



The Strategy of Education in Azerbaijan

This is the first book that combines worth-while investigation on the history of education of Azerbaijan with the official documents issued over the past 20 years due to the development of national education. Main goal of the author is to reveal and show all the details that condition the achievements of educational policy, to focus attention on the importance and the need for reforms in the field of education, noting the enormous role of the national leader Heydar Aliyev in this field. The book contains materials that are important as an objective source for learning the activities of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic Ilham Aliyev in the field of education, as well as official documents, which serve the legal base for the development of education. This monograph is based on real documents and facts which stimulate the development of modern education. From this point of view this book will draw interest not only for specialists but for a wider audience that wants to get to know this area well.

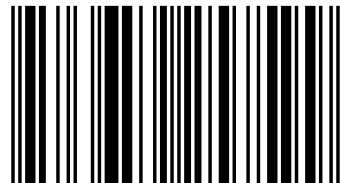
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The Strategy of Education Development in Azerbaijan



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**THE STRATEGY
OF EDUCATION
DEVELOPMENT
IN AZERBAIJAN**



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*Dedicated to the 20-th anniversary
of the independence
of the Republic of Azerbaijan*

HUMEYIR AHMADOV

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This is the first book that combines worth-while investigation on the history of education of Azerbaijan with the official documents issued over the past 15 years due to the development of national education. Main goal of the author is to reveal and show all the details that condition the achievements of educational policy, to focus attention on the importance and the need for reforms in the field of education, noting the enormous role the national leader Heydar Aliyev in this field. The book contains materials that are important as an objective source for learning the activities of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic Ilham Aliyev in the field of education, as well as official documents, which serve the legal base for the development of education.

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FOREWORD

Expressing the civic position, the book is generally a reflection of the approach to the semi centenary history of Azerbaijan on the background of national education prosperity. The authors of this history are our national leader Heydar Aliyev and the decent successor of the distinguished leader, the President of Azerbaijan Republic, Mr. Ilham Aliyev.

Heydar Aliyev built an independent state for us and our generation to come. He ensured a clear tomorrow of the state. He delivered our voice and word to the world. He identified a bright path for Azerbaijan.

Today, we are stepping towards our sacred goals on this path. Our country is progressing and flourishing due to the successes deriving from the policy pursued by the President Ilham Aliyev. The world is admitting our power. We feel proud to have an independent state like Azerbaijan.

Objective attitude towards every point of the history of this state is a mission bestowed upon each of us as citizens. The book presented to you has also emerged grounding from such necessity.

The facts reflected here draw a nearly complete picture of Azerbaijan's national education history. For the sake of objectivity, the edition had to pay regard to the activity of another public figure as well, since her role in the achievements of Azerbaijani education in the recent years is also exceptional. The mentioned public figure is the President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Good Will Ambassador of UNESCO, and member of the National Assembly Mehriban Aliyeva.

Thus, the book combines three directions: position of education in the national leader Heydar Aliyev's moral-political heritage, the education policy implemented by the President Ilham Aliyev and public activity of Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva in the education sphere. All of these directions have been considered as integral parts of a common statehood line.

Despite of that majority of the distinguished statesmen have not developed political theories, their life and activity represents a bigger statehood philosophy and an immense statehood school.

We hope, this book will also serve as a valuable tool for those learning from the Heydar Aliyev school!

Hussein AHMADOV,
Academician

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

The progress of the Azerbaijani state, which is located on the crossroad of the West and the East, diverse civilizations, and marks the confluence of the world's different force centers' interests, is connected with our national leader Heydar Aliyev.

Achieving and maintaining the independence: listing the history books is enough to identify which of these missions is more intricate. The splendor of the eminent leader Heydar Aliyev is derived from that this distinguished statesman not only succeeded in achieving the worldwide recognition of the Azerbaijani state, but also ensured the essential grounds for the eternity of our national sovereignty and the independent life of the Azerbaijani state.

Way back during his first administration over the country (1969–1982), Heydar Aliyev brought the ideal of national statehood to the agenda in the most different forms delivering the word of Azerbaijan and the voice of Azerbaijan to the world in the person of various men of art and succeeding in the recognition of Azerbaijan as a geographic areal by the outer world more as a center of an ancient and rich culture than as a raw material and industry provider of the former Soviet Union.

Exactly in the years of Heydar Aliyev's first leadership over the country, the Azerbaijani language was asserted as the national language in official documents with the subjects regarded forbidden since the times of repressions starting to reappear in the creative editions, the first steps being taken towards the objective and undistorted documentation of Azerbaijani history, an actual revival occurring in the national thinking and the Azerbaijani people gaining a deeper and clearer insight into the right to independent life.

The mission fulfilled by the distinguished leader at that historic period is not confined with the above-mentioned processes, which were displayed mostly at a moral-ideological level. Heydar Aliyev also ensured a parallel between all of these directions and the steps taken towards the socioeconomic independence of Azerbaijan: by his direct initiative and leadership, hundreds of industry facilities were constructed in Azerbaijan, roads, bridges and other important infrastructure assets were built and put into operation. All the

regions of Azerbaijan were served with electricity while the gas, water and communication lines were installed to cover the country's most distant villages. Agriculture was advanced, and though this reality is not yet reflected in the political documents relating to that period, the Azerbaijani peasant became the owner of his plot. Welfare of our citizens was extensively improved. Residential complexes, buildings, numerous immovable property facilities erected in all the districts of our country each being more elaborate than the last changed the view of Azerbaijan.

In those years, Heydar Aliyev built in us a feeling of belief in tomorrow. Justice found its place in the society. Thus, the people of Azerbaijan gained a Motherland always close by and supportive, while Azerbaijan gained citizens, who are ready to sacrifice their lives for it.

We believe, in the recording of the Azerbaijani history of sovereignty struggle, there is a grave need for detailed scrutiny of the period of 1960s-1970s, which played the role of a bridge between the late 1980s, the times of the Azerbaijan People's Republic, when the fight for national independence passed onto an open plane, as well as assessment of the facts in a new context. Because, it is an undeniable fact that the actual grounds for Azerbaijan to declare its national independence and achieve the eventual settlement of own problems as a sovereign establishment were laid exactly in the 60s-70s of the XX century. Certainly, our standpoint is not aimed at reducing the value of historic accomplishments made in the times of the People's Republic and the Azerbaijani national independence movement, which gained a wider range from the late 80s, as every period has its own unique role in the history. Yet, this is also a reality that but for the measures carried out for the social-economic-cultural advance of Azerbaijan and both the open and secret activities aimed at revival of the national thinking way back in the first period of the national leader Heydar Aliyev's leadership over the country, Azerbaijan's current existence as an establishment with a self-determining course independent of any country would be doubtful.

In the first period of his power, Heydar Aliyev delivered actively the national idea of Azerbaijan to all classes of the society. He led out the senses of freedom hidden in the lowest layer of public mind attaching a new content to it. The carriers of the national mind, our men of science, literature and art were protected from repressions.

Paying a due regard to the scientists involved in activities of national essence, Heydar Aliyev successively pursued the line of strengthening the national grounds of Azerbaijan placed in narrow frameworks by the Soviet power. From the first years of the eminent leader's return to the power, national dramas gained an increasingly wider spectrum in the repertory of our theatres and history films increased in number. Delivery of the remainders of Hussein Javid, author of *The Prophet* and *Sheikh Senan* in the Ottoman Turkish, to Azerbaijan from Siberia, where he was exiled to die accused of the failure to oppose the ideological influence of Tofiq Fikrat and Akif Ersoy, marks an imperative step aimed at protecting the national thinking and national literary heritage.

Another reason for non-expansion of the dissident movement in Azerbaijan at that time was grounded on Heydar Aliyev's non-pursuance of criticizing and pressurizing policy against the writers of national trend, but in contrast, his efforts to prevent such attacks as much as possible. Being expressions of the national identity, *Gulustan* by Bakhtiyar Vahabzadeh, poems of national character by Khalil Rza Uluturk and the *Deyirman* novel by Movlud Suleimanli gained the chance to open distribution in the legal and illegal editions exactly at that period.

One of the unwritten fields of our history covers the public entities created in the country in 1970s relating to the integrity of Azerbaijan and their sphere of activity. We suppose, our historians studying that period of time could reach interesting results through serious analyzes pertaining to the fact that establishment of the first illegal circles supporting the national independence idea in Azerbaijan coincided namely with the historic period of Heydar Aliyev's coming to the power in Azerbaijan.

At that time, also the idea of uniting the Southern and Northern Azerbaijan gained a particular topicality, which led to the propagation of anti-Soviet elements and stimulated the discussion of national issues. The Southern problem was extensively discussed in the high school auditoria and public centers.

Not accidentally, the first literary-cultural relations between the North and South separated for ages were shaped precisely in 1970. Poems of revolutionary spirit authored by Mahammadhussein Shahriyar in native language were published in Baku. The Southern motif appeared in our literature. Restitution of national roots commenced in all fields of culture.

The Strategy of Education Development in Azerbaijan

Even at the time our national leader was engaged in the USSR administration in the Kremlin as one of the leading persons, he was expanding the opportunities grounding the future independence of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan finally achieved its national independence explicitly on this ground due to the will of struggle our nation displayed waging for its rights benefiting from the historic condition emerged in the USSR since the late 80s. Our national sovereignty was declared to the entire world following the signature of the Constitutional Act on Restoration of National Independence of the Azerbaijan Republic in October 18, 1991 signed also by the powerful statesman Heydar Aliyev as one of the major initiators.

However, repetition of the historic faults at the initial phase of independence was again taking its toll causing a true danger for the harmful repeat of history, loss of our newly-gained independence and Azerbaijan's recurrent colonization by some state. The bloody struggles for power straining from day to day were accompanied with occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenian armed forces inspiring separatism tendencies also in other regions of our republic. The country was left face to face with the threat of civic war. Chaos and anarchy tendencies were following our people close heels. The right to live safely of citizens, who were sick of the political confrontations, was not ensured with the military opposition and illegal armed unions treating people the way they wished. The socioeconomic crisis in the country had reached its culmination point owing to the negligent policy pursued, and rolling down the whirlpool of destitution, the population lost its hope for future. In the period of the Azerbaijan People's Front-Musavat power characterized by formation of hostile relations with the neighboring countries and the worst display of anarchy nationwide, the assumption that Azerbaijan will fall apart to be erased from the world map as a state was already very realistic.

Had it not been for the important event that occurred at that decisive stage entering into history as the day of NATIONAL SALVATION, had the wise historic personality of contemporary time, experienced and willful statesman, our national leader Heydar Aliyev's return to power not come true on that day by the will and demand of people, we could not speak now about the independent, powerful Azerbaijani state progressing, improving and democratizing with every new day.

This Return made the Azerbaijani independence a reality on the global plane. This meant a self-restoration of a nation stepping towards own goals passing from the centuries' tests through great difficulties, but never giving up. This meant a return of our language, national-spiritual values, many forgotten truths gone into oblivion and our moral unity. With this return, Azerbaijan stepped onto a more honorable and more magnificent stage of our independence history.

The major architect of that stage was our national leader Heydar Aliyev. That period was remarkable not only for the wise statesman's ending of the civic war that had surrounded the entire country right after his return to power at the people's insistence, dashing the inner and outer enemies' plans to split Azerbaijan into parts and destroy the independent state, as well as the selfless prevention of the conspiracies against our nation. It was also a period, when Azerbaijan joined the world community and the Azerbaijani nation's existence was recognized and accepted by all the states.

In circumstances ruled by the most acute geopolitical confrontations allowing the occupation of our lands, Heydar Aliyev managed to maintain the Azerbaijani statehood. Azerbaijan stood its malign enemies having treated it maliciously at different times and repeatedly slaughtered our nation, as well as their endless and mean tricks, contrivances and claims. None of these conspiracies succeeded owing precisely to the Heydar Aliyev intelligence. Azerbaijan became the most advanced country of the region in a short period of time.

In this aspect, the period after June 15, 1993 marks the beginning of an essentially new era in the Azerbaijani history, for Heydar Aliyev laid the foundation of existence of the Azerbaijani society, its national-moral values and philosophical approaches in a new time and new circumstances. The conception of state-building developed by the great personality covered many abstract problems of sociology and philosophy with a passage from the level of ideas and science to the practical politics area. Implementation of successive and purposeful measures aimed at the democratic, secular and legal state-building, which marked a priority trait of the political line pursued since 1993 ensured the grounds for establishment of the crucial principles of democracy, human rights and freedoms in our country. The adoption of Constitution in 1995 reflecting the human democratic values, democratic

parliamentary elections conducted on a multi-party plane, commencement of the Constitution Court the first time in the country's history and other democratic measures led Azerbaijan to the rank of civil states. Due to this policy, Azerbaijan was accepted as a full-fledged member to the authoritative international organization of the European Council and joined the family of global democratic community. The increased care for education as the most powerful means of the progress of society and development of science, culture and morality in the years of independence was recognized as the priority principle of the national policy. New horizons opened before the Azerbaijani education since the second half of 1993, the essential spheres like education, public health and social defense were upgraded both for their structure and content. Yet, before all of these, we owe the protection and advance of firstly our sense of national pride to Heydar Aliyev.

Way back in 23 August 1993, in his TV performance via the Azerbaijan TV channel, Heydar Aliyev clearly expressed what a historic mission and hard task he had undertaken, gave a proper assessment of the actual force the Azerbaijani state power had at that difficult and complex time, and boldly stated that in the protection of national statehood he relied on his nation, which may seem somehow abstract, but is the source of all times and actual powers: ***“Personally I have no weapons: I have neither a cannon, nor a gun or a machine gun. I have the intellect, will and if the nation believes in me and has entrusted me with this authority, and I have taken the liability to save the nation from this grave state, I suppose, the nation will defend me. Therefore, neither a coup, nor the forces preparing acts of terror against me make me fear. I am not afraid of anything. I have said it and am repeating: I have given the rest part of my life to my nation. It will stop wherever the nation stops it. I have put my life at my nation's disposal. I am serving to my nation every minute and every second twenty four hours a day. I am not serving to any kind of force. So, no kind of force can pressure on me”.***

The core of Heydar Aliyev's merits before his motherland and nation was that the eminent leader transformed the notion of independence, freedom from the pretentious words, meeting conversations, in short, from the level of verbal slogan to the philosophy of national ideology. He managed to make people realize that Azerbaijan's way to salvation passed through the national

independence and the ideology of Azerbaijanism. Most importantly, he made everybody believe that these blessings mean not only a pride, but also the people's welfare: "Our duty is to make Azerbaijan develop further and become more powerful as an independent state, and Azerbaijan's sovereignty brings happiness and joy to every single citizen".

Sometimes, while thinking "what made Heydar Aliyev powerful?", the wise leader's personality, life and activity appear in front of our eyes to immediately answers this question. Heydar Aliyev's power was firstly in that he, as an influential politician, was able to achieve mobility in all issues, ensure the national unity and direct this power towards a common objective. This ability rested upon the nation's belief in its leader.

Due to the socio-political stability ensured in the society and national unity achieved among the citizens owing to Heydar Aliyev's wise decisions, the decline of national economy was prevented. The essential grounds for the present successes were laid in 1994-1995, and since 1996, elements of revival in the socioeconomic life of Azerbaijan started being more obvious.

The macroeconomic stability attained, raise of the economic indicators in industry and other fields, as well as the initial results of the large-scale economic reforms implemented, confirmed the correctness of the policy pursued and confident steps Azerbaijan was making towards the market economy. A vital direction of economic reforms, the privatization process was successfully implemented. Being under political, economic and information blockade in those years, the Azerbaijan Republic nevertheless achieved the signature of the global project, Contract of the Century, on September 20, 1994 due to Heydar Aliyev's resoluteness. Being of vital importance for Azerbaijan, the contract played an exceptional role both in the creation of stability inside the republic and achievement of successes in the foreign policy. As was stressed by Heydar Aliyev himself, with signature of the Contract of the Century, Azerbaijan opened the Caspian Sea and its power resources to the entire world.

When the signature of the Contract of the Century brought the necessity of finding an efficient route for the oil to be produced to reach the world markets, Heydar Aliyev put forward the idea of multi-optional oil pipeline with a specific wisdom characteristic of him and brought the idea of building the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline for transportation of the main oil to be

produced within the Contract of the Century in parallel with employment of the Baku-Supsa pipeline. In November 1999, the presidents of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey signed the intergovernmental agreement on construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil export pipeline within the OSCE Istanbul summit with participation of the USA president. Despite of the numerous obstacles created for the laying of the pipeline, the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev's political will and prescience defeated all of them making the project a reality.

The new oil strategy of Azerbaijan and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, as well as the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum power projects are the most successful achievements made by our state in its contemporary history having achieved the independence in 1991. These achievements sourcing from the national leader Heydar Aliyev's prescient policy have become the major factors of political, national and economic safety for the contemporary Azerbaijan.

Tens of books and thousands of newspaper materials have been published regarding the positive advances taking place in our life after Heydar Aliyev's return to power. Therefore, there is no special need for a repeated detailed review of the events and processes every contemporary was a spectator of. We may shortly note that right after the national leader Heydar Aliyev's return to the republican power, integrated measures commenced aimed at elimination of the civic confrontation danger and restoration of the internal public-political stability; stopping the enemy's policy of occupying the Azerbaijani lands; authorization of the political life and implementation of legal reforms; enforcement of influential economic reforms owing to the fertile ground provided; due to all of these, Azerbaijan's transformation into an internationally recognized state able to protect itself and offer its citizens social welfare and stability. Exactly from this standpoint, the date of June 15, 1993 should be accepted as the starting point of every accomplishment Azerbaijan makes today.

The political image of Heydar Aliyev is a live portrait of the statehood idea of Azerbaijani people, of an entire management school having passed the tests of history with honor, and of the most durable features the modern public-political philosophy possesses. Studying the personality of Heydar Aliyev, the world historiography actually studies the historic past, today and tomorrow of the independent Azerbaijani state, the state-building process in

our country, Azerbaijan's integration to the international community and our national culture. We would obviously not be wrong to say the Heydar Aliyev phenomenon is the self-confirmation of Azerbaijani nation.

Owing to the power of Heydar Aliyev genius, the Azerbaijani path of democracy-building and national development followed a specific direction with consideration of national features and people's moral values. Besides the norms and standards of democracy and market economy relations accepted for all the countries, specific attributes of every country are considered as a crucial factor in their implementation, which ultimately characterizes the different models of development. Our development path integrates the Azerbaijani model, which is a combination of historic traditions and national peculiarities with global values. That is, the national-moral values take a leading position also in the state-building process making its undeviating core.

Sufficient work has been done as well for protection of the national-moral values under Heydar Aliyev's leadership. The nation's historic traditions have been restituted with regain of its language and right for religious belief, as well as extensive opportunities for advancing the moral values.

Heydar Aliyev is not only the protector, but also the biggest propagandist and a perfect perpetrator of our national-moral values in all the fields, particularly the state-building. The "national factor" has displayed itself as the leading line throughout his entire activity. In the Heydar Aliyev political heritage, the national factor is a mechanism driving and stimulating the economic-political, socio-psychological and cultural life potential. In the context of the eminent leader's political philosophy, the first major condition providing for the independent state-building is precisely the legacy of moral heritage.

Keeping in permanent focus the necessity of creating unity inside the country, the wise leader repeatedly expressed the topicality of organizing the Azerbaijanis living abroad and ensuring their unity around a common objective, and took precise steps in this direction. Having inscribed his name in our history as "the greatest Azerbaijani", Heydar Aliyev retains in memories also as the first statesman having officialized the solidarity of the Azerbaijanis worldwide. Establishment of the union of Azerbaijanis worldwide enjoyed a particular place in the provisions of national leader's model for national development regarding the ensuring of civic solidarity, which he had prepared

theoretically way back in the 70s-80s of the last century and started to apply while leading the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic's Supreme Assembly. It is no coincidence that the Nakhchivan Supreme Assembly officialized the day of December 31 as the Day of Solidarity of Azerbaijanis Worldwide the first time in the republic exactly by our eminent leader's initiative in December 16, 1991 and in just 10 days, the Azerbaijani National Council adopted a decision on officialization of the date, while the true celebration of the historic date as a real national holiday became possible only after 1993.

Heydar Aliyev's relations with Azerbaijani diaspora are governed by these ideas: "The hearts of our compatriots living aside from the Motherland should always beat together with Azerbaijani pulse. Regardless of where they live, whether they are having hard and difficult times, everybody should think about his motherland; the people of Azerbaijan already know that now, we finally have our independent state. This is the independent Azerbaijan. So, wherever you are, whatever country you live in, you must think only about Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan's independence, territorial integrity, as well as today and tomorrow of the Azerbaijani people".

