

SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN DIMENSION MEETING

**FREEDOMS OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION, WITH
EMPHASIS ON FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION**

**16-17 April 2015
Hofburg, Vienna**

**SESSION II: Non-discrimination and the freedoms of peaceful assembly and
association**

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**Madam moderator,
Ladies and gentlemen's**

Significant reforms have been conducted in the field of protection and promotion of human rights since the Republic of Azerbaijan gained its independence.

Adoption of the Constitution of independent Azerbaijan in 1995, was the beginning of creation of legal base important for state building processes in the country. Foreign and national policy conceptions of Azerbaijan were developed in compliance with international legal norms, during these years state-building processes have been successfully carried out in all directions, statehood traditions were enriched, necessary actions were taken in the field of ensuring of human rights and freedoms which is the highest objective of our independent state.

One of the most important steps of reforms made in different directions towards the integration process of Azerbaijan Republic into the European legal system was creation of Ombudsman Institution that is an effective human rights protection mechanism.

The main purpose of creating such democratic institution is to achieve restoration of human rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and in the international treaties to which Azerbaijan is a party and violated by governmental and municipal bodies and officials of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Taking into account the competences and activity principles of all ombudspersons in the world, Azerbaijani Ombudsman Office stimulates development of the legal consciousness, opinion and culture.

The Commissioner's activities are regulated under the Constitutional Law which has tremendous place in the field of human rights protection and promotion in Azerbaijan.

I should say that freedom of assembly was one of those issues that are important for the Ombudsman since the beginning of her activities.

The Ombudsman organized the awareness events about the promotion of this right among the population, which was continued at the same time with the participation of state authorities regarding how to promote this right. During these awareness events the Azerbaijani Ombudsman put forward the proposals in the relevant area.

I would like to mention that, National Action Plan on Protection of Human Rights in the Republic of Azerbaijan and National Program for Action to Raise Effectiveness of the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms in the Republic of Azerbaijan were approved with the Presidential Orders on December 28, 2006 and December 27, 2011.

National Program for Action, which is the new document in ensuring of human rights, defines the priorities of raising the effectiveness of human rights and freedoms protection (improvement of normative-legal base, protection of the rights of different groups of population, improvement of the activity of governmental bodies, education, research-analytical and awareness raising activities in the field of human rights, cooperation with international organizations on human rights, coordination of implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation of National Program for Action)

The Ombudsman was recommended to guide the activity of the Working Group on Implementation of Program.

The Ombudsman held public hearings to monitor the status of the implementation of the measures stated in the National Action Program in every district of the country. In these public hearings held with participation of the local executive bodies and the police authorities there has been underlined the importance of the promotion of the right of citizens to assembly in the period of the elections conducted in the country within last years and it related bodies and of strictly fulfillment of the provisions of the relevant Law by the related authorities, especially the local executive bodies and the police. Legal awareness events have been also conducted.

The Azerbaijani Ombudsman proposed organizing seminar-trainings for the police officers about the rules of conduct and the practical skills in accordance with the legislation on using correct methods and situation of control during the meetings and demonstrations, which should be the continued in the forthcoming years as well as an experince.

In the frame of those public hearings as a result of the conducted pre-election monitoring, there have been conducted visits to the open and closed places for freedom of assambly in every city and town and it was found that for the pre-election campaign every candidate's representatives have been created the equal opportunities.

Recently, the Commissioner of Azerbaijan met with the director of the ODIHR, Mr. Michael Link visiting our country. At the meeting they discussed the issue of freedom of association and directions of the joint bilateral cooperation along with other issues. In the course of the meeting, both sides underlined the importance of the organization of awareness events about the freedoms of association taking into account the upcoming elections.

Thank you for attention!