, to improve normative legal base and institutional mechanisms, to expand public participation in the work of state bodies, and to use new technologies in public administration.

The actions enshrined in National Plan for Combating Corruption was implemented by state bodies 86 % in 2012-2015. Legislation on civil service and institutional mechanisms were developed, regular training was held for civil

servants on anti-corruption and ethic behavioural rules. Recruitment to municipal civil service was ensured on the basis of interviews and in transparent way.

The number of services delivered by e-government portal has been increased, the capabilities of ASAN payment system have been expanded, the geography and the number of services of ASAN Service centres deliver have been expanded.

Adoption and implementation of the Law on Public Participation which is the legal base for enhancement of public participation being one of the principles of open government ensured creation of public councils at state bodies, conduction of public discussions and hearings and participation of civil society institution in the work of state bodies.

Azerbaijan ranks the 40th place among 148 countries according to Competitiveness Index of World Economic Forum in 2015 and 7th place among 189 countries in ease of doing business index of World Bank Doing Business report for 2016. The projects and initiatives implemented by state bodies on promotion of open government were considered as the priority, civil society institutions working in this field were supported.

National Action Plan on promotion of open government for 2016-2018 was approved on 27 April, 2016 in order to ensure consistency of actions taken for promotion of open government and combating corruption. Adoption of new Plan of Action is another indicator of strong political will for enhancement of open government principles and combating corruption. The Plan was developed with active participation of representative of civil society organizations and was discussed in numerous public hearings. Moreover, the actions reflected in National Plans of Actions covering 2012-2015, which had not been implemented were included into new Plan of Action.

It should be noted democratic reforms carried out in the field of human rights protection lead to creation of the Ombudsman Office in the country which had been already functioning in more than 100 countries having different public administration forms and legal systems.

Azerbaijani Ombudsman Institute has been modernized, its normative-legal base has been renewed, the scope of its competences has been expanded.

The Ombudsman Office executing coordination function between state bodies and the civil society promotes comprehensive development of public control in our country, mobilises civil society organizations to help for solution of the problems of people.

National Preventive Group was set up at the Ombudsman Office, the wide competences were defined for the group to make visits to temporary detention places, penitentiary facilities, and other facilities which persons can not leave on their free will, at any time, without any obstacle and prior notification as described in the law.

For monitoring of the implementation and promotion of National Program for Action to Raise Effectiveness of the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms in the Republic of Azerbaijan (NAP) the Azerbaijani Ombudsman held next public

hearings in 57 cities and rayons of the country from May to July 2016 for monitoring of the implementation and promotion of the mentioned NAP.

New version of the website of the Ombudsman Office (ombudsman.gov.az) has started operating, moreover, online request service (<https://www.e-gov.az/az/services/read/3541>) was created in order to enable each user including the citizens of the Azerbaijan Republic, foreigners and stateless persons, as well as legal entities to send their proposals, applications and complaints to the Commissioner.

18 June was declared Human Rights Day in Azerbaijan by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan from 18 June 2007. Like each year, on the initiative of the Commissioner Human Rights Month-long campaign was declared in country in 2016. Events were organized by respective state bodies, NGOs and mass-media in this regard.

With regard to celebration of 21 September as World Peace Day in all countries, the Commissioner initiated Peace Month long campaign on 21 August-21 September in 2015 and 2016, like every year. A series of mass events were organised by respective central and local executive bodies, NGOs and mass-media.

Like each year on the eve of the anniversary of adoption of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Child Rights month long campaign was declared on the initiative of the Commissioner from 20 October to 20 November, 2015, and respective central and local executive bodies, NGOs and mass-media organized series of events within the framework of the campaign.

The Azerbaijani Ombudsman office as a NHRI accredited with A status by the UN OHCHR continues the activities for further ensuring the human rights, improvement the governance, and targeted to stability as well as development using all its potential.

Thanks for your attention!