The first congress of the Azerbaijanis worldwide held in Baku in November 9-10, 2001 at the President Heydar Aliyev's initiative marked a turning point in the organization of Azerbaijani diaspora. Delivering a speech at the glorious event, our national leader sounded his conceptual ideas concerning the goals, tasks and missions facing the Azerbaijanis worldwide, as well as the effective and productive organization of the diaspora activities. "There is no stronger means uniting nations as language and national-moral traditions. We must keep using this means... The factor uniting Azerbaijanis is our national identity, historic roots, national-moral values, national culture, poems, songs, art and traditions and customs belonging to our nation".

Heydar Aliyev determined a complete ideology for the Azerbaijani people and the Azerbaijanism ideology authored by him played the role of a fundamental base for the consolidation of our compatriots living both in Azerbaijan and beyond its borders around the general national interests and victory of the Azerbaijani concerns; our national leader succeeded in engrafting into each of us as representatives of the nation the ideals of sacrificing our own lives if needed for the bright future of Azerbaijan, be able to stand above the individual interests for the sake of national advance and a selfless service

to the Motherland. The ideology of Azerbaijanism authored by Heydar Aliyev has proved itself as a perfect ideological ground and instrument for succeeding in shaping up the mentioned direction, as well as protecting and propagating the national-moral values.

The ideology of Azerbaijanism is actually a perfect theoretical-practical ideological foundation essential for application and constant study in the system of national-moral values, and represents a unified set of the systems of national, moral, cultural, literary, historic, political and economic values making the core of the statehood mind of an Azerbaijani man.

The ideology of Azerbaijanism is a wide-profile concept covering all the fields of state-building. It is also the most accurate and properly identified conceptual course of our national renaissance. Integrating the nation's and state's ages-old traditions, as well as the economic-political rhythm of the national-moral values fully shaped up by the 70s-80s of the last century, the Azerbaijanism ideology authored by the distinguished leader Heydar Aliyev reflects also the perspective side of the progress we have achieved. In a word, Heydar Aliyev's Azerbaijanism ideology has already been accepted as the practical model of national advance becoming a superior concept of the statehood theory. The answer to the continuously topical question since the first years of independence "where are we leading and which potential are we using to advance" may be found exactly in provisions of this concept.

The tasks arising from the concept undoubtedly fall mostly on the shoulders of our youth, who are the builders of our future, along with the members of older and middle-age generation. The Azerbaijani youth should realize that the national culture, morality and moral heritage to which he belongs is above any kind of modernity.

Since the youth is the direct builder of our future and provider of our tomorrow, mentoring this social category in national spirit and forming it in keeping with the national-moral values marks a priority demand the society is facing. The only means to provide this is education, on the corresponding activities of which the book will provide extensive information presenting detailed analyses of the traditions developed in the field of education and successes achieved following the strategic development course authored by the national leader Heydar Aliyev.

In almost a half-century period, the phenomenon of Heydar Aliyev became an undeniable fact of Azerbaijan's and generally, the region's socio-political life, and everybody, who kept in mind also the unwritten laws of nature and non-infinity of a human life opposite to this truth, shared the anxiety suggesting an emptiness in the life of Azerbaijan after the physical death of Heydar Aliyev, non-completion of the activities commenced by him and Azerbaijan's return to the alarming days once suffered.

Yet, the power of Heydar Aliyev personality was in that he never overlooked this factor in his statehood conception. Our national leader mentored in his political school a decent successor in the person of the President of Azerbaijan Republic Mr. Ilham Aliyev to lead the state built by him to the bright future, continue the Heydar Aliyev ideas and be the provider of Azerbaijan's progress and eternity of the national independence in a new time, and presented him to the Azerbaijani society and the world in general.

Elected the President of Azerbaijan Republic at the presidential elections dated October 15, 2003 with blessings of our national leader and highest trust of Azerbaijani nation, Mr. Ilham Aliyev's successful performance in the context of far-reaching concerns facing Azerbaijan in the contemporary uneasy world once again confirms the everlasting worth of the domestic and foreign political course established by the prominent leader. Here, certainly, personal qualities of the President Ilham Aliyev are irrefutable with his high intellect, deep knowledge and omniscience in modern processes. The proficiency President Ilham Aliyev displays in his precise knowledge of where the Heydar Aliyev strategy starts and which directions it takes, as well as in the professional implementation of this strategy, and the impossibility to suggest an alternative to the course being implemented mark the important factor ensuring the successes of Azerbaijan in modern time and in the near future. People have not made a mistake by trusting Ilham Aliyev to continue the Heydar Aliyev policy to Ilham Aliyev also because the people's choice coincided with that of our wise leader at choice of this successor. In his address to the Azerbaijani people on the eve of presidential elections in 2003, the national leader expressed his hope for the future like this: "I believe that Ilham Aliyev will manage to complete the fateful issues, plans and activities I failed to complete with your help and support. I believe in him as in myself and have high hopes on his future".

The ancestors have said, “Belief is in faith”. Another proof of Azerbaijani nation to have a belief and faith lays in the correctness of the nation’s choice. Exactly due to this belief and the “nation-President, President-nation” unity, today Azerbaijan has all the achievements we could only wish in 1993: strong and actively advancing economy, growing welfare of our citizens, stability and civic solidarity, authoritative state running an independent policy and enjoying the position of regional leader and most importantly, hope in tomorrow.

As evident from the historic experience, sometimes the progress of different states and period of implementation of grandiose ideas is restricted with just a lifetime of one personality. Yet, the wisdom and prescience of Heydar Aliyev is displaying a complete reverse of it in the Azerbaijani experience. During the time of Ilham Aliyev’s leadership over the country having been elected the President of Azerbaijan Republic with the highest trust of nation, the strategic development course authored by Heydar Aliyev was effectively continued with the ideas put forward theoretically by the national leader, but failed to implement owing to the lack of time and/or opportunities becoming a reality.

At that period, firstly the factors providing for the country’s continuous development were reinforced. Socio-political stability was ensured in the society. The balanced foreign policy line pursued through a decent diplomatic proficiency did not let emergence of the moments that could cause any tension in Azerbaijan’s relations with other states. Azerbaijan brought together all the interests as an area of dialogues characterized by concurrence of all geopolitical interests and direction of international arguments mostly to the level of discussions and mutual understanding. Our country became a model for the entire world with its tolerant attitude to different cultures and national-religious identities.

The most successful ideas aimed at settlement of the socioeconomic problems having long caused grave civic concerns in Azerbaijan became a reality. Perfect national programs targeted at development of Azerbaijani regions and elimination of the existing socioeconomic concerns were adopted and executed. Democratic reforms gained a wider range in our country. Essential steps were taken to ensure the legal state- and civic society building, as well as human rights and freedoms and freedom of expression and press.

Today, the independent state of Azerbaijan is living through the period of its highest progress. Our country has already become a leading state of not only the Southern Caucasus, but also the post-Soviet space and mostly its West-oriented part. This reality is not proved by the geopolitical role we play not only in the region, but also in a wider sense, as well as the geopolitical weight we have achieved, but by the actual economic indicators supporting these two factors. Mentioning just one factor is enough – according to results achieved by the international strategic research centers, today Azerbaijan is the country with the highest development tempo worldwide. Investment flows into the republic increase from year to year. Azerbaijan maintains its leading position in the East European space for the volume of foreign capital investments. There is no regional project that may be implemented without agreement and active involvement of our country. These are all benefits of the political course founded by the national leader Heydar Aliyev and successfully continued by the President Mr. Ilham Aliyev.

The important point is that the accomplishments made serve to the interests of Azerbaijani people. Numerous state programs are continued up to date to ensure the civic welfare. Life is prospering in our regions. Due to the care paid to the advance of entrepreneurship, the private sector of Azerbaijan keeps on developing. New work places are opened. The levels of unemployment and poverty in our country are eliminated. The republic's infrastructure is renewing. New roads, gas, power and water lines are laid in our most distant villages. The electricity and heating problems are being removed. Different projects for the development of Baku and suburban settlements are carried out. With the modern buildings, extensive facilities each being more elaborate than the last, as well as the construction and renovation activities ongoing in all regions of the country, Azerbaijan is kind of being reconstructed.

Appropriate projects are implemented aiming at raising the cultural-intellectual potential of Azerbaijani citizens and, as noted by our president, at transforming the economic potential available in the country into human capital. The latest achievements of information technologies are penetrating also into the lives of Azerbaijani people making our citizens residents of the information-oriented world. Education, public health and culture facilities are built throughout the republic and put into the citizens' disposal. Author

of numerous valuable public initiatives, president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Good Will Ambassador of UNESCO and deputy of the National Assembly Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva attaches a particular brilliance to the activities realized in this direction.

The fact that an immense portion of the successes attained fall on the share of Azerbaijani education is not a matter of chance arising from the line of progress and model of development chosen by our national state. In the modern times, the power of countries is not measured by its military potential or economic resources. Today, the only criterion identifying the strength of states is the human capital, and the only way for shaping up this wealth passes exactly through the advance of science and education.

What about the independent Azerbaijani state's level of readiness to this new competition environment defined by our globalizing world? The book, submitted to your attention will provide a comprehensive answer to this question.

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CHAPTER I

EDUCATION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT POSITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Humeyir Ahmadov

Education is the most important area of our lives. It should be based on national goals and interests.

Heydar ALIYEV

HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN AZERBAIJAN

Education is the most important means ensuring the progress. Settlement of many essential problems challenging the society passes firstly through the advance of education. It is no coincidence that the greatest philosophers Azerbaijan and the world in general has produced so far have achieved eternity in history as the greatest enlighteners of their times seeking the triumph of the moral ideals troubling them exactly in education and enlightening of people.

The seeds of enlightening they sowed way back centuries ago are now yielding their fruits. The scientific-technical “miracles” of the XXI century we call the Information Century, which surprise every one of us, as well as the achievements made in the development of democracy and ensuring of the human rights and freedoms all over the world are the currently materialized dreams of philosophers having once managed to transform science and education into the priority social factor of the humanity. In this context, the merits of Azerbaijani enlighteners have been exceptional as well.

1.1. First schools

The development of national education and schools in Azerbaijan has a rich and complex history. Regardless of czarism’s subjective purposes, Azerbaijan’s occupation by Russia led objectively to many progressive results in the field of national enlightening and school, as well as in the other fields.

As we know, as far back as in the early XIX century, a school reform was carried out in Russia, the Ministry of People’s Enlightening was established in 1802 and the schools administration was centralized. In 1803, the Ministry

of People's Enlightening published the Primary Rules of National Enlightening. In 1804, the Regulation of Universities, as well as the Regulation of Education Establishments Subordinate to the Universities were published based on the Rules. In 1804–1805, new universities were opened in Kharkov and Kazan, and the Chief Pedagogical Institute – in St. Petersburg. Several scientific societies were created attached to the Moscow University.

After the occupation of Azerbaijan by Russia, extensive opportunities emerged for the mutual development of Russian and Azerbaijani cultures. The culture of Russian nation inspired the progress of many areas of scientific knowledge in Azerbaijan. Advanced public ideas also penetrated into Azerbaijan through the progressive representative of Russian culture.

At the beginning of the XIX century, education enterprises of mostly religious character called “maktab” (school – *trans.*), “maktabkhana” (school – *trans.*), or “mollakhana” (Moslem ecclesiastical school – *trans.*) by people were active in Azerbaijan, which provided mainly primary education and knowledge of shariat (principles of Moslem religion – *trans.*). These schools were largely located attached to mosques, or in the house of the teaching mullah. Mainly the mullah of every residential quarter was engaged in education activities. There were a few girls' schools in most cases organized by mullah's wife. Since there were no specific educational qualification for teachers, that is, a condition limiting the right of teaching, mostly the persons with medrese (religious school of Moslems) education were teaching at schools.

The schools were primarily supported by the population funds. The education was paid. On Thursdays, the pupils would give money and expensive gifts to the teacher-mullah. They were not divided into groups and lessons were of an individual training character. The children would attend the school mainly in autumn and winter for 4-6 months.

Education in such schools would last mostly for 4 years and more. Age was not taken into consideration. The mollakhanas did not have an official syllabus, a stable program, or an identified curriculum. Usually there were no exams with any certificate or diploma awarded to confirm the graduation.

Along with the primary education schools, secondary and high-higher education schools – medreses were also functioning in Azerbaijan just like in many countries of Near East and Middle Asian republics, which taught

not only shariat and Moslem lessons, but also exact sciences. Many renowned poets, writers, philosophers, scientists and doctors of Azerbaijan had received their first education exactly in medreses. Despite of the complexity of education method and certain shortages in the education content, these schools also had positive features. The people studying there would have a good command of the Eastern literature. After the annexation of Azerbaijan to Russia, the czar government did not treat these schools indifferently, maintained their records considering their broad expansion and kept interesting in them. However, at the first glance at these schools, the czar government realized it can never use them for own political purposes and had to create a new system of national enlightening.

The necessities of training officials for the local government authorities and firstly translators, who would speak both Russian and local languages, thus strengthening the czar Russia's power, brought the priority issue of opening several schools in Transcaucasia to the agenda.

Since the 30s of XIX century, some innovation and revival appeared in the field of education and enlightening. An inclination, wish to receive education in Russian language emerged in a part of the local aristocracy. A nobleman, Ismayil bey Gutgashinli, had received military education in central cities of Russia way back in the first decades of the XIX century and had a perfect command of Russian and French languages, and Abbasgulu agha Bakikhanov also learnt Russian in Guba in those years later to improve the knowledge in Tbilisi.

The czar government was opening official state-owned schools in Transcaucasia providing education in Russian in order to prepare officials from the local aristocracy. In 1803, the Russian-language Tbilisi Nujeba School was established in Tbilisi by the initiative of general Knorring to become later the Tbilisi Gymnasium. Several new civic and military schools were opened in Tbilisi at the time of general A.P.Yermalov. Azerbaijanis also studied at these schools together with Russians and Georgians.

Following the wars, in the 30s, the government started opening Russian-language schools in different cities of Azerbaijan and their number kept on increasing. Russian-language district schools were established in Shusha (1830), Nukha (1831), Baku (1832), Ganja (1833), Shamakhi (1837) and Nakhchivan (1937) by the state. The schools provided knowledge of

Russian language, as well as lessons of mathematics, geography and shariat. In addition, at those schools, Russians were taught also the Azerbaijani language. Persian language was also taught in the Russian-language high schools opened in Transcaucasia. These Russian-language schools had a particular role in the development of mutual cultural relations between the peoples of Russia and Azerbaijan.

1.2. Addressing the issue of education in the world outlook of Azerbaijani enlighteners

A certain period of progress in the field of enlightening commenced in the second half of the XIX century due to the advance of capitalist relations. At the mentioned time, the number of Azerbaijanis having received Russian-language education had largely increased, while the same figure was very insignificant in the first half of the century with new city, district and village schools opened in the cities of Ganja, Nakhchivan, Shusha, Nukha, Salyan, etc. After the guberniya (province – *trans.*) office was moved from Shamakhi to Baku, Russian-language high-schools were opened in Baku.

In 1879, the Moslem Department was arranged for Azerbaijanis in the Gori Seminary by the efforts and initiative of local enlighteners, particularly, Mirza Fatali Akhundov. Besides, Realschules were opened in Shusha and Shamakhi. These schools, especially the Gori Seminary contributed vastly to the formation of Azerbaijani intelligentsia and spread of the advanced achievements of Russian culture in Azerbaijan. Najaf bey Vazirov graduated from the Baku Realschool, Abdurrehim bey Hagverdiyev – Shusha Realschool, Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, Suleiman Sani Akhundov, Uzeyir Hajibeyov and many others – from the Gori Seminary.

In the 80s–90s, a big teachers group consisting of Azerbaijani alumnis graduated from the Gori Seminary, among which the names of distinguished enlighteners aiming at the national enlightening, such as M.Mahmudbeyov, N.Narimanov, R.Efendiyev may be mentioned. Alumnis of the Tbilisi Teachers Institute, Sultan Majid Ganizadeh and Habib bey Mahmudbeyov were also a part of this enlighteners group.

These intellectuals having opened the first Russian–Tatar school in Azerbaijan and actively contributed to the edition of new textbooks were

willingly acquiring the advanced pedagogic theories of the times. The schools opened by the state carried out important activities to spread progressive achievements of the Russian culture to distant districts. Azerbaijani youth studying at these schools was acquainted with works of such classicists as Krilov, Pushkin, Lermantov, Gogol and Tolstoi and learned the basics of the advanced Russian science.

Born in Shamakhi, lived there a long time and having a perfect command of Azerbaijani language, A.O.Chernyayevkiy compiled an ABC-textbook for Azerbaijani children named the Language of Motherland using the Voice Method, which was based on the Russian pedagogist K.D.Ushinskiy's pedagogic theory applying the national character principles. The book worked out with close involvement of the renowned intellectuals of that time, Hesneli khan Garadaghi and Sefereli bey Velibeyov was firstly published in 1983 achieving grand success. After that, Rashid bey Efendiyev compiled and published the book titled Kindergarten using again the voice method.

In the second half of the XIX century, the field of enlightening was going through a complex process of development. Then, schools of new type were being opened in Azerbaijan along with the old Moslem ecclesiastical schools and Russian schools. These schools were named "usuli-jedid" (new method – *trans.*) schools at that time. They were created by the enlighteners, who had some acquaintance with the Russian schools, as well as the new teaching and education methods. In Shamakhi, Seyid Azim Shirvani, in Shusha – Mir Movsum Navvab, in Lankaran – Mirza Ismail Gasir and in Ordubad – Mahammad Taghi Sidgi ranked among the teachers having created the "usuli-jedid" schools and teaching with application of new methods. The schools provided lessons of native languages, Russian language, history and geography along with the Persian language and shariat.

The renaissance of enlightening emerged in the North Azerbaijan also affected the South Azerbaijan. There, eminent enlighteners as Mirza Rushdiyye and Haji Seyid Rza worked out and published native-language textbooks applying the new methods despite of the severe persecutions by Iranian reactionaries and selflessly struggled for the opening of new schools and children's education in their native language.

Since the 1980s, four-year primary schools named Russian-Tatar schools were opened in the juncture of Azerbaijan and Russia, which provided

education in both the Russian and Azerbaijani languages. The first Russian–Tatar schools were opened by Hebib bey Mahmudbeyov and Sultan Majid Ganizadeh. The number of Azerbaijanis having received education in the center of Russia was also increasing versus the previous years. A part of the youth having finished the high schools in Baku, Shusha and Tbilisi would leave for Moscow or St.Petersburg to receive higher education.

In 1865, Hasan bey Malikov Zardabi graduated from the Nature-Mathematics Faculty of the Moscow University and in 1878, Najaf bey Vazirov graduated from the Agriculture Faculty of the Petrovskiy-Razumovskaya Academy again in Moscow. A close contemporary of Najaf bey Vazirov, Asgar agha Gorani Adigozalov also got his higher education in Russia in those years and returned to Azerbaijan. They were familiar with the advanced theories of such renowned Russian scientists as I.M.Sechenov, D.I.Mendeleyev and K.A.Timiryazev aslong with the achievements of the world culture.

Thus, a big category of intellectuals appeared in the last quarter of the century consisting of the Azerbaijani youth with Russian-language high and higher education. Their ardent activity somehow affected the intellectuals having received older religious education in Persian and Arabic languages provoking inclination and sympathy in certain part of them for culture. A part of the older-education intellectuals tended towards modernism in the science and education, while some even opposed to the older religious education struggling for the modern education and upbringing. Among those rejecting the older religious education and tending towards the new education, Seyid Azim Shirvani was the most progressive.

Besides the official state schools and “usulu-jedid” schools, there were many Moslem ecclesiastical schools and medreses in the country. The older religious education was still active at that period as in the first half of the century. Many uneducated parents still sent their children to the Moslem ecclesiastical schools instead of the state schools. A part of the youth would leave for the Near East, Najaf, Karbala, in general, the cities, where pious people lived, to receive religious education. Notwithstanding all of these, in the second half of the XIX century, the older religious-scholastic education gradually lost its significance, while the modern education increasingly advanced in the field of enlightening.

The issues of enlightening and education were also influencing the creative activities of that time. It is no coincidence that in the early XX century, a part of the realistic Azerbaijani writers united in the fields of press and publishing, another part mostly uniting around the scene and theatre (N.Vazirov, A.Hagverdiyev, U.Hajibeyov and so on), while the third group of writers were tending towards the juvenile literature on the subjects of enlightening, education and upbringing. The entire creative activity of these teachers-writers was conformed with the demands of school and enlightening. Those writers completed their practical teaching activity at schools with their pens.

Since our writers believed the decisive work of education, teacher and school was the strongest means for progress, they attached a particular importance to the schools doing their best on this way. Therefore, the struggle for enlightening, schools and upbringing enjoyed the key position in the writers' creative activity. They did not follow the satire path as did Molla Nasreddinists. True, these writers also rejected the older way of life as critical realists, equally hated intellectual ignorance, longed for destruction of the older society and strived to save the people from fanaticism.

The greatest merit of Azerbaijani critical realists was their selfless struggle for destroying the old world and saving the society. The "Mollah Nasreddin" journal and its edifying school was aimed at saving our lives and society from the bonds of obsolescence, raising all the curtains to explain to everybody the dirty and tragic essence of the feudal relations, showing the life truths with their bitterness, waking the people up and making them vigilant.

Instructive realists were neither obsessed by criticism of the past, nor captivated by dreams of the future. They described mostly the rules of common life and daily round addressing firstly the schools before anybody or anything in the creation of future. They considered the school the basic means not only for culture and renaissance, but also for the establishment of social structure. Sometimes they would even exaggerate the importance of schools calling it the way to salvation.

The names of Suleiman Sani Akhundov, Abdulla Shaig Talibzadeh, Sultanmejid Ganizadeh, Rashid bey Efendiyev and Ibrahim bey Musabeyov may be mentioned among the instructive realists. There were also teachers-authors, who wrote juvenile stories on subjects of enlightening to later give up, as Shafiga khanum and Mahammad Garayev.

These writers had the same goals, ideological direction, area of activity and even the range of subjects. Many of them (Suleiman Sani Akhundov, Abdulla Shaig) came from the families of the then intelligentsia. The essential range and area of activity of these writers was school. They were ardent supporters of the “usuli-jedid” school and new style of education and upbringing as opposed to the education and upbringing they had received, doing their best in this path.

If the Molla Nasreddinists spreaded their ideology through the press and books, instructive realists impressed it through schools. The school was the biggest and most suitable auditorium for them. They would read here their poems, include their novels in the textbooks and stage their dramas on school scenes. The instructive realists made use of every means to transfer higher and holy feelings to the new generation and bring up the children of motherland with new and modern methods.

1.3. Education in the time of Republic

Establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic marked the peak of the activities done for enlightening of society until that historic period. After the declaration of Azerbaijan’s independence, serious measures were implemented in the fields of enlightening and culture, as well as in all the important spheres of public life, the Azerbaijan People’s Enlightening Ministry was instituted, education in native language was commenced, all-Turkish history was taught at schools instead of the Russian history and pedagogical courses were arranged. 6 pedagogical schools for men and 4 – for women, as well as 7 seminaria (college-trans.) for men and 1 – for women were opened in different regions. 100 young Azerbaijanis were sent abroad to receive higher education, the Baku State University was founded and a decision was issued on the creation of the Agriculture Institute.

The network of cultural enlightening centers was expanded, essential activities were implemented for creation of the National Library system, the Azerbaijani Telegraph Agency was established in May 1919, the National Independence Museum was opened in December 1919, tens of newspapers and journals started to be published inside and outside the Republic, and the official governmental press – the Azerbaijan and News of the Azerbaijan

Government newspapers in Turkish and Russian languages started to be published.

Nasib bey Yusifbeyli, Rashid khan Kaplanov, Hamid bey Shahtakhtinskiy, Nurmahammad bey Shahsuvarov, Dadash Bunyadzadeh, Mustafa Guliyev, Ruhulla Akhundov, Agha Sultanov, Mahmud Aghayev, Mammad Juvarlinski, Museyib Shahbazov, Ayna Sultanova, Mirza Mammadov, Mirza Ibrahimov, Mammad Alakbarov, Mehdi Mehdizadeh were the leaders of Azerbaijani education in the Republic times and years of the Soviet power.

In general, the first ministry for national enlightening and education in Azerbaijan was created in May 28, 1918 by decision of the government of the Azerbaijan People's Republic under the name of the People's Enlightening Ministry, and its structure consisting of three departments (general education, higher and high vocational education, professional schools) was approved by decision of the Council of Ministers dated June 30, 1918.

Following the Soviet power establishment in Azerbaijan, the issues of education and people's enlightenment maintained its particular topicality. The People's Enlightening Ministry was re-established under the name of People's Enlightening Commissariat by the decree №1 of Azerbaijan SSR Council of Ministers dated April 28, 1920 with all the educational institutions in the country passing under its subordination.

In 1940, the Labor Resources Office was created by the appropriate decision of the Azerbaijan SSR Council of Ministers, technical vocational educational institutions passed under its control, the State Technical Professional Education Committee was created attached to the Office by the government decision in 1959 to be active until 1988.

At the same time, by decision of the Azerbaijan SSR Council of Ministers, the Higher and High Vocational Education Committee was created in 1959 (became an independent ministry since 1964). The higher and high vocational education institutions operating in the republic were subordinated to it. The ministry acted until 1988. In general, 2 ministries and one committee (People's Enlightening Ministry, Higher and High Vocational Education Ministry, State Technical Professional Education Committee) operated in Azerbaijan to engage in the issues of education since 1959 till 1988.

In 1988, all the three ministries were annulled by decision of the Azerbaijan SSR Council of Ministers and the People's Education

Ministry was created instead of them. The new Ministry's structure was approved. Later, the Ministry was renamed into the Education Ministry by the Decree of the Azerbaijan Republic's President dated September 3, 1993.

The Soviet power's special attention targeted at the people's enlightening till the 50s of the XX century was mostly serving to the objective of bringing up the educated citizens to implement the Soviet ideology. Yet, regardless of its nature, we think that implementation of the mass enlightening measures in Azerbaijan since 1920s, liquidation of the illiteracy courses and sometimes even the forced involvement of our citizens in education range among the most serious successes we achieved at that period. Because, this activity carrying ideological purposes changed its character since the 60s of the last century to acquire mostly a national character.

Aiming the traditions existing in the field of science and education development towards the national objectives and advance of these traditions at the level of modern time requirements is unexceptionally linked with the name of architect and builder of the independent Azerbaijan state, the great leader Heydar Aliyev.

CHAPTER II

PATRON OF AZERBAIJAN SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

Humeyir Ahmadov

I have been always closely connected with the school and education. I believe that society should help teachers, young generation's knowledge and education, no matter how it can do it. This is my principal position.

Heydar ALIYEV

RESPONDING TO EDUCATION IN THE HEYDAR ALIYEV HERITAGE

With his incomparable merits in the development of Azerbaijani science, education, in general, culture, the eminent leader Heydar Aliyev never begrudged the field with his attention and care always proving himself as a strong defender of our national science and education in all times of his leadership over the country. The national leader's extremely sensitive attitude towards the field was not ungrounded. Heydar Aliyev approached to the advance of science and education as a vital basis of the national state-building process considering the improvement of people's intellectual level as a priority issue.

Adhering to this purpose the distinguished statesman eliminated several factors impeding the progress of Azerbaijani education way back in his first leadership period over the country and mobilized the available potential for building the future development of the country on scientific grounds, strengthening of the republic's cultural-intellectual resources, as well as the upbringing of decent citizens for Azerbaijan, which would declare its national independence in several decades.

2.1. Reforms in the education field

Heydar Aliyev's activity in the field of education mainly reflects the following directions: He nationalized the staff of the Azerbaijani enlightening system with local cadres, built schools all over the republic, particularly in the villages, displayed care for teachers, expanded the system of appointment, the teachers appointed to work in villages were provided with the accommodation rent allowance and other privileges, the youth were provided with conditions to receive higher education and noncompetitive nomination to higher education institutions in order to provide provinces with experts, the number of higher

education institutions was increased with their logistical supply reinforced and efforts made to link the Azerbaijani education with the education system of advanced countries.

Heydar Aliyev firstly began nationalizing the Azerbaijan Enlightening Ministry's personnel to achieve the end successfully. The cadres demand was increased. Employment of Azerbaijani education employees in the ministerial system was strengthened. Those committing faults in work, including non-Azerbaijanis, started to be discharged from their positions. For ex., the improper actions of the Enlightening Deputy Minister R.A.Balayan were discussed at the Azerbaijan CP NC's bureau meeting dated March 13, 1970 and he was discharged.

As the means expended on the national enlightening enterprises were very limited at H.Aliyev's coming to the power, he did not spare efforts for raising them and achieved this goal. The expenditures for supporting the national enlightening fields increased every year since 1969. For ex., 377.1 mln manats was allocated from the 1977 state budget of Azerbaijan for supporting the national enlightening, which was by 19.3 mln manats more versus 1976.

In 1978, 384.3 mln manats was allocated from the state budget for the national enlightening institutions, which exceeded the figure of 1976 by 8.9 percents. In the forthcoming years, the volume of means for supporting the national enlightening institutions kept increasing. For ex., 723.5 mln manats was allocated in 1981 for funding the national enlightening institutions, which surpassed the previous year's indicator by 4.7 percent. The social-cultural expenditures constituted 57.2 percent of the entire budget, or 1 billion 235 mln 200 manats. This was by 5 percent less than the plan for 1980, and by 10.8 percent more than that for 1979. In 1982, the funds allocated for financing the national enlightening institutions amounted to 689 mln manats with a 4-percent growth versus 1980. 372.5 mln manats was provided for supporting the national enlightening system which marked a 46-percent growth, or 9.9 percent growth versus the report of 1980.

Another basic direction of Heydar Aliyev's activity aiming at the development of Azerbaijani enlightening system covered the construction of new school buildings, involvement of the school-aged children to education and popularization of the education. In the period between 1969 and 1982, construction of the new school buildings and involvement of children to

schools in Azerbaijan constantly followed the advancing line. It is worth noting that until April 1920, i.e., the establishment of Soviet power, there were only 976 schools in Azerbaijan, which was extremely insignificant failing to meet the people's demand for enlightening. Though the construction of school buildings commenced since the Soviet power expanded in the years of cultural revolution, it failed to cover all the settlements of Azerbaijan and meet the corresponding demand. Till the late 60s, many schools were even arranged in personal houses of different citizens attaching an air of deprivation to the villages having no separate school buildings. People felt grave need for the construction of new school buildings. It was a necessity to increase the funds allocated for school construction and implement this task. Therefore, Heydar Aliyev started solving this problem as soon as he came to power.

The opening of 120 schools was celebrated in our republic in September 1, 1969. A part of them were newly-built, another transformed from 8-year schools to high schools. Thus, little after H.Aliyev's coming to power, the total number of high schools in Azerbaijan reached 1130. The very year, in September 1, 1 mln 130 thousand pupils started studying, which exceeded the indicator of 1968 by 70 thousand pupils. Another source claims that in the education year 1969-70, 1 mln 295 thousand pupils were studying in the day-time general education schools of Azerbaijan.

In those years, serious steps were taken for involvement of school-aged children to education with the schools network speedily expanding. In 1970, 170 new high schools were opened, of which 55 were built with the funds allocated from the state budget. In addition, many school buildings were built funded by kolkhozes and sovkhoses, i.e., the local budget. By September 1, 1970 every third person of the Azerbaijani population was covered by all kinds of education.

In 1971, a new progress was achieved in the high school education field in Azerbaijan; the number of children involved in education highly increased. That year, 1 mln 390 thousand pupils studied in the Azerbaijani schools, which was by 60 thousand pupils more versus the previous year. The number of first-graders only totaled 170 thousand. 1905 eight-year, 1303 high schools and many primary schools were active in the republic. In September 1972, 1382 (439 – in the cities, 943 – in the villages) out of the 4204 general education schools in Azerbaijan were high schools, 1843 – eight-year schools (of them,

299 – in the cities, 1544 – in the villages) and 979 – primary schools. 1 mln 412 thousand 500 pupils were studying at day-time schools. This figure meant a big jump in the field of national enlightening versus the previous year.

Such a development was gained due to the republican leader's direct care to the national enlightening. If the speedy growth of pupils' number was linked with the growth of population and demographic development on the one hand, on the other hand it was a result of involving the children having deviated from schools in the previous years, particularly the girls. The population growth was influenced mostly by the gradual improvement of welfare standards.

The special weight of educated women rapidly grew owing to the particular attention to involving the Azerbaijani girls to schools and Azerbaijani woman was playing an essential role in the republic's socio-political and industrial life. Already in 1978, there were 770 thousand women in Azerbaijan with higher and high education, which was speaking of the immense successes achieved in increasing the women's role in Azerbaijani society in such a short time.

Yet, a problem left way back from the 60s was pending in this field, which covered the fact of unemployment of the youth having graduated from schools. In his letter addressed to the Soviet Union CP CC dated January 24, 1969 the chief of the USSR Central Statistics Department V.Starovsky suggested the union republics strengthening the efforts for solving this problem. Heydar Aliyev started solving the problem as soon as he came to the power and achieved successful results. The network of technical-vocational education in Azerbaijan was expanded.

Caring for the schools construction, H.Aliyev made this issue a subject of comprehensive and extensive discussion at the bureau meetings of the Azerbaijan CP CC and adopted resolute decisions regarding this. The meeting of Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau held under his chairmanship in August 28, 1973 adopted a decision regarding the construction of new school buildings in the republic's territory, which suggested building schools to cover 35 thousand pupils in 1974, 35 thousand – in 1975 and 276 thousand pupils in 1976–80. Demanding the timely and duly fulfilment of the decision from the responsible people, Heydar Aliyev resolutely prevented any faults occurred in this process.

Construction of the boarding schools also enjoyed a specific attention. The decision made by the CC intended construction of boarding schools with 2 thousand pupil coverage in 1974, with 3 thousand – in 1975 and 10 thousand – in 1976-80 from the state budget funds. The implementation of decision was kept under strict control with the schools construction process expanded throughout the entire republic. Due to the care rendered to the boarding schools, the pupils of these schools soon started to successfully represent Azerbaijan in the All-Union Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and other olympiads. All of these came out as an effective tool for recognition of talented Azerbaijani children, in general, the nation's intellectual level all over the country.

In 1974, around 103 thousand boys and girls finished the republic's high schools. This meant a 13 thousand growth versus 1973. That year, 1 mln 500 thousand pupils were studying in 1540 high and 1890 eight-year schools operating in the republic.

In the 1976-1977 education year, 1 mln 464 thousand 400 pupils studied in the day-time schools of Azerbaijan with 1754 high and 1743 eight-year schools active in the republic. Owing to the intense labor and successive work, 75 percent of the school network was shortly located in villages and the schools construction mission in Azerbaijani villages largely expanded. In the education year 1974-75, 147 school buildings were constructed and put into operation in the republic, which marked a significant advance in the history of Azerbaijani enlightening.

By 1978, it was intended to build schools with 48.7 thousand pupils coverage, including high school buildings with 29.5 thousand pupils coverage with a substantial funding from the Azerbaijani state budget. This mission was also done with success, owing to which the number of people with full high education totaled 1 mln 104 thousand 200 men, or 18.8 percent of the entire Azerbaijani population in the years of passage to obligatory high education.

In 1968–78, the number of high schools in Azerbaijan grew by 77 percent with the number of village schools reaching from 680 to 1264. Due to all of these, the image of Azerbaijani village was rapidly changing. Interest in science and education kept growing and schools were shaped up in villages as the centers of culture.

In general, Azerbaijan fully transformed into the land of educated people in the years of Heydar Aliyev's first leadership over the country; the educated urban population made 100 percent and analogic rural population – 99.9 percent referring to the 1979 census. In 1980, 1 mln 400 thousand pupils were studying at the general education schools in Azerbaijan and this was an unmatched success throughout the entire history of Azerbaijan. In his speech at the meeting with the first-year students received to the higher schools in Moscow, Leningrad and other cities of the country dated August 29, 1981 H. Aliyev stated: “At present, 1 mln 857 thousand men have been covered over different kinds of education in Azerbaijan, over 1.5 mln of them studying at the general education schools, and the rest at the higher and technical schools”.

Special attention was paid to the training of teachers, increasing the number of teachers with higher education and providing the village schools with qualified teacher cadres. It is worth noting that by September 1, 1969 only 50 percent of the 75 thousand teachers working at the primary, eight-year and high schools of Azerbaijan had higher education. The head of Azerbaijan took resolute steps aimed at the immediate correction of the state and commenced urgent measures. At the meeting dated August 12, 1969 the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau made a decision on noncompetitive entry to higher schools of the youth coming from different regions of the republic. The mission successfully continued also in the further years was aimed at providing the Azerbaijani villages with different professionals, including the teachers. The decision was simultaneously directed towards the progress of general culture and education in the Azerbaijani villages. The successful implementation of the decision played an exceptional role in the development of Azerbaijani villages in the 1970s–80s.

Yet, it should be underlined that some faults were committed in the non-competitive enrolment to higher schools. Some regions did not recommend the youth in the number intended for the higher school plans, the training level of the graduates coming to the exam was low, etc. Heydar Aliyev demanded the soon and resolute elimination of the faults charing the corresponding tasks. In regard of this, he stated in one of his speeches in 1982 that only 7 graduates have been enrolled to higher schools while 30 non-competitive places were allocated for 30 regions of the republic.

Arrival of the youth from villages to Baku and other cities to receive pedagogical education put forward another topical problem. There was a lack of hostel network for accommodation of the students and renting a flat being expensive created difficulties for them. Therefore, Heydar Aliyev was also thinking about the students' living conditions causing adoption of the appropriate decisions.

The decision adopted in August 28, 1973 by the Azerbaijan CP CC and Azerbaijan SSR Council of Ministers intended the construction of 4.7 sq. m. hostels in 1975 and 50.6 sq. m. hostels within 1976-80s attached to the pedagogical institutes and schools. The implementation of this decision serving to improvement of living conditions of the youth coming from regions to receive pedagogical education and advance of enlightening in the villages and regions was under the personal control of Heydar Aliyev. Due to all of these, construction of the student hostels of the pedagogical institutes and schools was successfully carried out.

Rendering a particular care to the young specialists leaving to work in villages and the teachers having been working there from the previous years, Heydar Aliyev was expanding the geography of Azerbaijani enlightening and achieving the growth of quality education. Young specialists were appointed to the areas to increase the level of national enlightening in the villages. In 1969, 4 thousand young teachers were appointed and sent to work in regions. Though a part of them left these places after the appointment term finished, some married in the villages and joined the local population. Surely, those people played an immense role in the implementation of the general policy aimed at the progress of schools in Azerbaijani villages and enlightening of the rural population. In the 70s, teachers were receiving the highest salaries in villages and considered the most respectful persons.

In 1971, the teachers of the general education schools in villages, as well as the retired teachers of the very schools and teachers of the general education subjects of three-year village technical schools were released of the agriculture taxes. This step stimulated the revival of school work in villages, improvement of the teachers' welfare and increase of their authority.

Another sample of the care displayed for enlightening in Azerbaijan was the all-population discussion of the draft law On the National Enlightening

and its adoption with the adoption and implementation of the law contributing vastlz to the advance of the Azerbaijani school.

Heydar Aliyev attached a particular importance also to the creation of primary and high school textbooks in native language. In 1972, 86 types of high school textbooks with a total 5 mln copies were published. In 1874, 100 types of textbooks, 7 types of teacher guidance manuals and 10 types of practical guidance editions were published with 600 thousand copies and sent to the schools. 93 kinds of textbooks were published in 1976 with a total circulation of 5 mln 590 thousand pieces.

Heydar Aliyev took part in the conferences of Azerbaijani teachers and delivered program speeches. The meeting of the Azerbaijan CP CC dated March 25, 1978 adopted a decision on summoning the conference of Azerbaijani teachers. The Bureau's meeting on May 17 approved the text of Heydar Aliyev's letter of congratulation to the conference participants and his report to be made. Taking part in the VI conference of Azerbaijani teachers held in May that year, Heydar Aliyev delivered an extensive speech, which deeply analyzed the historic path of development and current state of the Azerbaijani school and defined the perspectives and challenges to be confronted. Heydar Aliyev pointed out that he attaches a particular importance to the role of education in the progress of Azerbaijani nation.

Hundreds of facts prove Heydar Aliyev's exceptional contributions to the awarding of Azerbaijani high school teachers with honorary names and recognition throughout the country. In regard of this, he repeatedly wrote letters to the Soviet Union CP CC boldly insisting on his requests. For ex., in April 23, 1981 he wrote a confidential letter #233 to the CC on awarding Z.Shoyubov with the honorary name of the USSR People's Teacher soon achieving this goal. The numerous requests addressed to Moscow for awarding the teachers with honorary names marked the big attention the Azerbaijani leadership displayed to the teachers' labor. The value attached to teachers covered even all the distant regions of Azerbaijan. Heydar Aliyev would usually present the prizes to representatives of the enlightening field personally.

One of such ceremonies was held in December 1981. The speech delivered by Heydar Aliyev at the prize presentation ceremony fully discloses the essence of his attitude towards the Azerbaijani teacher and school. He

stated: **“The profession of teacher is an honorable and beautiful profession. Our nation called the most respected and decent people as teacher since ancient times”**.

Heydar Aliyev also celebrated the anniversaries of schools with long histories. Corresponding decisions of the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau were adopted for this. For ex., the Bureau’s meetings dated January 12 and February 9, 1982 adopted a decision on commemoration of the 150th anniversary of high schools in Shusha and Sheki and 125th anniversary of the School #1 in Lenkeran. Wide-ranging events were held in accordance with the decision and logistical supply of the schools was reinforced. Yet, the celebration of anniversaries in the further years was stopped since the number of schools with long historic traditions was sufficiently big.

Heydar Aliyev constantly tried to increase the funds allocated for the training of cadres with higher education on different specializations for Azerbaijan. It should be noted for comparison that the materials of the I All-Azerbaijan Soviet Conference indicate availability of only 62 men with higher education in Azerbaijan before April 1920. Perfectly understanding the problems this limitation would cause, Heydar Aliyev paid a special attention to the training of specialists with higher education.

Adherence to the principles of social justice and ensuring of transparency in the education system, as well as prevention of the social category differences at enrolment to higher education institutions ranked among the fields enjoying a specific attention of Heydar Aliyev. Exactly due to such attention, knowledge became the true and only criterion in our higher schools way back at that period. Since the late 50s and early 60s, the cases of bribery and corruption having found their way into our temples of science and education displaying as an integral part of the harmful elements in the system of government administration were resolutely prevented. Due to the transparency Heydar Aliyev created with immense determination and principality, the children of the underprivileged, laborious people having no other trust else than their knowledge also got the chances to be enrolled for respectful specializations of higher schools in those years. Stating **“Let the justice triumph!”** in his famous interview to the “Literaturnaya Gazeta” at the beginning of 80s, our eminent leader truly achieved the triumph of justice in the Azerbaijani education.

Heydar Aliyev created favorable conditions for the education of workers' and peasants' children preventing the high-ranking officials to place their children through different ways to the Law Faculty of Azerbaijan State University. Consequently, the special weight of workers' and peasants' children enrolled to the higher schools of Azerbaijan reached over 67 percent in 1978, which meant a 13-percent growth versus the previous year. It is worth noting that in Europe, the rural population was historically accepted as the protectors of the national blood. The attention paid to the higher education of the people representing different social categories in Azerbaijan expanded the general network of the education, enlightening and culture, increased the republic's cultural level and enhanced the people's belief in the power.

Heydar Aliyev paid a specific attention to the development of Azerbaijani higher education, expanded the appropriate network, increased the number of students and rendered care to the teachers. As was mentioned already, there were only 13 higher schools in the republic before Heydar Aliyev came to the power. However, he believed the number of higher schools does not meet the growing demand of the Azerbaijani population. Therefore, the leader of Azerbaijan attached a particular importance to the opening of new higher education institutions. Owing to his very attention and care, the number of higher schools in Azerbaijan reached 17 in 1980. the Institute of Russian Language and Literature, as well as the Construction Engineers Institute were opened in Baku, different institutes were opened in Nakhchivan and Khankendi, 23 new faculties and 72 new chairs were established in the higher education institutions within 1976–1980, and by 1980, 75 secondary vocational schools were active in our republic training specialists in over 140 specializations.

If in the previous years Azerbaijan lagged behind the neighboring republics in this field, Azerbaijan left behind not only those republics, but also the Eastern republics in general for the level and scale of the cadres with higher and high vocational education owing to Heydar Aliyev's activity. 172 out of every 10 thousand men in the republic were students. Yet, Heydar Aliyev did not suffice with this result keeping on the mission of opening new higher schools. The Ganja Technology Institute was established directly due to his efforts, which was the 18th higher education institution in Azerbaijan.

Creation of this higher school enabled the training of experts in new fields in Azerbaijan.

In general, 5 new higher schools were opened in Azerbaijan during Heydar Aliyev's leadership over the country, their logistical supply was formed, installations and other technical equipment were purchased and delivered from foreign countries, hostels were built for students, all of which contributed to leading Azerbaijan up to the position of the advanced center of education in the South Caucasian region for the first time during the years of the soviet power.

Heydar Aliyev rendered a special care to the Baku State University among the higher education institutions in Azerbaijan and tried to increase the balance of girls in the total number of students of the higher schools. He attached a particular attention to increasing the number of scientists and expansion of the scientific researches. Let's remind that in 1920, only 259 out of the 1412 alumnis of the Azerbaijan State University were Azerbaijanis, including 40 women. In 1939–1941, 479 men graduated from the University. The number of university scientists also kept on growing. In 1938–1940, 1 Doctorate and 30 Candidate Theses were defended at the University's Scientific Council, in 1941–1945 – 13 men, including 8 Azerbaijanis defended the Doctorate Thesis and 118 men, including 68 Azerbaijanis – the Candidate's Theses. After 1945, the number of alumnis of the Azerbaijan State University equaled to 21 thousand 928 men. In 1946–1969, the number of specialists trained with higher education exceeded the indicators of the previous 25 years by over 8.3 times. In the 1970s, Azerbaijani boys and girls constituted approximately 75 percent of the University students.

Commemoration of the jubilees of higher schools also took a primary position in Heydar Aliyev's activity. From this standpoint, he paid a special attention to the Baku State University, which had exceptional contributions to the development of Azerbaijani science, culture and education. In his opinion, the teachers teaching in the University's lecture halls played an outstanding role in the progress of self-esteem, national thinking and national spirit of the Azerbaijani nation.

Heydar Aliyev delivered a brilliant speech in native language at the solemn ceremony held on the occasion of the University's 50th anniversary in November 1, 1969. In his speech, Heydar Aliyev stated that creation of

the Azerbaijan State University marks the victory of progressive forces and outcomes of the struggle of the best sons of Azerbaijan lasting for several decades aiming at enlightening the native nation and opening the treasure of the world culture and science to the nation. With these words, he openly expressed his trust to the Azerbaijani independence and to the forces having struggled for it, including the figures of the People's Republic. It should not be neglected that Heydar Aliyev was sounding these ideas without hesitation as the head of the Communist Party in the republic, which considered the Azerbaijan People's Republic, the founder of the University, an enemy and tried to raze that period from memories.

At that time, some people thought that Heydar Aliyev cannot speak in Azerbaijani. Nevertheless, this speech of his caused a big sensation in the Azerbaijani society in the true sense of the word. Some people even approached him to congratulate and express him gratitude for speaking in his native language. The fact that Heydar Aliyev spoke in Azerbaijani meant a significant event for the people loving their native language and living in the national spirit. In his conversation with those men, he said, there is no reason for surprising, this is my native language and speaking in one's own language should not be regarded a heroism. Still, actually, the fact that the republican leader delivers a speech in his native language with a higher national spirit in conditions of the soviet system could yield several undesirable results for him.

With this speech, Heydar Aliyev recommended the love for native language and importance of developing it particularly assessing its role in the advance of national traditions. Heydar Aliyev was stating with a thundering voice: "The best traditions of the Azerbaijani people have been developed in the Azerbaijan State University." He appreciated highly the University's exceptional role in the development of Azerbaijani language, people's national spirit and senses of patriotism.

The visit of guests from different cities of the country, foreign states, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and other countries to the University's anniversary was a sample of international recognition of Azerbaijani science and education. Commemoration of the University's jubilee marked a big holiday of the Azerbaijani science and culture. Not sufficing with the commemoration event, Heydar Aliyev put forward an initiative of awarding

the University with the state award and in 1971, the University was awarded with the Red Labor Flag order owing precisely to his efforts and Heydar Aliyev personally presented the order. Such commemorative events were also organized in the further years.

In 1980, the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau issued a decision regarding the commemoration of ASU's 60th anniversary and in compliance with the decision, jubilee celebrations started since the early 1980. Heydar Aliyev took part in the jubilee ceremony and delivered a comprehensive speech. His speech reflected a high appreciation of the Azerbaijani scientist, analyse of the current state of higher education and identification of the development perspectives marking the display of particular attention paid by the Azerbaijani leader to the advance of higher education.

The development of military education also gained topicality at that time as an issue of extreme importance. Anxious of the absence of Azerbaijani youth in the USSR cosmic flights training center, Heydar Aliyev personally administered the dispatch of Azerbaijani youth to the higher aviation schools. The Jemshid Nakhchivanski Military School founded by the national leader is a bright display of Heydar Aliyev's particular attention and care to the development of national education in all the fields.

At that time, Azerbaijanis were not let close to the military cadre training and USSR military elite, while there were several higher military schools in the Azerbaijani territory, which were of strategic importance at the USSR level. Though located in the territory of Azerbaijan, among the thousands of cadets of these schools there were only five to six Azerbaijanis, most of them being members of the "international" families. Certainly, this tendency could not leave Heydar Aliyev calm. With a direct intervention and care of the distinguished leader, the number of Azerbaijanis in the ranks of the youth enrolled to the higher military schools in Baku started rapidly growing since the 1970s and the process of nationalization was launched. Under the statistics of 1979, 65 percent of the cadets were Azerbaijanis. At that time, Heydar Aliyev took another resolute step towards the national military cadre training. Creation of the Jemshid Nakhchivanski Military Lyceum carried the purpose of popularizing the interest towards the military field.

A BSU professor Yagub Mahmudov remembers the times they wer invited to the traditional conference held at the Central Committee in regard of the

enrolment to the higher education institutions in the late 70s: “After listening to the Minister of Education and a few rectors of the higher schools, Heydar Aliyev invited the head of the All-Troops Commanders School to deliver a speech. And immediately asked him – how many representative of the local population, that is, the Azerbaijanis do we have among the students? Highly disappointed with the answer, that is, Azerbaijanis were weakly involved in the military education, Heydar Aliyev acutely rebuked the head of the All-Troops Commanders School and charged him with precise tasks. It happened so that I also was to take part at the conference held in the Central Committee on the eve of enrolment to the higher schools the next year. Heydar Aliyev again invited the head of the All-Troops Commanders School to the floor. The man again cited different figures. Heydar Aliyev interested in the course of this important activity, in particular, the percentage of the local population. He repeatedly expressed discontent despite of a certain progress. The word of the great politician still stick on my memory: **“It is necessary to send the representatives of local population to the aviation schools. We have to train pilots. One of these days I interested in the staff of the astronauts group. I expressed my discontent of the fact that not a single Azerbaijani was included in the group. I was informed that only the graduates of the aviation schools are enrolled to the astronauts group. I interested in this issue, too. It appeared that not a single person from the local population of Azerbaijan is represented at the USSR aviation schools. Where are you looking then?!”**

Heydar Aliyev personally headed the entire strategic activities aimed at the future development of Azerbaijan. In a word, the great Azerbaijani always thinking about the future of the nation, labored for the Azerbaijan of the XXI century way back at that period outstripping the time. Because of the comprehensive development programs implemented by H. Aliyev in the early 70s-80s of the XX century, Azerbaijan was transformed into a republic of advanced industry, agriculture and culture in the vast USSR environment that started to collapse by that time. This was a vivid outcome of the purposeful, widely thought-out, deeply measured policy targeted at the future and genius far-sight of Heydar Aliyev. Years passed, our national leader evaluated the pleasant yields of his intense labor in this direction like this: “The brightest outcome of Azerbaijan’s development during the Soviet times is that the

economic, scientific-technical and cultural potential created at that period has provided a substantial ground for our republic to operate as a fully independent state”.

Way back at that time our eminent leader already saw the present days when we have joined the gift of independence and prepared the native motherland for its sovereignty. At the times of communist dominion, Heydar Aliyev was conducting a struggle, which nobody else could conduct, against the injustice committed in respect to his native nation and took very far-sighted and bold steps for the sake of Azerbaijan’s future in resond to the pain suffered by his nation in conditions of harsh persecutions by the Kremlin regime.

Having a deep knowledge of the processes ongoing in the world policy and international relations, Heydar Aliyev never missed a chance to acquaint the Azerbaijani education representatives with the progressive education system of advanced foreign countries. With the process of passage from the confrontation between 2 states with different systems to the relaxation commenced since the late 60s, Heydar Aliyev made use of the rapprochement displayed in the USSR-USA bilateral relations and acted towards the recognition of American education system in Azerbaijan and application of its positive sides by the Center’s recommendation. The Bureau meeting of the Azerbaijan CP CC in September 9, 1969 held under his chairmanship adopted the decision on organization of the Education in USA exhibition in Baku. Representatives of the Azerbaijani education displayed great interest in the exhibition passed successfully at the present Khatai Palace from December 26, 1969 till February 9, 1970. Totally, tens of thousands of men visited the exhibition. Arrangement of the exhibition surely played an exceptional role in the Azerbaijani education representatives’ acquaintance with the education system of one of the world’s advanced countries in conditions of the Soviet system.

Heydar Aliyev approached the issues of development of the republican education on a wider plane trying to increase Azerbaijan’s role in the competition between the two states of different systems for gaining respect in the Moslem countries. He managed to convince the party and state leaders that Azerbaijan’s role of a sample for the Moslem world passes through the progress of science, education and culture in the republic. For this purpose,

he paid a big attention to the advance of education, tried for the establishment of Azerbaijani education's international relations and republic's transformation into a major center training experts for foreign countries, including the Eastern countries and achieved these ends. Certainly, this mission intended also the propagation of Azerbaijani science, culture and education along with the general intentions of the Soviet regime. Exactly in the years of Heydar Aliyev's leadership over our country, Azerbaijan became one of the major centers of the Soviet state training experts for foreign countries. Due to his direct efforts, the youth from different countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and even Europe arrived in Azerbaijan to receive higher education. Their coming also led to the increase of responsibility of the youth working at the higher education institutions of Azerbaijan with a bigger attention paid to the quality education. Heydar Aliyev recommended working with the students arriving in Azerbaijan from foreign countries, as well as the propagation of the republic's achievements. The Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau's meeting dated August 12, 1969 adopted a decision on the improvement of work with the foreign students studying at the republic's higher education institutions. Though this decision certainly served to the state's general purposes, it was aimed at the establishment of closer links with Azerbaijan and propagation of the national history, science and culture. The number of foreign students studying at the higher schools of Azerbaijan grew from year to year. For ex., representatives of 52 countries studied among the 14 thousand students of the Azerbaijan Languages University. In 1974, 1621 persons from 55 countries studied at the higher education institutions of Azerbaijan, while in 1975, the figure reached 1647 students from 64 countries.

Such a dynamic growth of the youth arriving was linked with the high quality of science and education in the republic, creation of favorable living and education conditions for foreign students and Azerbaijan's transformation into an advanced republic to be cited as a sample. Azerbaijan managed to leave behind the other republics of USSR in this field. The republic's respect and authority kept on strengthening due to the growth of USSR influence over the developing countries in the person of Azerbaijan.

After finishing their education at the education centers of Azerbaijan, the cadres prepared for the countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and even Europe, differing for the course of their socioeconomic development and

level would return to their homelands to take different positions, some of them becoming later even the heads of states.

The leader of Azerbaijan also achieved the internship experience of Azerbaijani students at universities of foreign countries and education within framework of exchange programs as much as possible. For ex., only in 1979, 122 Azerbaijani students were sent to the Democratic Republic of Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia to receive education. In turn, students from those countries also arrived in Azerbaijan for receiving education. Though these countries were socialist countries, their high level of science, education and culture as European countries was anyway pointed out. Since Azerbaijan could not create direct relations with foreign countries in conditions of the Soviet power, Heydar Aliyev created conditions for the Azerbaijani youth to acquire different specializations at the country's advanced higher schools. He recommended the youth to be aware of the latest achievements of the world science and culture of the population of the city, where they study.

Since the advanced European and world science came to Azerbaijan through Russia, Heydar Aliyev tried to send Azerbaijani youth to the most respectful higher schools in different cities of USSR. This was not in vain. Because, the Soviet education system was regarded as one of the most advanced education systems of the world. Heydar Aliyev also started benefiting from the opportunities of this education system. Yet, despite of their education, many of the Azerbaijani youth, particularly those coming from the villages did not know Russian language thus failing to enrol to the country's advanced higher schools through the general competitions. Entering into the higher schools training experts in specializations, which were new for Azerbaijan, was even harder. Many of these specializations, for ex., information technologies, international law, international relations, aviation and others were not taught in Azerbaijan owing to the lack of cadres and the policy pursued by the center. Therefore, Heydar Aliyev started getting permissions for the non-competitive enrolment of the youth to the country's higher schools in different cities, firstly, Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Minsk and others. Yet, even in 1972–1973, very few Azerbaijanis went to study at those schools. It was a necessity to eliminate this situation immediately. It is worth noting that Heydar Aliyev had a program of activities in this direction

with clear and precise purposes. He saw the access to the advanced world science through the Azerbaijani youth receiving perfect education at the country's respected higher schools in the Soviet system and created all the conditions for them in this field. Heydar Aliyev persistently received permissions of Moscow for the annual growth of number of the youth leaving for non-competitive education at the country's higher schools, achieved the funding of their education from the all-Union budget and paid a particular attention to the improvement of their welfare state. The youth of Azerbaijan not only mastered sciences at the advanced higher schools, but also acquainted with the numerous historic and cultural monuments of the cities they lived in, built relations with the students having arrived from foreign countries to study and successfully represented the republic.

If the number of the youth sent to study at different schools of the country was approximately 400–600 before, later this figure reached 800–900. Already since the mid 70s, 1627 Azerbaijani youth were studying different specializations at the high schools located in 40 cities of the country. In 1977, the figure reached 2500. It should be noted that they received education on 244 types of specializations. The higher schools of Azerbaijan did not train specialists in most of these fields.

Heydar Aliyev's activity did not finish with the above-mentioned successes. Regular meetings were held with the youth studying at different higher schools of the country by his instruction. Heydar Aliyev delivered an extensive speech at the solemn ceremony held with those students every year in Baku. These meetings and his speeches disclose the essence of the policy aimed at education of the Azerbaijani youth at the country's respected higher schools, attention paid to the policy and the personal position. For ex., in his speech sounded at the meeting held in August 1977, Heydar Aliyev stated: **“Make effective use of these years for yourselves. The doors of theatres, museums, preserves and libraries are open to you. You should try to learn, expand your world outlook and increase your awareness as much as possible”**.

In 1975, the number of higher education schools, where Azerbaijani youth were enrolled and studied, increased even further. The very year, in August, at his meeting with the young students, Heydar Aliyev stated: “This year... 670 boys and girls were enrolled to the higher schools of other cities”. Totally,

that year, over 2200 students were studying at the country's 151 higher schools on 244 different specializations, 500 Azerbaijanis graduated from the other higher schools of the country in 1970–1979, the enrolment percentage of Azerbaijani youth to those higher schools in the very years was increased by 10 times, and in 1979, 2800 Azerbaijani boys and girls studied in the countries other cities on 244 different specializations.

Heydar Aliyev attached a primary importance to the education and living conditions of the students and post-graduate students studying in the central cities, particularly in Moscow. The meeting of the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau dated November 2, 1979 adopted a decision by his initiative regarding the meeting of the Bureau members with the students and post-graduate students studying in Moscow. The decision was successfully implemented.

In December the very year, a grandiose meeting of the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau members with the Azerbaijani students and post-graduate students studying in Moscow took place at the M.Gorky Moscow State Arts Theatre's new building. The supreme Minister of Education of the USSR, city governors, rectors and famous professors of all the institutes in Moscow came to this meeting by Heydar Aliyev's invitation. Delivering an extensive speech at the meeting, Heydar Aliyev recommended to students and post-graduate students to acquire deep knowledge of the science, get closely acquainted with the Moscow monuments of history and culture indicating that every year 270–280 students are sent to Moscow to receive higher education. It is worth noting that 3315 Azerbaijanis were studying at that time at 152 higher schools located in 43 cities of USSR.

The measures in this direction kept on in the further years as well. In 1981, 853 students were sent to other higher schools, of which 720 were enrolled as the 1st-year students. In the very year, 3600 Azerbaijani students studied at the country's different higher schools in 244 specializations.

Thousands of Azerbaijani youth received education at different higher schools of the country to come to the motherland as specialists. Learning from many progressive scientists of the world, these youth brought with themselves a new knowledge, new thinking and new breath to Azerbaijan. Their studying in the country's other cities, distant provinces, close acquaintance with their environment, culture, customs and traditions assisted in their all-round development.

The young specialists working in different places of the country represented the republic proficiently. It should be marked that another goal of this policy pursued was spreading the Azerbaijanis throughout the country to form the Azerbaijani diaspora in the USSR. Heydar Aliyev wished the Azerbaijanis to take positions not in the lower or middle, but in the higher category of population regardless of where they live. He believed that Azerbaijani experts are the national treasure of Azerbaijan.

Owing to the direct intense activity of the Azerbaijani leader, the republic transformed into the land of educated people. Later, Heydar Aliyev would say: **“The biggest achievement in Azerbaijan is that we have no uneducated man. One cannot find an uneducated man in any village, or a distant mountain village of our country”**. The growth of the people’s general level of education and culture in Azerbaijan displayed itself vividly in the XX century. All of these were, undoubtedly, historic merits of Heydar Aliyev.

Later Heydar Aliyev marked that irrespective of the ideology, socio-political and economic systems during the 70 years, several generations of Azerbaijani people received education, grew up, reached higher levels and acquired immense science and culture. All of these are the national achievements of our nation and make the intellectual potential of our Azerbaijani republic at present. In his opinion, the existing education system gained vast successes for Azerbaijan. Knowing that a nation’s progress passes through the development of culture and science, he paid particular attention to this activity.

After starting to work constantly in Moscow as the first deputy of the USSR Soviet of Ministers and a member of the Soviet Union CP CC Political Bureau, Heydar Aliyev never weakened his attention to the education of Azerbaijan. He rendered a special care to the Azerbaijani education as the first deputy of the supreme minister governing the field of education. The Azerbaijani youth having received higher education at the country’s advanced schools in the 70s–80s, later started working in the most different spheres of the public life after the restoration of Azerbaijan’s national independence making their own contributions to the process of state-building.

2.2. Renaissance of Science in Azerbaijan

Having become the biggest protector of the national education from the first days of his leadership over the country, Heydar Aliyev never overlooked the Azerbaijani science as well putting forward a precise, substantiated and purposeful conception intending the progress of the field.

Rendering a particular care to the Azerbaijani scientists and science, Heydar Aliyev operated successively and systematically in this area along several directions: he increased the number of scientific research institutes and research workers, strived for recognition of the Azerbaijani science in the country and the world, achieved the rewarding of renowned scientists with different orders, medals and awards of the state, promoted the expansion of researches on the history, language and literature of Azerbaijan, protected the nationally oriented scientists from persecutions and pressures creating for them proper creative activity conditions.

Possessing a profound knowledge of and attaching a deep love, high respect and assessment to the Azerbaijani science, culture and literature, Heydar Aliyev stated in one of his speeches: “The roots of the ancient culture and scientific thinking of Azerbaijani nation go deep to its history. For many centuries the people of Azerbaijan created a rich, multifold and original culture, which reflects the highest accomplishments of the Eastern literature and arts, as well as the philosophy and science of different times. The sciences of medicine, astronomy, mathematics, geography, history, philosophy, literature, music culture and decorative arts, creative arts have developed and beautiful architectural buildings have been erected here since the most ancient times.”

Heydar Aliyev tried to raise the number of scientific research institutions and research workers, and rendered a special care to them aiming at transformation of Azerbaijan into a center of the all-Union science. In this area, his activity was sufficiently successful. If in 1969, 12350 research workers, including the 55 academicians and associate members of the Academy of Sciences, 329 Doctors of Sciences and 300 Candidates of Sciences were operating in the 89 scientific research and project enterprises,

as well as the problem laboratories of the dedicated institutes and higher schools active in Azerbaijan, in 1978, the number of the scientific research, project and dedicated institutions reached 118, research workers – up to 21407 men, academicians and associate members – 100 men, Doctors of Sciences – 853 men and Candidates of Sciences – up to 7594 men.

In 1980, more than 4000 men, including 245 Doctors of Sciences and 1600 Candidates of Sciences were conducting research works at the 34 scientific and science-production establishment within the Academy of Sciences. The Republican Academy of Sciences had 56 full-fledged and 71 associate members. In general, the Azerbaijani science was represented by 123 scientific institutions and chairs of 17 higher schools that year. About 22 thousand scientific collaborators, including over 900 Doctors and over 8 thousand Candidates of Sciences were employed by these scientific establishments.

Azerbaijan became an advanced center of science in the Southern Caucasus due to Heydar Aliyev's efforts leaving the other republics behind. Heydar Aliyev was seriously striving for increasing the special weight of Azerbaijanis among the scientific workers and his efforts were yielding excellent results.

Citing some facts for comparison would bring clearness to the above-mentioned. The number of Azerbaijani research workers constituted 48.6 percent in 1947 and 64.6 percent in 1960, while the same figure changed to 70.9 percent in 1970 and 71.3 percent in 1971. In contrast to this, the number of research workers belonging to the nationalities resettled in Azerbaijan from time to time, both at the period of czarism and Soviet power, was reducing. Certainly, this process did not mean pursuing a policy against them. There were several reasons grounding the situation: interest in science and education was growing among Azerbaijanis, higher salaries were paid at the scientific research institutes, and the population in Azerbaijan was rapidly increasing. In such an environment, rapid internationalization of the country's public life and understanding of their belonging to other nationalities than Azerbaijanis caused the representatives of those nations to leave the republic. For ex., if the percentage of Armenian research workers in Azerbaijan made 6.2 percent in 1970, in 1971 the figure fell to make 6.1 percent. The number of Russian research workers was also reducing. Their special weight totaled to 16.2 percent in 1963 and to 14.5 percent in 1971, while the figure equaled to 14.4 percent in 1972.

It is worth noting that the percentage of Jewish scientific workers remained unchanged at the level of 1970–1971: 4.8 percent. These facts once again prove that the anti-Semitism raging all over the country did not exist in Azerbaijan in any way during the power of Heydar Aliyev. Another fact also causes interest: if in 1968, the number of the Jews having moved abroad from the USSR was only 400 men, in 1873 the figure reached 35 thousand men. The number of the Jews moving to foreign countries in 1979 was 50 thousand. Despite of the severe policy pursued in the country in this matter, there was no display of anti-Semitism in Azerbaijan. The Jews regarded Azerbaijan as their native land.

As was noted above, the number of research workers in Azerbaijan kept on increasing owing to Heydar Aliyev's efforts and the training of scientists enjoyed a primary attention. In 1970-80s, 258 Doctors of Sciences and 2677 Candidates of Sciences were active in Azerbaijan. This surely meant an immense success.

Heydar Aliyev charged the scientists and heads of the scientific institutions with realization of scientific research works in the most modern fields of science. Under his direct patronage, scientific research works were ongoing in Azerbaijan in the most perspective scientific fields. Only in 1979, 55 scientific research works coming out as the results of researches conducted in the republic in different fields of natural and public sciences were listed in the most important achievements of the Soviet science. This was speaking of the big successes of Azerbaijani fundamental science. In 1971–1980, the economic profit gained from application of the researches conducted by scientists of the Academy of Sciences to production totaled to over 570 million manats with more than 1000 authorship certificates for various inventions made by the Academy scientists in those years, which was 5 times as much as the previous 25 years.

Famous not only in the country, but all over the world for oil sciences, Azerbaijan was figuratively called the Academy of Oil. The oil chemistry and processing became the leading field of Azerbaijani science with substantial forces and funds attracted to the field. Oil experts-academicians of Azerbaijan were famous in all countries throughout the world. At discussions of scientific issues in this area, the corresponding decisions would be made usually after the final judgment of Azerbaijani scientists, the regular lectures delivered by Azerbaijani scientists in different scientific centers and universities of the

world were highly assessed and the science of nature study was rapidly advancing in the republic.

In 1978, the Institute of Space Researches for Natural Resources was established in the Academy of Sciences, which was a powerful scientific center operating in those directions, and a short time passing, the researches of the Institute's scientists started to be recognized as an authoritative source in the entire country.

At that time, the oil chemistry processes, admixture chemistry, theoretical concerns of the chemistry technology and institutes engaged in physics and mathematics had become tremendous research centers. Azerbaijani scientists took an active part in the development of oil fields in the Volga region, West Siberia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Ukraine and other republics, and also closely assisted the Democratic Republic of Germany, Romania, Afghanistan, Algeria, Kuba, Iraq and Syria in the exploitation of oil fields. Their inventions received totally 15 patents in the USA, Federative Republic of Germany, Japan, England and Italy.

Considering the development perspectives of the radiotechnics, electronics and electronic industry in the republic, the scientists expanded their activities in the fields of technical physics, applied mathematics, cybernetics and radioelectronics, as well as other modern fields of science. Along with these, the process of reconstruction of the already structured fields of national economy, which were considered as traditional fields of industry, was also ongoing, scientific research works concerning environment enjoyed a specific attention and efforts of the scientists from different fields of science were combined. In 1981 alone, the scientific research and project institutes of Azerbaijan took part in the development of 25 complex programs over the country.

Heydar Aliyev attached a particular importance to celebration of anniversaries of the Academy of Sciences, its institutes and distinguished scientists, as well as creation of their house-museums. In his opinion, such commemorations would further increase the interest in science in the country making the Azerbaijani science and scientists known not only in the republic, but in the country and world.

In regard of this, Heydar Aliyev adopted serious decisions. A chronological tracking of only some events arranged by him concerning the mentioned issue will create a clear picture of his range of activity.

The Azerbaijan CP CC adopted a decision in its meeting dated December 30, 1969 concerning the solemn celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences by Heydar Aliyev's initiative. Scientific conferences and symposia were held in compliance with the decision. Representatives of different scientific centers of the country and foreign countries participated in the anniversary events conducting exchange of opinions regarding the scientific achievements and familiarized with the ancient history and rich cultural heritage of the Azerbaijani nation.

In 1975, the 30th anniversary of the Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences was solemnly celebrated. Heydar Aliyev wrote a letter to the Soviet Union CP CC with a request on awarding the Academy with the Friendship of Nations order and achieved his goal.

The decision adopted by the Azerbaijan CP CC in September 14, 1982 concerning the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences Nizami Literature Institute was a display of evaluation and care to the researches conducted in the field of literature, the literary heritage and science.

In January 1976, home-museum of the distinguished scientist Yusif Mammadaliyev was opened in Ordubad by Heydar Aliyev's proposal and famous scientists and party members delivered speeches at the solemn opening ceremony. The event supported the growing interest in science in Nakhchivan demonstrating the care rendered to the scientific heritage and scientists.

Heydar Aliyev paid a special attention to the mass-circulation editions in Azerbaijan, in particular, the creation of encyclopedia. It is worth noting that the Azerbaijan CP CC and the Azerbaijan SSR Council of Ministers had adopted a joint decision on creation of the Azerbaijan Soviet Encyclopedia way back in 1965. Pursuant to the decision, every part of the 10-part encyclopedia was to have a volume of 70 printing pages. Yet, many faults and mistakes were committed in this field during the time passed. No part of the encyclopedia was ready for publishing, the scientific discussions among scientists transformed into intrigues and an unpleasant atmosphere had occurred. The first part of the encyclopedia worked out by the late 1970 was not released owing to numerous errors and faults. Therefore, Heydar Aliyev wrote the fully confidential letter #252 to the Soviet Union CP CC in May 23, 1974 asking for permission on publishing the first part of encyclopedia in 1974 and the

10th – in 1980, and received the permission of Moscow. The meeting of the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau dated February 10, 1976 adopted decisions regarding the main editorial office and scientific-editorial council of the Azerbaijan Soviet Encyclopedia.

Due to Heydar Aliyev's efforts, the first part of the Azerbaijan Soviet Encyclopedia consisting of 3836 articles-terms was published. Nevertheless, it should be underlined that the first part was published without the article "Azerbaijan" owing to the intrigues among the scientists.

In one of his speeches, Heydar Aliyev criticized the scientists stating the first part of the encyclopedia was published without the article about Azerbaijan because of the absence of a unity among them. He was striving for unity, cooperation and solidarity among the Azerbaijani scientists and mostly achieved this goal. Heydar Aliyev supported also the publishing of the encyclopedia's other parts. In 1980, the fourth part of the ASE was published. The publishing of its rest parts continued in the later years, too. However, the needless arguments among the representatives of different fields of science affected negatively the entire process.

In the years of Heydar Aliyev's power, the scientific researches and publishing of monographies concerning the Azerbaijani history, Azerbaijani language and culture was largely expanded. New publications were written and released. Several publications dedicated to the Azerbaijani history and linguistics received the state awards.

At that time, Baku became the center of Turkish Studies all over the world. In the early 70s, the start of the *Turkologiya* journal, which was of sufficient scientific authority in Baku was a result of huge will and total dedication. Though the Kremlin rejected several times the edition of the *Turkologiya* journal, the imperial authorities retreated before Heydar Aliyev's selflessness failing to close down the edition, which was serving to the unity of the Turkish world. All of these prove that Heydar Aliyev always managed to use the moments suggested by the political environment for the revival of national identity and national mind in a diplomatic manner.

Commencement of such a journal long after the First International Turkology Conference held in Baku in 1926 was aimed at giving a new breath and stimulus to the languishing Turkism. Well aware of that all the participants of the Turkology Conference were assassinated through the 1937 repressions

machine, pro-national men like Bekir Chobanzadeh, Henefi Zeynalli and Ruhulla Akhundov received the acquittal at the voluntarism period, but the center would not give a chance to Azerbaijan in national issues, Heydar Aliyev engraved the sparkles of national revival in the literary samples and chronicles of history using his personal authority at the USSR leadership.

Heydar Aliyev recommended the scientists to investigate elaborately different periods of the Azerbaijani history addressing them with a statement implying our ancient and Middle Ages history, as well as the history in the XVIII, XIX and XX centuries was not recorded duly. Meeting the historians repeatedly, Heydar Aliyev would express his deep alert concerning the field. In his conversations, the leader of Azerbaijan would clearly point out that historians of other republics keep a due record of their history and called them to do the same. Certainly, all of these conversations and recommendations asserted a serious influence leading to the publishing of valuable editions dealing with the Azerbaijani history.

H. Aliyev believed that a nation ought to know its historic roots, remember it and keep with own science and culture; hence, the Azerbaijani leader commended the historians in their correct recording of history, objective studies and proper evaluations.

Paying a due regard to the profound investigation and propagation of the rich history and culture of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev particularly focused on the protection, study and analysis of ancient manuscripts underlining a faithful remark that though individual Azerbaijanis come with comprehensive historic researches, unlike the other nations, Azerbaijani nation did not have systematic historians in the previous centuries. In the opinion of the distinguished leader, since the study of sources and ancient manuscripts is of exceptional substance in the creation of such a historiography and sound application of a nation's history and culture, their protection is a necessity.

It is worth noting that the most valuable historic manuscripts of Azerbaijani nation were destroyed on a mass scale in the 1930s and burnt being regarded as harmful. Until Heydar Aliyev's coming to the power, manuscripts in the republic's Manuscripts Fund were kept in a neglectful way in the cellar of the corresponding building. The valuable manuscripts reflecting the ancient historic past and culture of Azerbaijani nation were purposefully

messed up. There was a grave need for the restoration and protection of these valuable manuscripts.

Since the manuscripts regarding the ancient history and culture of Azerbaijan stored in various archives and libraries of the world were not collected and delivered to the republic, the scientists could not use these priceless sources. Heydar Aliyev achieved the adoption of several important decisions aiming at correction of the situation. In August 1981, the Azerbaijan CP CC discussed the issue On the Measures of Further Improvement of the Activity of Azerbaijan SSR Manuscripts Institution and adopted the related decision. Carrying a vital scientific and political essence, the decision entailed the storage of over 40 thousand rare monuments in the Institution in different languages. With this decision of particular value for the Azerbaijani science, culture and history adopted, the Manuscripts Fund was transformed into the Institute of Manuscripts.

The decision intended the encouraging of a positive environment for storage of the manuscripts, improvement of the Fund's logistical supply, as well as the location and protection of the manuscripts. In accordance with the decision, Heydar Aliyev gave the building, which was constructed way back in the early 1920s by the famous millionaire and benefactor Haji Zeynalabdin Tagiyev and which housed the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR for some period and was later deserted, to the Institute of Manuscripts refusing to the identical requests of different ministries and organizations. Making such a decision, our national leader reposed on the belief that ancient books represent the historic past and cultural wealth of Azerbaijani nation. Adoption of this decision laid the foundation of an important stage towards the investigation of history and culture of Azerbaijan. Following the decision, the books kept in a squalid way in the building's cellar were taken out, restored and stored in a good environment as museum samples.

Heydar Aliyev kept the activity of the Institute of Manuscripts in his permanent focus even after its creation. Due to his attention and care, numerous ancient manuscripts were found and restored with the necessary conditions for their protection being provided. In the forthcoming years, several republican and international scientific conferences, seminars and symposia were held dedicated to the ancient Azerbaijani manuscripts.

Heydar Aliyev took measures aimed at propagation of Azerbaijan as a center of science and culture since ancient times, acquaintance of different foreign countries' scientists with the republic and establishment of relations, and achieved the adoption of appropriate decisions by the CC. By his initiative, the meeting of the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau dated July 14, 1981 issued a decision on the solemn commemoration of the 780th anniversary of the renowned scientist Mahammad Nasiraddin Tusi. The decision enclosed the organization of festivities and scientific sessions in Baku and Moscow, erection of Tusi's monument in Baku and Nakhchivan, issue of the commemorative medals, postage stamps, badges and placards, starting out and publishing monographs and books, shooting films and opening the jubilee exhibitions.

In compliance with the CC decision, solemn anniversary of Nasiraddin Tusi and scientific sessions concerning the issue were held and the books were published. Heydar Aliyev took part in these events personally.

Heydar Aliyev also strived willingly towards transformation of Azerbaijan to the Soviet science's advanced scientific center in the studies concerning the East. The processes taking place in the East, particularly the Iranian revolution and Soviet interference to Afghanistan made the settlement of the issue even more topical. Making use of the emerged circumstances for the benefit of Azerbaijan, the Department of History of the Southern Azerbaijan was opened at the Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies and in 1982, the Department of Azerbaijan was established in the All-Union Society of Orientalists by Heydar Aliyev's initiative. The very year, the 180th anniversary of the distinguished Orientalist Mirza Kazimbey was commemorated.

The head of the republic recommended a deeper investigation and analysis of the Azerbaijani folklore. Speaking about this at the VII convention of writers, Heydar Aliyev said: "The land's folklore, different national arts, etymology, language history, all of these should be studied altogether". He encouraged the research works concerning the above-mentioned issues and created the necessary conditions.

Heydar Aliyev paid a special attention to the Azerbaijani scientists and suggested their names for being rewarded with the highest orders and medals of the state. He organized the jubilees of renowned scientists and improved

their living conditions. The scientists of Azerbaijan were surrounded by his particular attention and care. Owing exactly to his efforts, the eminent scientific figures of the country were awarded with the orders and medals, as well as honorary titles. In regard of this, the meetings of the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau discussed the issues raised by Heydar Aliyev's initiative and corresponding letters were sent to the Soviet Union CP CC.

For ex., in the confidential letter #253 to the Soviet Union CP CC signed by Heydar Aliyev in May 24 pursuant to the decision of the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau dated May 21, 1974 on awarding the distinguished theorist of literature and academician M.A.Dadashzadeh with the Order of the October Revolution on the occasion of his 70th anniversary, Heydar Aliyev described him as a respectable and eminent scientist requesting the award. Heydar Aliyev achieved this goal.

The meeting of the Azerbaijan CP CC Bureau held in January 11, 1977 adopted a decision on sending a letter to the Soviet Union CP CC containing the request of awarding the famous historian and academician A.Sumbatzadeh with the Red Flag of Labor Order. Heydar Aliyev achieved this, too. Another letter was about rewarding the Azerbaijani scientist M.Gashgay. Confidential letters #394 on rewarding the academician A.Husseinov with the Red Flag of Labor Order and #441 on awarding M.Guluzadeh with the same order were sent to the Soviet Union CP CC in September 13 and October 12 of the same year appropriately.

The very year, the 70th anniversary of the renowned geographer and academician Hasan Aliyev, Heydar Aliyev signed the confidential letter #59 in February 8, 1979 on awarding the distinguished theorist of Literature Hamid Arasli with the Red Flag of Labor Order on the occasion of his 75th anniversary and Hamid Arasli received his award. In July 26 of the same year, the confidential letter #327 was sent to the Soviet Union CP CC containing the request of rewarding the renowned philologist and academician M.Shiraliyev with the Lenin Order and this request was also fulfilled. Again, the very year, in August 22, confidential letter #369 was sent to Moscow with a request on rewarding the chemist-scientist I.Orujova with the October Revolution Order and this desire was also met.

During Heydar Aliyev's power, Azerbaijan turned into a place hosting different All-Union and international scientific meetings. Respectable scientific

congresses, scientific conferences and symposia dedicated to regional issues were regularly held in the republic. The Soviet and foreign scientists visiting the country were closely familiarized with the achievements of Azerbaijani science, its history and culture. Owing to the policy pursued by Heydar Aliyev, in the 1970s–80s Azerbaijan was a sample for the peoples of developing countries in the cultural, national and scientific development. Representatives of many nations visited Azerbaijan, studied the country's experience, and authoritative scientific gatherings were arranged in Baku with participation of the scientists, public and political figures of those countries. For ex., the authoritative international scientific conference held in May 1977 in Baku regarding the national independence movement of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America hosted the political and public figures and scientists of over 70 countries. Delivering an extensive and inclusive speech at the scientific conference, Heydar Aliyev expressed his high appreciation of these countries' national independence movement. Organization of such an event in Baku and Heydar Aliyev's speech showed that the Azerbaijani leader, the distinguished statesman enjoying a specific authority not only in the Turkish and Moslem world, but also among the peoples, governmental and public circles of the countries fighting for national independence, is an internationally recognized politician with a deep knowledge of the problems confronted by these peoples. In general, among the Soviet leaders, Heydar Aliyev was considered a political figure with the most perfect knowledge of the Moslem East's problems.

Heydar Aliyev strived willingly to expand the international relations of Azerbaijani scientists. With his direct assistance, Azerbaijani scientists delivered reports at international scientific conferences and symposia, introduced the Azerbaijani science to the world and represented the nation with dignity.

Heydar Aliyev saved the Azerbaijani scientists from pressures of the Soviet system and took them under his own auspices thus creating all the conditions for their valuable researches. Sometimes he himself criticized some of those persecuted, rebuked them under certain circumstances, as if reported to Moscow everything is under control, some time passing appointed those persons to leading positions at higher scientific circles ensuring positive conditions and protecting them from attacks. In the years of Heydar Aliyev's power, scientist was considered one of the most authoritative and respectable

strata in the society. The Azerbaijani scientist was fully provided from the financial aspect. He had almost no constraint in the living standards. The Azerbaijani scientist had favorable living conditions. Throughout the country, professors received salaries as much as the higher-rank party officials. Therefore, the youth displayed a growing interest in science with every passing year. The talented youth came to science with enthusiasm, defended the theses and received scientific degrees. Science was regarded a most respectable field in Azerbaijan. Later, Heydar Aliyev would say: **“The science of Azerbaijan has highly advanced and shown to the whole world how powerful and strong it is”**.

Heydar Aliyev was particularly concerned in raising the quality of Azerbaijani science. Before his coming to the power, a strange flaw had appeared in Azerbaijan. Many people employed in the party, soviet and economy fields longed to get scientific degrees along with their positions ordering the writing of candidate’s and doctorate’s theses abusing their positions and financial opportunities. Working for the state during the whole day from early morning until late at night, these persons defended the theses in several years and gained the diploma of scientists, thus thinking that they may need the scientific degree after leaving the position. As was mentioned already, at that time the men of science had quite high salaries. For ex., in the 1970s, the monthly salary of the director of Scientific Research Institute exceeded those of the CC secretaries and deputy chairmen of the Council of Ministers. Those leaving their positions would gain softish higher positions at scientific institutions thus causing stagnation. Hence, the number of the persons with scientific degrees in Azerbaijan would artificially increase, while the actual science stopped developing. The scientists were not known in the country and the world to the necessary extent. Soon after coming to the power, Heydar Aliyev started a severe struggle against such negative facts. The disgrace was prevented owing to his efforts. Many were punished. Defending these by those, for whom the science was not a regular commitment, was banned.

After leaving for Moscow linked with his appointment, Heydar Aliyev never gave up his care for the science and scientist of Azerbaijan. He would sincerely receive the representatives of the distinguished Azerbaijani scientists, give his recommendations and state the necessity of vigilance in

guarding the nation's interests. For ex., he rendered a particular attention and care to the academician Ziya Bunyadov, who was considered enemy by the Armenian historians, received him and gave his appropriate advices also in the mid 1980s.

Thus, during the big history of Azerbaijani nation, the highest development of the school and enlightenment took place in the 1970s-1980s. Paying a due regard to the national enlightenment, Heydar Aliyev directed his major efforts in the general foundation of the Soviet policy towards the construction of schools and raising the funds allocated from the budget for education. During the years of his authority, Azerbaijan became the square for the schools building. In 1969-82, 849 general education schools, i.e., in the average about 7 schools per year were built and assigned in Azerbaijan. The logistical supply and furnishment of the Azerbaijani schools were improved, while the school libraries and funds largely enriched. A due regard was paid to the pupils' labor activities with the school workshops and various profession fields enlarged.

Heydar Aliyev rendered a particular care to the Azerbaijani teachers rewarding them with different honorary titles and making the most advanced ones known all over the country. The unmatched role of the teachers in relieving the Azerbaijani nation from illiteracy and backwardness grounded the national leader's respect to the teachers. He stated that every educated man has to respect the teacher and highly assess the teacher's huge role in the life of society. Heydar Aliyev never forgot his own high school teachers and always remembered them with respect.

2.3. Azerbaijani education during the independence period

Though these traditions identified by Heydar Aliyev served as a kind of foundation for Azerbaijan to join its independence, unfortunately, the rich intellectual potential, the human capital formed by the national leader Heydar Aliyev way back in the 1970s-80s was not employed duly in the first years of Azerbaijan's independence.

Owing to the careless policy of the temporary powers replacing one another, science and education in Azerbaijan faced a crisis like the other fields

important for the country's life, a period of grave decline commenced in this field coinciding with the emergence of dangerous trends, brain-drain in Azerbaijan increased, those serving to science and education became the country's most unrespectable social category hardly making both ends meet and languishing before the small business' growing authority. Thus, the Azerbaijani science and education became a field of unfortunate experiments.

In his closing speech at the State Committee for Education Reforms meeting in March 1999, Heydar Aliyev characterized that period as follows": **"...The education system is a kind of system, which may have no revolutionary changes. In general, the changes taking place in all fields of our life are of an evolutionary character. One should never be allowed to destroy in one day the things, which had been created for decades, and then to establish a new law, of which one has no idea himself"**.

In fact, the very existence of Azerbaijan as a state was under question in those years. If our national leader's powerful hands did not interfere in the processes ongoing at that time, today, definitely, the existence of an independent Azerbaijani state of a unitary system among the South Caucasian countries would seem quite unconfident. After the national leader's return to the republican supreme power in June 1993 by the people's persistent demands, our national state was saved from the danger of destruction in the true sense of the word and started out the way of development. The state was rescued from the grave political crisis and the danger of civic war it had plunged into, the rebels were suppressed and Azerbaijan's independence and integrity were provided. Getting seriously involved in the republic's fateful concerns, our eminent leader Heydar Aliyev directed his attention towards the country's political and economic advance from the very first day. Heydar Aliyev had to struggle in many fronts under such circumstances. Referring to the abundant scientific-intellectual potential he had formed in the republic way back in the 70s-80s as a most essential constituent of the ongoing state-building process, he put forward his conception of perfect education and focused on the problems of this field strategic from the standpoint of national progress. The renowned statesman kept current the integration of Azerbaijani education to the world education system with maintenance of national grounds as a primary mission and

carried out progressive reforms in the field of science and education in due succession. The Article 42 of the Azerbaijan Republic Constitution worked out under Heydar Aliyev's guidance and adopted in November 12, 1995 through the national referendum established every citizen's right to free obligatory education. Simultaneously, necessary environment was ensured for the advance of concurrent private sector in order to provide the progress of national education on alternative grounds and achieve the competition for a higher level education.

In 1996, the republican government adopted a decision On the Measures for Improvement of Vocational Education in the Azerbaijan Republic on Heydar Aliyev's instructions; vocational schools and lyceums were established. **Success of every progressive reform, undoubtedly, depends directly on the extent to which it correlates with the public mind and on its embracement by the society. Reposing on this reality, a grand strategist, the national leader Heydar Aliyev defended the progressive course of reforms in the national education system from the first day of his activity and achieved the discussions to commence around the issue.**

The Decree On the Creation of State Commission for Education Reforms in the Azerbaijan Republic signed by our national leader in March 30, 1998, as well as the Azerbaijan Republic Program of Education Reforms approved by him in June 15, 1999 also served to ensuring exactly the gradual, stage-by-stage implementation of the education reforms and conformation of the Azerbaijani education standards with the circumstances of new period. The Decree on the State Commission for Education Reforms in the Azerbaijan Republic is focused primarily on the implementation of international standards oriented reforms in the education system of independent Azerbaijan, development of education and reinforcement of its logistical supply, as well as ensuring of its integration to the European education space. As to the Azerbaijan Republic Program of Education Reforms, its essence covered the progressive and stage-by-stage implementation of education reforms, maintenance of the historically formed rich and innovative ideas and experience, as well as application of the world education system principles correlating with the national features of Azerbaijan. As a result of implementation of the Reforms Program, the content of education

in Azerbaijan was updated, new curricula and textbooks were worked out and serious work was done for the development of standards for individual fields of education and subjects.

Another novelty in the field of higher education was granting of the financial independence to the country's 4 leading higher education schools – the Baku State University, the Azerbaijan State Oil Academy, the Azerbaijan Medical University and the Azerbaijan Agriculture Academy, as well as entitlement of the University status to several higher schools by the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic On the Improvement of Education System in the Azerbaijan Republic dated June 13, 2000.

The reforms carried out by the distinguished statesman Heydar Aliyev contributed immensely to the development of most higher schools in Azerbaijan and expansion of international relations in the education field. Successive growth of the budget allocations for the development of education as a display of the national leader's attention and care to the field provided for raising ninefold the salaries of education field representatives within 1993-2001.

The Decree On the Improvement of Education System in the Azerbaijan Republic issued by the great leader Heydar Aliyev in June 13, 2003 laid grounds for the substantial improvement of the education system, organization of management on modern principles, its conformation with the international standards and integration to the global education system. The adoption of the Decree led to optimization of the network of education institutions, entitlement of several other universities with the autonomy status and creation of the Azerbaijan Teachers' Institute and its 12 affiliates aiming at raising the quality of teacher training in our country. At the same time, new education institutions – the Maritime Academy, Academy of National Safety, Music Academy, Academy of the Government Management under the President, National Music Conservatory and Aviation Institute were created.

Another factor directly influencing the general quality of education is strengthening of the logistical supply at comprehensive schools. The Presidential Decree dated October 4, 2002 On the Reinforcement of Logistical Supply of the Azerbaijan Republic General Education Schools has served specifically to expansion of the network of general education schools, which are an essential factor in the development of national education system, and

strengthening of their logistical supply. The Program on Overhaul of New General Education Schools in the Azerbaijan Republic and Their Supply with Modern Education Equipment (2003–2007) worked out by the Education Ministry in accordance with the Decree was approved by the national leader's Decree dated February 17, 2004. The approved program entailed the construction of 149 schools in the republic with 44698 pupil coverage within 2003–2007, as well as construction of 212 additional classrooms in 179 schools and overhaul of 45 schools, all of which were successfully realized.

Since June 1993, the decline and dangerous and destructive trends in the science as well as all the other fields were prevented. Favorable political, economic and legal environment was created for the advance of national science. Heydar Aliyev's strategy of national independence and national state building substantiated the idea that the main and smooth line of the eternity of state's independence and democratic development of civic society passes necessarily through the national science and national education.

For its salvation, the Azerbaijani science is thankful exactly to the great leader Heydar Aliyev. Choosing the Academy for the first meeting with the society representatives after his return to power at the people's insistence and meeting first the Azerbaijani scientists, this step of Heydar Aliyev was undoubtedly an expression of the particular value he attached to the science, intellect and people, who are carriers of the intellectual potential. Thus, the eminent leader delivered to the public mind that the foundation of the independent state he started to build being a distinguished statesman following systematically the statehood traditions rest upon the scientific grounds and intellectual potential. This, on the one hand, was the confirmation of the huge respect Heydar Aliyev cherished for the science and intellect of Azerbaijan, and on the other hand, a vivid display of the endless belief and supreme trust of the Azerbaijani intelligentsia to the Heydar Aliyev personality.

Our national leader received the biggest support namely from the Azerbaijani intelligentsia during the implementation of measures and process of reforms aiming at rescuing Azerbaijan from the tragedies, pulling it out from the grave social-economic-political-moral crisis and establishment of

socio-political stability in the country. Heydar Aliyev protected the Azerbaijani science, education and culture from the danger of disruption just like all the fields of society and provided a rapid growth in them. The steps taken towards the organization of social defense of the men of science, culture, literature and art, as well as the growth of allocations for these fields grounding from the national budget expansions laid the foundation of a new renaissance period.

After Heydar Aliyev's return to the power, Azerbaijani science drew itself up from the deprivations of recent years, stepped back from the abyss, set its affairs in order and stepped into the path of revival. Our talented scientists having left the motherland and knocking about the world to make their living started gradually coming back. New directions were identified in the Academy of Sciences' activity and in essence, the third stage of development of the Academy of Sciences commenced last century following the great leader's historic meeting with a group of leading scientists in the Academy in January 31, 1997. In his speech at the meeting, Heydar Aliyev once again underlined the importance of deeper investigation and interpretation on higher scientific grounds of the centuries-long Azerbaijani history for the state. Mentioning the substantial problems confronted by the Azerbaijani science, he substantiated their topicality and recommended the scientists to engage in the strategic issues bearing bigger importance for the Azerbaijani state and people, thus putting forward the main provisions of the science development strategy in Azerbaijan. Stressing the particular essence of humanitarian sciences for the wide public, people and nation, the great leader came with the urgency of recording the history of literature and culture, and stressed the special importance of a deeper investigation of the centuries-aged Azerbaijani history and its interpretation grounded on advanced scientific principles for the state: "Certainly, physics, mathematics, biology, chemics and other subjects must all develop in the independent Azerbaijan. Yet, each one of them has own characteristic framework. However, everybody needs to know history from childhood. We also need the history of our culture, literature and science".

All of these recommendations were accompanied by the decrees and enactments encouraging the development of Azerbaijani science and Heydar Aliyev adopted many important decisions regarding the progress of science

in our country, maintenance of scientific-technical potential, training of and caring for the highly qualified cadres in the science and education field, as well as raising the authority of the men of science in the society. The Academy of Sciences received the status of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences by the Decree of the Azerbaijan Republic President dated 15 May 2001, thus confirming once again the achievements in the fundamental science development made by the Academy, its role in the cultural and moral formation of the Azerbaijani nation and that the academic science is the main provider of a country's development.

The salaries of the AN Academy of Sciences and of all the Academy employees raised by several times by the decrees dated March 30, 2001 and July 1, 2002. In August 12, 2002 a historic decree was signed on the establishment of AN Academy of Sciences Nakhchivan Bureau and a conference dedicated to the creation of this department was held at the meeting hall of the Nakhchivan Supreme Assembly under the great leader's chairmanship.

The national leader's decree dated January 4, 2003 concerning the status and Charter of the National Academy of Sciences, as well as improvement of the NAS President is also of a particular importance in the Azerbaijani science. This step of the eminent leader provided extensive opportunities for implementation of substantial reforms in the system of the National Academy of Sciences, upgrading and conformation with international standards of the technical supply, acquisition of the most progressive experiences of the world countries in the field of science, raising the quality index of activities at scientific research institutes and centers, as well as directing the scientific community's attention towards the problems that are of particular topicality for the public life.

Several measures have recently been taken by the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences Presidium covering the implementation of reforms at the Academy, improvement of its managerial and organizational system, specification of the scientific research direction, upgrade of the cadres training, increasing the responsibility of research workers and effectiveness of the work of scientific and scientific service institutions in order to fulfill the tasks charged by Heydar Aliyev at that time. The Conception of Strategic Development of Science and Reforms at the Azerbaijan National Academy

of Sciences has been worked out, approved at the Academy's general meeting and gradually implemented.

In the boundless creative activity of Heydar Aliyev, the issues of linguistics, firstly the native language, as well as the vital socio-linguistic issues, including language and the state, language and culture, language and nation, language and history, language and literature and language building also enjoyed a particular place. Like all the great political figures, Heydar Aliyev also paid a special attention to improvement of the economy and financial welfare of own nation and country along with its general cultural progress and raising the country, where he lives and the nation, to which he belongs, to the level of the world's most advanced countries and nations. The distinguished statesman Heydar Aliyev's immense care, devotion and deep love for the native language derived not only from his senses of true citizenship, love to and higher pride for his own native language. This sourced also from his ability and gift of knowing perfectly his native language, deeply conceiving the language's internal secrets and beauties, as well as applying them proficiently. Paying a due regard to establishment and development of Azerbaijani language as the national language, the national leader Heydar Aliyev signed a decree On the Improvement of Activities Aiming At Application of the National Language in June 18, 2001. The Decree indicates precise implementation periods for the tasks relating to the historic path of development of the Azerbaijani language, developmental stages of our literary language, as well as application of our language, which is the most important means of communication in the independent Azerbaijan Republic.

At the mentioned period, the ANAS Presidium made a decision regarding the Decree's implementation. The decision underlines the Decree's exceptional value in the development of our national language and covers several measures targeting at the application of national language and Latin script at the Academy. Most of these measures have already been carried out. The Presidium's meeting dated August 22, 2001 discussed comprehensively Heydar Aliyev's Decree On Establishment of the Azerbaijani Alphabet and the Day of Azerbaijani Language, as well as his Decree dated August 13, 2001. The Presidium made a decision concerning the enforcement of the plan of measures deriving from the head of country's decree and statement at the

Academy's scientific institutions and organizations, and an appeal to the President was adopted.

The national leader's return also marked the growth of social status of the men of science and teachers, who dedicate all their lives to the enlightening of younger generation. The public authority of the scientist and/or teacher title, which has been historically considered the most honorable public status of the society, was again restored.

The main subject of education and most active stratum of society, the Azerbaijani youth was also salvaged from numerous problems with the return of the great leader. Nobody has forgotten the disorderly and scattered crowd, into which the Azerbaijani youth was transformed owing to the known events of 1988-1993. The forces dragging Azerbaijan towards the crises for the sake of own ambitions firstly used our youth as a means for execution of their intentions and spoiled the country's future.

In 1991–1993, numerous youth organizations appeared in Azerbaijan under different names. The tendencies of politicization and populism displayed in majority of these organizations, which emerged in conditions of the then anarchy in the country. Unfortunately, most of these organizations fell under influence of the political parties and institutions of different trends active at that time. However, such cases were ceased after the meeting of the savior of Azerbaijani nation, Heydar Aliyev with the youth at the National Assembly at the period right after his return. Under such circumstances, protection of Azerbaijan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the successful implementation of legal and democratic state building in the country suggested the necessity of mobilizing the youth not on the grounds of different political parties' and organizations' interests, but the interests of a national state and working out the common youth policy. This policy is being continued with a particular success also today.

Our national leader became the biggest supporter of Azerbaijani sport. Owing to the appropriate purposeful policy in this field, the sportsmen of Azerbaijan managed bright victories at international competitions.

In his speeches, the eminent leader drew the attention to the topicality of perfect education for the Azerbaijani youth: "... Our youth must receive education. Because, but for the higher education, our youth will not have the

desired future”. Heydar Aliyev also considered the issue of moral mentoring an essential priority standing before the Azerbaijani youth: “... One of the major issues concerning our youth is the moral mentoring. You know, the present financial difficulties, financial needs certainly lead to the emergence of different negative cases in the society. Nevertheless, our youth and our citizens should know that the temporary difficulties of this period have to be stood, the moral mentoring has to be permanently present and our youth has to be mentored with higher morality spirit. The global values, as well as the national-moral values of the Azerbaijani nation ought to be assumed by every single young man. If there is no morality, there can be nothing good. Even if one has huge wealth, countless money, infinite riches, there can be nothing good if there is no morality. Higher morality has been present at all stages and in the past centuries, which mark the essence of our national history. The thing which today makes the personalities we know from our past history famous all over the world and raises them to the level of sample and honor for us is their higher morality and higher objectives. Therefore, today we need the moral mentoring maybe much more than in the previous years. Our youth should be brought up in the national spirit and on the grounds of our national-moral values. Our youth has to know perfectly our history, our past, our language and our national values. The youth lacking a good knowledge of our national values, national traditions and history can not be patriotic, either.”

The national leader ensured all kinds of opportunities for the youth to receive education abroad in order to see them literate, educated and intelligent. Heydar Aliyev’s call for supporting the construction, repair and supply of the schools at the XI Convention of Azerbaijani teachers caused a huge echo and revival in the society. Exactly after the appeal, foreign organizations and embassies in the country also started promoting the schools construction. The local entrepreneurs and rich Azerbaijanis living abroad also joined this appeal of Heydar Aliyev. New schools were built in our country, the existing schools were repaired and logistical supply of the higher education institutions was improved. Owing to the care rendered by the national leader, a period of strong development tendencies, innovation and novelties commenced in the education system. The budget allocations for the education sector grew from year to year.

Azerbaijani pupils received the greatest humanism and care also from the national leader Heydar Aliyev. A special decree was signed by his instruction concerning the stage-by-stage implementation of supplying the pupils of general education schools, which cover 20 percent of the country's population, with textbooks from the state budget. Besides, the State Program of Poverty Reduction and Economic development approved by the special decree issued by Heydar Aliyev intends a gradual passage to the free supply of also the textbooks for the X–XI classes of the general education schools since 2003, which became a reality since 2005.

The students gathering the highest points from the higher school entrance tests every year also enjoyed the national leader Heydar Aliyev's particular attention. He instituted special Presidential scholarships for those students, as well as honorary scholarships and the Golden Book for the gifted youth.

The living conditions of and social care for Azerbaijani teachers were also among the issues the national leader kept in his permanent focus of attention. He always said teachers are the carriers of a higher and holy profession and called the society to be constantly respectful towards them. At the same time, he called the Azerbaijani teacher to be faithful to their holy profession and protect its nobility. It is a result of the national leader's particular attention and care to the education that today the number of patriotic youth in our country with modern outlooks and higher education has largely increased. Certainly, these youth represent the future of the stable and powerful Azerbaijan, the masterpiece of Heydar Aliyev. Heydar Aliyev expressed his deep belief in our youth from the standpoint of the future of independent Azerbaijani state like this: **"... I am sure that young generations capable of maintaining the future of Azerbaijan are being brought up. Therefore, we – representatives of the older generation are confident that you, dear youth, will conceive how difficult it was to create the independent Azerbaijan Republic and protect its future. I am sure of this."**

At the forums of Azerbaijani youth, the national leader called the youth to a deeper investigation of the country's successes and problems: **"We assess the successes we have achieved, and are well aware of the problems still unsolved. The youth should know these – both the achievements, and the**

unsolved problems. The youth should know everything. We are now living in an independent state in conditions of pluralism and development of democracy implementing the legal, democratic and secular state building. Therefore, every citizen of Azerbaijan has to know the processes ongoing in the country's life and they have to take an active part in these processes. The tasks confronted by the youth include primarily taking one's position in the society, being enlightened, expanding their education and being useful for the society”.

The youth policy currently pursued in our country covers a system of measures implemented by the state with the purpose of providing the comprehensive development of the youth and their active participation in the life of society. This policy covers a quite broad spectrum – the issues linked with education, mentoring, health, intellectual and moral development of the youth, organization of their spare time and active participation in all fields of life.

CHAPTER III

***FROM THE ECONOMIC
POTENTIAL
TO THE HUMAN CAPITAL***

Humeyir Ahmadov

I am absolutely sure that it is impossible to build a truly developed country if it have not got a high level education in it, and if young generation do not adapt to the advanced technologies. So education is our priority.

Ilham ALIYEV

AZERBAIJANI EDUCATION AT THE NEW DEVELOPMENT STAGE

The first decade of the XX century represents a particular subject of interest as a kind of bench-mark for summing up the forecasts of scientists, analysts and politologists, identifying the new trends and demands of the globalizing world, as well as amendments to the near and perspective development programs.

In this sense, the years of the third millennium left behind have been remarkable for the grandiose changes taking place in all fields of life in Azerbaijan to obtain wider scale. Life itself has confirmed convincingly how perspective and proper is the Azerbaijani development strategy worked out by the national leader Heydar Aliyev.

Since the 15th of October 2003, when the most decent successor of our eminent leader's moral-political heritage, the President of the Azerbaijan Republic Mr. Ilham Aliyev started his activity as the head of our independent state with absolute trust of the nation, he has identified the focus areas of the republic's socioeconomic, political, cultural and humanitarian development and taken several actions for timely implementation of the tasks pending in these areas.

Stepping into the XXI century as a rapidly advancing state, our republic has seen these years as the period of true progress and growth.

The successful steps made by the President Ilham Aliyev towards the reinforcement of state building, the domestic economy's entry into a new quality stage, employment of the Caspian hydrocarbon reserves, close completion of the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan oil pipeline construction, participation in other global and regional projects, as well as pursuance of the balanced cooperation policy with the West and the East advances the Azerbaijani state from year to year and expands the range of opportunities for solving the country's fateful concerns.

The head of our state has a deeply substantiated position regarding both the short- and long-term political directions, which is highly assessed by the world's most authoritative political leaders. They consider the Azerbaijani President as their equal partner, a reformer belonging to the new times and a leader effectively integrating into the international community, and value the further development of cooperation with him as a priority course of their countries' policy.

From the first days of leadership over the state, the Azerbaijani President became also the biggest benefactor of our national culture and national-moral values.

His decrees entailing the publishing of world classicists' plays in the Latin script Azerbaijani alphabet, as well as development of the National Encyclopedia, his attention and care for the figures of culture and art validate this once again. These steps have served to the progress of Azerbaijani science and culture promoting to the interest in these fields and intensifying the society's concern for the important areas like this.

3.1. Modern education strategy

A significant portion of our achievements attained under the President Ilham Aliyev's leadership also falls into the share of Azerbaijani education. With his very first steps the Azerbaijani President has proved he has a comprehensive understanding of the existing problems of education system and is striving for their quick elimination. From this aspect, the Decree signed by the President Ilham Aliyev on establishment of the Day of Knowledge in our country and work regime regulation at the education institutions is a particularly remarkable fact. The Decree is of exceptional value from the standpoint of conformation of Azerbaijani education system with the European standards. At the same time, the Decree suggests several measures for building an effective activities system that would serve to improving the quality of education in the country's education establishments.

The State Program of Socioeconomic Development of the Regions of Azerbaijan Republic (2004–2008) signed by Mr. Ilham Aliyev in February 11, 2004 is both of an exclusive importance for realization of the plans set

forth and represents a historic document containing multi-branch actions leading to the development of national education as well.

Further promotion of the education, public health, culture, sport and physical training at regions, drafting and implementation of the program entailing the furnishing of general education schools with computer technology for a 10-year period, free supply of textbooks for the high school pupils, creation of regional schools for children with limited health, boarding schools and technical high schools and organization of dedicated requalification courses for supplying these institutions with dedicated pedagogical cadres, arrangement of olympiads and panel games among the high school pupils regarding the entrepreneurship activities, as well as the round tables and conferences discussing the employment problems and sociological research works linked with the youth unemployment problems are elements of this programs.

Assistance to the talented youth in receiving education in the developed countries and industrial internship experiences on modern professions and specialties, creation of new workplaces for the youth in the borderline and mountainous regions, agitation of their involvement in proprietary activities, construction of new buildings for higher and high vocational, technical vocational, as well as city and village general education schools throughout the country's regions, repair of the existing buildings, improvement of the education institutions' technical supply are also remarkable among the program's provisions.

Today the process of large-scale reforms in the education system of independent Azerbaijan has already assumed an irreversible character. Owing to the President Ilham Aliyev's attention and care to the education system, the development programs supposed to ensure the bright future of the national education system have been approved with their implementation commenced and substantial steps have been taken towards the continuous development of the Azerbaijani education.

Upgrade of the education content, preparation of new programs, textbooks and guidance materials, improvement of the education administration, reinforcement of the education institutions' logistical and educational supply, introduction of modern Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) to education, advancing the education quality through

expansion of international relations and other such priority areas represent the most preferable of these actions.

Mr. Ilham Aliyev always underlines in his speeches that successes of the new oil strategy and socioeconomic reforms implemented in the country must serve to formation of the rich intellectual resources and formation of the human capital, which are of huge necessity for the continuous and balanced development. **“Reviewing the developed countries’ experience we see that the main reason of their success is not oil and gas, but knowledge, education and modernity. We have to have the latter, and, of course, we have the natural resources. A synthesis of these factors will transform Azerbaijan into a very advanced and modern country”** – states the head of the state having the formation of a durable and stably developing economic system in the essence of the socioeconomic development strategy he has identified. This policy intends the creation of fundamental grounds providing for the maintenance of the country’s stable and dynamic economic growth tempos accompanied by reduction of the oil dependence. Oil is an exhaustive and unrestorable natural resource – and the President Ilham Aliyev considers it a necessity to ensure a steady national advance through directing the grand funds gained from export of this unmatched natural wealth firstly to the development of human factor with application of the latest achievements of scientific-technical progress. The President is right in his statement that oil is not an objective for Azerbaijan, but a means for ensuring a continuous economic progress. The world practice also has a negative precedence named the Dutch Syndrome, which suggests building the economy exclusively on the oil resources and relies on the oil revenues, which results in paralyzation of the economic system. Exactly because of this, the head of the country does not consider it expedient to achieve economic development through the oil factor only emphasizing the higher benefits of focusing on the non-oil sector for the sake of a balanced and continuous development: *“We have to pursue our policy in such a course that suggests the ostensible absence of oil in Azerbaijan. The available structures in all the fields of economy and firstly, in the non-oil sector, should be developed. We can turn Azerbaijan into a comprehensively developed state only in this way”*.

The purposeful strategy carried on by the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev having a clear goal of directing a big share of oil revenues to the

human capital has fully approved itself in the experience of many developed countries. Today, referring to the sample of several Far East states having no rich natural resources, specifically, Japan, one can say with full confidence that science and education, highly qualified cadre potential is the major provider of every state's steady socioeconomic and cultural-intellectual advance. Intellectual potential surpasses today even the rich natural resources for its significance and dividends. Withstanding the competition in the modern world requires first of all the reliance upon education, abundant knowledge and information technologies.

In fact, the historic experience shows that abundance of the natural resources in some cases even brings numerous unwished problems to the nations and states instead of the continuous development. Even now, many samples can be cited of some oil-rich countries living in tension and unstable conditions, and even losing their right of ownership over own resources. The adverse consequences of the inexperienced and unfitting policy pursued in the oil diplomacy in the first years of Azerbaijan's national independence once again confirm the validity of such conclusion.

Having returned to the political power through the nation's persistent demands only in 1993, our national leader Heydar Aliyev put forward the new oil strategy resting upon the national interests of Azerbaijan and ensured its successful implementation. The great strategist, he came with the necessity of developing the country's rich hydrocarbon reserves jointly with the Western companies in compliance with the national interests as the first condition of achieving the stable economic advance and carried out an active diplomacy in this context.

The distinguished leader Heydar Aliyev considered the direction of oil revenues to other important areas of economy, opening of new workplaces through the creation of new production facilities in the non-oil sector, in short, strengthening the population's social defense actions as a priority mission of his economic policy. A proper and efficient management of the revenues earned from the country's exceptional national wealth – oil and protection of the transparency principle in production were among the issues enjoying constant particular attention of our national leader Heydar Aliyev. In his speeches, the great leader always stated that oil belongs not only to the present, but also to the future generations. This abundant natural resource

should be used with absolute efficacy and cost effectiveness to serve to interests of every single citizen, the economy's ultimate dependence on the oil factor should be prevented and the revenues gained have to serve to reinforcement of the scientific-intellectual resources and formation of the human capital.

The national leader Heydar Aliyev's Decree dated December 29, 1999 On Creation of the Azerbaijan Republic State Oil Fund also contributed to realization of these supreme objectives. The Fund represents a mechanism for accumulation and effective management of the revenues gained from implementation of the oil agreements. Creation of such an entity derives from the desire to prevent the possible cases that may cause squandering and abuses in the usage of revenues earned from the development of the national oil and gas reserves, as well as to ensure the absolute transparency. The primary goal of the Fund's activity is an appropriate employment of the oil and gas production revenues in a manner to meet the interests of present and future generations. At present, funds amounting to over 2 billion US dollars have accumulated at the State Oil Fund and are used for implementation of the socioeconomic projects, which are of exceptional importance for the country. The Fund makes regular reports before the society and its activity is checked by the local and foreign auditors.

Issues of particular importance, such as the development of a long-term strategy for management of the oil and gas industry revenues and realization of actions aiming at ensuring the targeted usage of the funds allocated from the State Oil Fund for maintaining its transparency also find a profound reflection in the Decree. Importance of the **Long-Term Strategy for Employment of Oil & Gas Revenues** approved by the Decree of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev dated September 27, 2004 should be particularly pointed out as a display of the state's sensitive respond to the effective expenditure of revenues accumulated at the Oil Fund. The strategy intends directing the funds to the non-oil sector, development of regions and small and medium entrepreneurship, scale advance of infrastructure areas, implementation of the measures aiming at poverty reduction, formation of the "human capital", strengthening the country's defense abilities and other areas of this kind. Signature of this strategy has once again confirmed that the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev takes the issues linked with the

management and effective employment of oil revenues, as well as maintenance of transparency quite seriously. The fact that our republic has joined the Great Britain Premiere Tony Blair's initiative of transparency in production industries is also a confirmation of this. **“The State Oil Fund is a very transparent entity and its activity is supported by the international finance institutions. International audit is conducted on a regular basis and press is provided with timely information concerning the Oil Fund's incomes and expenditures. Transparency will be a major reason of our success. You know that Azerbaijan has joined the International Transparency Initiative. It is more than a year that we have been seriously engaged in this issue and support the Great Britain Premiere's initiative. I can say that Azerbaijan is maybe the only country in the region that takes quite an active part in this initiative. This will enable us to make the oil revenues work efficiently in the future and every citizen of Azerbaijan feel this in his daily life... The oil revenues are already reflected in our people's daily lives. In the future, certainly, as our revenues will grow, our people will have a better life”**, says the President Ilham Aliyev and identifies the direction of oil revenues to other areas of economy and firstly, to the non-oil sector's development and formation of the human capital as priority missions of the government.

In the modern globalization century, when technogenic processes have assumed a wider scale, scientific and education achievements represent a vital criterion speaking of the states' general level of development and potential and providing the socioeconomic and cultural-intellectual growth.

These achievements of the states having reached their higher developmental levels from the aspect of economic progress, democratization and reliable protection of human rights represent an undeniable truth attained exactly through the particular attention and care to science and education. Practice shows that the states, which regard the scientific development a vital guarantee of the state building process through resting the economic development strategy upon scientific grounds and constantly referring to progressive traditions achieve national progress and take a decent position in the global arena.

Today, the social factor indicators combine the human capital, salaries, social inequality and human development index. Since the development of

society is directly linked with the human activity and productivity of his labor, the investments in human factor – the human capital is of special importance. Human capital forms through grounding on the education, science, public health, culture, art and information services. Covering complex areas, the human capital has extensive opportunities to influence the economic, social and political-legal areas.

The factors cited define a man's position in the society and characterize his living standards. From this aspect, recently international institutions measure the human capital in many countries with those parameters and calculate the human capital along with the production and natural resources within the national wealth.

Practice shows that it is exactly the education system, which bears the main burden in formation of the human potential. This concerns not only the higher education system, but all kinds of education – primary high, general high, vocational and higher education.

Being an essential factor of raising the population's living standards and human development index, education renders a full-scale influence over acceleration of the country's socioeconomic advance. This factor puts forward the necessity of paying a special attention to improving the level of education in the present market economy conditions. It is known from the experience of developed countries that education is an importation tool assisting in exposing one's talent and intellect and represents the core of society's development. In this sense, it is a necessity to bring the Azerbaijani education system up to the level of world standards in the present market economy environment. Paying attention to the world experience, one can see that education is a field of creative activity having an important position not only in achieving the country's socioeconomic and social-cultural development, but also in ensuring of its safety and stability, as well as identification and forecasting of society's future development perspectives.

In the recent years, extensive opportunities have emerged for our republic's access to international world linked with acceleration of the socioeconomic development process. Yet, realization of these opportunities depends first of all on the level of development of a country's science and education, application of new techniques and technologies, as well as acquisition of new scientific knowledge and professions. Only in this course

Azerbaijan can achieve integration to the civil world and increase its world authority.

In accordance with the tasks related to education put forward by the President of Azerbaijan Republic, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the Ministry of Education has continued to implement the development programs grounding on strategic analyses that are linked with the most serious problems of education, thus raising the number of available programs on different fields of the education sphere up to 15. many serious achievements have been made in individual education stages and perspective directions of development have been identified owing to the development programs and other related activities carried out.

The Azerbaijani education development strategy is a kind of corner-stone for the next education stages and starts with the activities targeted at a proper adjustment of the pre-school education. The Azerbaijan Republic has adopted the Development Program on improvement of the pre-school education, which is intended to cover 2006–2010.

Many promising successes were achieved in the education field even before the mentioned program's full implementation. Application of the field-related modern training technologies has gained a wider scale, the Step-by-Step technology has been applied in regions and individual enterprises and training centers for teachers have been created. Activity of 33 Children's Development Centers for internally displaced children has been organized, effective cooperation relations have been established with UNICEF, UNESCO, Worldwide Food Organization, ACI and other related international organizations and the existing relations have been developed further. Commencement of private sector's engagement in the pre-school education field and its high-speed self-confirmation also belong to the progressive novelties.

According to the agreement signed between the Azerbaijani government and the Asian Development Bank, a credit project titled the Children Development at an Early Age has been drafted and submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers.

In March 1, 2006 the Azerbaijani government and the Asian Development Bank have signed a memorandum on the Children Development at an Early Age project.

Grand perspectives are expected in the pre-school education field as a consequence of the actions carried out. Development of a new curriculum meeting the modern requirements as a conclusion of the analyses conducted by international and local experts, improvement of the cadres training and qualification system, growth of the with pre-school education coverage, expansion of the institutions' logistical and educational supply, their provision with equipment and training materials, creation of personality-oriented training environment at educational institutions, upgrade of the funding mechanism, as well as establishment of of the community-based (alternative) pre-school education entitites rank among these perspectives.

It is known that at every educational institution and generally, in the republic's education system, exactly the education quality indicator is accepted as the objective criterion of the efficiency and effectiveness of the process. One of the major factors influencing directly the quality parameters in the general education is the schools' cadre supply and professional level of the teacher corpse. Due to this very factor, the Education Reforms Program and the strategy of activities intended as part of the II Credit Agreement, both of which are regarded as the main guiding documents of the education reforms, underline the actions linked with the quality of general education and its compliance with the actual demands and mae them the ground of a perspective development.

The gravest problem confronted in the network of the republic's general education schools concerns the supply of education-mentoring institutions with pedagogical cadres.

Pursuant to the Azerbaijan Republic Cabinet of Ministers' Decision #85 dated June 22, 2004 On the Measures for Encouraging the Involvement of Pedagogical Cadres in the Village General Education Schools, the Development Program concerning the supply of pedagogical cadres within the network of Azerbaijan Republic's general education schools for 2005–2009 has been approved to solve the problem of pedagogical cadres shortage in the republic's general education schools.

Owing to the lack of cadres, foreign languages were not taught in over 400 schools of the republic until recently and the pupils were actually deprived of the opportunity to obtain some knowledge concerning the mentioned subject.

The problem was topical with yet another issue. The most important development strategy implemented in the republic reflects such strategic directions as poverty reduction in the country, improvement of the population's financial welfare, elimination of unemployment, raising particularly the youth engagement in useful labor, improvement of the social-living conditions in regions and villages, social service, as well as settlement of topical concerns in the field of education. Each of the relevant decrees and enactments signed by the President of Azerbaijan Republic, Mr. Ilham Aliyev actually intend the settlement of such urgent issues as employment of pedagogical cadres, meeting of the cadres demand, and finally, dispatch of young pedagogical experts to specific workplaces. It is no coincidence that the primary tasks set forth cover achievement of actual results in implementation of precise actions aimed at promotion of pedagogical cadres' attraction to the general education schools in villages, employment of young experts and consequently, commencement of the work of approximately 15 thousand pedagogical cadres within the next five years. Naturally, realization of all these suggests a grave need for a special development program covering the perspective years in accordance with valid forecast modules.

In general, settlement of such problems as the lack of pedagogical cadres in the education sector's network of general education schools and appointment of young pedagogical experts to precise workplaces is assessed as a vital activity direction to consequently render a positive affect on the Azerbaijani education quality parameters and stimulate the future development. In this sense, the development program for pedagogical cadres supply in the network of Azerbaijan Republic general education schools within 2005–2009 is of particular importance and carries a fully directive and regulatory character in the settlement of problems as well as achievement of the objectives set forth.

The program's main purpose entails a successful handling of the contemporary problem of pedagogical cadres shortage in the general education schools of the Azerbaijan Republic within the next 5 years. In addition, the perspective activity reflects also the solution of several other problems. In fact, involvement of the non-dedicated cadre corpse involved in the network of many general education schools to a special training – retraining and requalification education with consideration of their level record, as well as

financial encouragement of their employment in the village schools is targeted both at the cadres supply mission and activity horizons intending the quality indicators growth. At the same time, training of small experts is set forth as a primary goal to enable in the long-term numerous citizens get precise job appointments.

The program also covers the tasks, which include providing the citizens with identified workplaces, ensuring the cadres orders by the government in the network of general education schools, raising the education quality, application of validated forecasting mechanisms in the planning of cadres training admission, creation of an appropriate encouragement system for the young experts having been appointed to specific workplaces in the general education schools located at distant villages, promotion of the population flow into villages, improvement of the teachers corpse's financial and social welfare, as well as the reduction of poverty and unemployment.

Several strategic activity directions have been identified for a 5-year term, which are covered in the main strategy guidelines of the policy to be implemented for solving the problem of cadres shortage and employment at the general education schools with the purpose of solving the cadres supply problem in the republic's general education schools network, providing the young experts with pedagogical higher and high dedicated education with distinct workplaces, involving the non-specialized cadres corpse to the special training, ensuring the participation of small experts in the process of meeting the actual cadres demand, as well as the encouragement of village appointments.

Implementation of the special encouragement actions intended in the Decision #85 of the Azerbaijan Republic Cabinet of Ministers dated June 22, 2004 On the Measures for Encouraging the Involvement of Pedagogical Cadres in the Village General Education Schools for the pedagogical cadres having received appointment to the education institutions with cadres demand in accordance with the government orders at the end of experts training and started instantly their jobs, as well as those willing to work in the districts with grave cadre needs; regulation of the process of pedagogical cadres dispatch to the districts with a serious need for cadres (education institutions located 20 km from the regional centers); involvement of the non-specialized cadres corpse with pedagogical experience of up to 5 years to the refresher

courses; attraction of the community with the status of small experts prepared for foreign languages to the special training after completion of their primary education, as well as involvement of the pedagogical cadres corps with over 5 years pedagogical experience record and currently teaching non-specialty subjects to the requalification education within framework of special programs make the core strategic courses of the program.

Special long-term measures have been identified for the activities in each of the 5 directions, the required funds have been estimated, a community division has been completed with involvement of exact forecasts at all stages.

At the contemporary stage, preparation of special development programs covering individual fields for the long-term development in the Azerbaijan Republic is one of the major attributes characterizing Mr. Ilham Aliyev's presidential activities. These strategically important instruments aim at meeting the social infrastructure's actual demands in the forthcoming years with application of special forecasting methods and are realized through identification of the operative solutions for the problems emerging, including mostly the volume and precise source of the required funds. In fact, successful settlement of this or another global problem in the forthcoming years is possible through an adequately planned activity. Therefore, there is an acute need for adoption of this development program, which contains a comprehensive solution of the serious cadres shortage problem existing in the republic's general education schools network and its perspective application to actual process and achievement of positive results.

In fact, intense activity aimed at ensuring the job security of the country's experts, poverty reduction, improvement of the citizens' social welfare and settlement of the unemployment concerns are considered a main strategic course identified by the Azerbaijani state for the perspective activities. In this very sense, the development program assumes a particular importance and is directed towards such issues as financial promotion of the education system representatives, growth of the general education quality indicators, regulation of the teacher-pupil balance through introduction of proportional division principles, stimulation of the population flow to villages, development of the social sector, and finally, ensuring of approximately 15 thousand pedagogical experts with distinct workplaces.

The program being successfully implemented, all the schools covered by the Azerbaijan Republic's network of general education schools have been fully provided with pedagogical cadres, the quality indicators have been increased, the non-specialized cadres corps has been retrained, their qualification has been improved within special programs and around 15 thousand citizens with pedagogical specialties have been provided with concrete workplaces. Marketing structures have been established at the vocational-professional education institutions, thus the labor market's demand has been considerably met. Adequate working conditions have been created in regions for young experts, their social-welfare problems have been solved, the population flow to villages has increased, which has positively influenced the demographic indicators, the poverty level has decreased and serious measures have been taken for handling the education sector unemployment problem.

The children needing special care (with limited health capabilities) are also under particular attention of the Azerbaijani President. In this context, the program dealing with the education of children needing special care (with limited health capabilities) (2005–2009) is of great importance. According to the program, 3 inclusive education projects have commenced with involvement of international organizations to cover totally around 30 education institutions, as well as over 100 children of pre-school and school age needing a special care.

In accordance with the program, additional corpses and gyms have been built in several institutions, many relevant entitites have undergone overhaul and the schools of this profile have been provided with the urgent equipment, modern computers and means of transportation.

The education sector development program (2003–2007) is also a project of exceptional importance. The reforms carried out as part of the project have mainly covered the components such as the quality of general education and its compliance with the actual needs, as well as the efficiency and financial reforms, management, planning and monitoring.

Serious reforms are ongoing as part of the quality of general education and its compliance with the actual needs component including the curriculum reforms, as well as the reforms regarding the teachers' training, textbooks and reading materials.

Funding and budgetary reforms, as well as measures intending rationalization and reinforcement of the schools' logistical supply are ongoing as part of the efficiency and financial reforms component. Grant projects are being implemented within the school grants program component aiming at creation of equal opportunities in the general education and application of novelties at schools.

Substantial work is being done as part of the management, planning and monitoring component in regard of the pupil competence assessment, education management information system, as well as reinforcement of the management and planning resources. The draft national curriculum of the general high education has been worked out and approved as part of the content reforms. The instrument is of exclusive substance for the future development of education system, particularly of the country's general education system and for grounding the general education content in a level to meet the modern requirements.

3.2. National Curriculum

Adoption of a conceptual instrument in the Azerbaijan Republic – Conception of the general education – the National Curriculum also marks one of the most outstanding accomplishments of the national education owing to the President Ilham Aliyev's targeted development strategy.

The National Curriculum is a framework document covering the general education training results and content standards, the subjects intended at every step of the general education, number of the weekly lessons and out-of-school exercise hours, organization of the pedagogical process, major principles of the training achievements assessment and monitoring, as well as the subject curricula structure.

In the modern time characterized by globalization and universalization of the public-political, cultural and social life, higher involvement of information and communication technologies and stronger competition, the National Curriculum is aimed at providing every person with the necessary education level and skills enabling him to make independent decisions with due regard to the exceptional importance of his talents

and abilities, as well as formation of the human being, which is the main driving force of society, and solution of the problems.

The National Curriculum covers precise functions including the steps of general education, ensuring of the links and successiveness between the subjects taught at these steps, constant improvement and upgrade of the subjects' content in accordance with the society's demands, ensuring of the swiftness and interactiveness of training technologies, preparation and application of the result-oriented subject curricula, identification of the effectiveness of training environment and education activity, ensuring of the evolutive and anticipatory character of training, as well as knowledge, abilities and skills on a concentric ground over the education steps, and objective evaluation and stimulation of pupils' competence.

The document was worked out on the principles including consideration of the national and global values, creation of a favorable training environment for all the pupils with due regard to the general development, trends and interests, as well as demand-orientation, result-orientation and integration-friendliness.

The National Curriculum characterizes the general education as an expedient process, which is based on the interests of people, family, society and state, national and global values, as well as the principles of secular outlooks, regularity, succession, integrative and democratic character, is aimed at formation of personality through theoretical and practical activities, ensuring of the adequate grounds for this personality's intellectual, social and physical development, his continued education and commencement of labor engagement, and represents a tool ensuring the pupils' abilities to realize and assess the processes, problems and development tendencies ongoing in the rapidly changing world, acquire the necessary knowledge, abilities and skills, apply the things they have learned and easily receive additional information with consideration of their age, physiological, psychological, individual features and potential opportunities, as well as their ability to become a productive member of the society in conditions of market relations and free progress of the personality.

A person with general high education is the one, who has a perfect command of native language and comprehensive information concerning the Motherland's history and culture, is able to appraise the art, literature,

scientific achievements, human labor and civic rights and freedoms, treats the democratic principles with respect, displays adherence to the statehood and state interests, applies skilfully the modern technology and means of communication, has a tolerant, sensitive and just attitude to people, national customs and traditions, nature and moral-ethical values, is able to receive education and information, assumes qualities like competitiveness in the market economy conditions and life and act independently in life, develop, build a healthy lifestyle and have an independent position, acquires the necessary knowledge, abilities and skills meeting the society's demands, and is able to communicate in one or several foreign languages in addition to his native language.

The National Curriculum clearly expresses the goal of every education stage and states that the primary education aims at creating and strengthening the reading, writing and calculating skills in children, providing them with the first worldly knowledge concerning men, society, nature and regularities between them, forming the logical and creative thinking elements in children, ensuring the discovery and development of gifted children from their early age, as well as building in them sensitiveness, esthetic and literary style, moral-ethical qualities, physical culture and self-service capabilities.

The abilities to apply in practice the necessary mathematical knowledge and solve simple algorithms, use the computer technology, describe the observed objects and events, distinguish between them for their characteristic features, think independently and logically, express personal attitude, establish communication, cooperate, express thoughts distinctly, observe the rules of cultural behavior, personal hygiene and appropriate safety rules, fulfill independently the tasks charged, as well as the actions requiring creativity and apply common labor skills are the results achieved from the primary education. Besides, the little citizen's ability to fulfill own tasks, respect the rights of his own and others, present the primary knowledge he has received concerning the language, moral-ethical values, national customs and traditions, history, culture and art of the Azerbaijani nation in a simple manner, read literary, scientific-popular and information-oriented texts meeting his age demands, distinguish the core content in the text and express his opinion concerning it, use dictionaries and information-oriented books, display just, caring and tolerant attitude towards people, nature, labor and

personal and state-owned property, as well as conceive the reality the way it is also rank among the primary education's achievements.

The subjects of Native Language, Azerbaijani Language, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Informatics, Life Information, Technology, Physical Exercise, Music and Fine Arts should be taught at the primary education step. The National Curriculum substantiates every subject and provides precise description of the results to be achieved from every subject.

Formation of communicative skills, as well as verbal and written speech habits in the pupils, ensuring the strengthening of mental activity, expansion of the ideas and information about the history, literature, culture, art, nature, socioeconomic opportunities and development of Azerbaijan, as well as the role of individual countries in creation of the human civilization, formation of the pupils' abilities to analyze and apply, investigate and generalize, use the information and communication technologies, work with different source, identify own activity directions, assess the events and essences, and solve problems constitute the purposes of the main education. Ensuring the development of qualities like healthy lifestyle, physical and esthetical culture, cooperation and respect to rights in pupils are also the goals of main education.

At the end of the general process of main education, the pupils must be able to use various means, methods and tools to conceive the surrounding world, including the observation, measuring, calculating, experiment and evaluation, select different methods for fulfilling the training tasks and solve them through the given algorithm, distinguish between different facts, ideas and arguments, compare, classify and present them, fulfill independently different actions requiring creativity in the training process, use the monologue and dialogue forms of speech, analyze the materials of different style and genre he has listened to and read, deliver their content in a brief and broad manner to the others, make a plan, thesis and report, work out a project and review, show samples, cite arguments and generalize the results. He must acquire the habits of using different sources of information (dictionaries, encyclopedias, computer, Internet, mass media, etc.) for solving mental and communicative tasks, identify own opportunities, trends and interests in a conscious way, demonstrate his volitional and instinctive attributes, assess the results of his own actions and find an optimal solution

for the problems arising. He must learn to obey the norms of social behavior, as well as adequate safety and medical-hygiene rules and healthy lifestyle norms, demonstrate in his activity acquisition of the moral, legal, ethical and esthetical values, as well as a civic position, must be able to act jointly in the problem solution, assess his and others' activity in the process of collective work and establish communication in a foreign language.

According to the National Curriculum, subjects of Native Language, Azerbaijani Language, Literature, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Informatics, Azerbaijani History, General History, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, Life Knowledge, Technology, Physical Culture, Music and Fine Arts are taught at the main education step and the document provides accurate substantiation of every subject and the results achieved from its studies.

It is known that assessment of pupils' competence is a successive and systematic process serving directly to evaluation of the education quality and consequently, its progress as an integral part of the training activity. The National Curriculum reflects precise moments related to this.

Pupils competence assessment is accompanied by accumulation of relevant data concerning the education quality and development and their analysis. Data accumulation is carried out through charging and checking of test assignments, organization of class interviews, observation of the subject curricula performance, as well as the pupils' and teachers' activity, analysis of the evaluation tables and other school instruments and other methods. The accumulated data usually cover the pupils' respond to training and their achievements, the teachers' training level, curricula adequacy, supply with training resources and guidance methods. The results derived from evaluations based on the data analyses are considered a reliable source for building the country's education policy and identifying the future considerations.

The pupils competence assessment is based on the principles of expedience, mutual evaluation, adequacy and reliability, progressive orientation, transparency and mutual cooperation.

The pupils competence assessment is conducted with the help of in-school, national and international directions. The in-school assessment consists of 3 components:

Pupil progress monitoring – is implemented at the school level by the teachers and school directors. At this stage, the pupils' competence is assessed in the formative (regular, continuous), micro-summative (over topics and sections) and macro-summative (semestral) forms with application of written and verbal methods.

The Curriculum assessment is geared towards identifying the conformance of pupils' training results with the appropriate content standards.

The education steps (main and middle) final assessment is actualized through the centralized graduation exams and ends with submission of the appropriate education document.

At the middle education step, the results of final assessment implemented at the main education step are used to identify the pupils' training in the relevant directions, or in accordance with the minimal standards.

The national assessment is usually done every 4-5 years with the purpose of evaluating the organization and planning of the education process, as well as the curricula quality through the accumulated data concerning the education environment and the changes taking place in the general education system.

International assessment is usually done every 3 years in order to get an idea about the state of education based on the pupils' competence indicators with a selective method, reveal the problems through analyzing the relevant data and identify the ways for their solution, forecast the perspective development courses and compare the contemporary condition with other countries.

As we see, the reform has come with such a conceptual document, which reflects the necessary competences, content and assessment standards for the people receiving education, the current syllabus and education programs, requirements put before the pupils and their level of study, precise progressive objectives of every lesson, methodological background, evaluation model, technical supply, etc., as well as the tasks of the teachers and the school and distinct solutions for these tasks.

Besides, a new conception and strategy for teachers' training has also been worked out. The institutions within the teachers' training network as part of the relevant sub-component have been furnished with modern equipment.

The major goal of the education management data system sub-component is to carry out a monitoring of the system guided by the responsible supervisors and assist the Education Ministry in working out an extensive and comprehensive Education Management Data System (EMDS) for developing strategy and activity plans based on the accurate and contemporary data.

The tasks implemented as part of this sub-component cover the identification and supply of the appropriate cadres and other resources for the EMDS Group, setting out a policy for EMDS planning and operations, development of the EMDS Core Plan, planning, preparation and realization of the schools coding procedures, working out the technical terms and tender documents for the EMDS equipment and software, purchase of the equipment and software, preparation of the data accumulation system for the EMDS sub-component of schools mapping, testing and modification of the sub-system, implementation of the system in order to gather data for the school mapping, development, testing and modification of the schools mapping sub-system, as well as the development of sub-system and realization of requalification regarding its use.

Development, testing and modification of the second, third and fourth sub-systems for EMDS based on the Education Ministry's and EMDS Group's choice, organization of requalification courses for working with and applying those sub-systems, development and implementation of the EMDS personnel requalification plan, development and application of the plan for effective usage of computers within the regional education departments and identification of a reliable system program for EMDS are among the sub-component tasks.

3.3. Textbook policy

The issue of new textbooks for general education schools ranked among the primary concerns of the national leader of Azerbaijani people Heydar Aliyev in his education policy. He regularly interested in the actions done in the field and pointed out the exceptional importance of the Azerbaijani Language, Azerbaijani Literature and Azerbaijani History textbooks in the education system.

The education strategy pursued by the President Ilham Aliyev displays a similar attitude. Ilham Aliyev is interested in every new textbook, reviews even the published ones and expresses his opinion.

In the recent years, 147 new textbooks and 36 guiding materials have been worked out for the pupils of the general education schools, where the education is provided in two languages – Azeri and Russian. This means that 80 percent of the 182 textbooks and guiding materials currently applied at the general education schools has been upgraded. Thus, the first stage of national textbook development has finished.

Considering that the textbooks for Azerbaijani Language, Literature and primary classes were the only manuals applied in the high education system that met the national standards until the Reforms Program prepared by initiative and assignment of the national leader Heydar Aliyev in 1998, the scale of the relevant activities seems much clearer.

In accordance with the State Program for Poverty Reduction and Economic Development in the Azerbaijan Republic (2003–2005), all the pupils studying at the I–V classes in 2003 and those studying at the VI–XI classes of the independent schools training the IDP children were provided with free textbooks. In 2004, new ABC manual for the I classes and 34 new textbooks for the VI–VII classes were developed, published and handed out freely.

In 2003, 19 new manuals for the pupils of Azerbaijani-language education schools and 14 – for those of Russian-language education schools were published and submitted to usage. Also, the manuals of Azerbaijani Language for the V–IX grades, Algebra and Geometry for the VII–XI grades, English Language and French Language for the V–VII grades, Physics for the VII–VIII grades and General Biology for the X–XI grades have been developed to meet the modern demands.

In 2004, the manuals of Literature for the V–VII and IX grades, English Language for the VIII–IX grades, Physics for the IX grade, Azerbaijani Language for the X–XI grades and Astronomy for the XI grade were presented to the schoolers. The manuals of Physics for the VII grades, Algebra and Geometry for the VII–IX grades and Biology for the X–XI grades were translated and published for the Russian-language education schools.

Since 2005, all the pupils of the I–XI grades of the general education schools were provided with free textbooks in accordance with the State Program, which marked Azerbaijan as the only country in the post-Soviet environment having realized free supply of manuals for the high school pupils.

Until recently, one of the main problems was lack of the manuals published in Latin script. The President of the Azerbaijan Republic, Mr. Ilham Aliyev has issued a special decree concerning the issue.

In regard of this, 18 encyclopedic dictionaries at cost of 1.7 million US dollars were successfully published for school libraries in 846,000 copies with the credit from the World Bank and handed freely to all the general education schools, which meant that libraries of all Azerbaijani schools were provided with 190 copies of encyclopedic dictionaries on the average. Pursuant to the decrees signed annually by the head of country, the books published in Latin script from the series of classical and modern literary samples of the Azerbaijani and world literature also enriched the libraries of the education institutions as additional reading materials contributing to expansion of the new generation outlooks and their familiarization with the great pearls of literature.

In general, the policy of textbooks in the general education system represents a priority line of the education policy as part of the strategic activity of Azerbaijani government. The policy set by the Azerbaijan Republic Cabinet of Ministers aims at mentoring the schoolchildren in a way that allows them to acquire the knowledge, capacities and skills meeting the modern standards to become citizens with good awareness of the native Motherland, nation and its customs and traditions, who form on the ground of national and global values, are physically and morally healthy, ready for independent life and have a democratic way of thinking.

The textbook policy is implemented through the Education Ministry, which is the main executive authority in the field, its relevant structures, scientific entities, private organizations and public bodies.

The key principles of the textbook policy consist of free provision of all pupils of the Azerbaijan Republic general education schools in accordance with the Rules of Publishing, Printing and Distribution of Textbooks for General Education Schools, maintenance of national interests of the

Azerbaijan Republic, as well as consideration of the scientists', experts', authors' and parents' opinion in the development, assessment, confirmation and publishing of textbooks and ensuring of anti-monopoly and sound competition in the process.

Irrespective of the form of ownership, every publishing house can prepare any kind of textbook together with the authors and submit it to the Textbook Assessment Council (TAC) in compliance with the existing rules. Authors of the textbooks for general education schools must include predominantly the citizens of the Azerbaijan Republic. The textbooks for general education schools are published mainly in a variative form. The right to choose the variative textbooks belongs to the school pedagogic councils, subject teachers and teacher-parent associations. Every author and publishing house has the right to agitate own textbook at schools.

Consistent with the traditions established by the national leader Heydar Aliyev and the education strategy pursued by the Azerbaijani President Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the requirements to the textbooks content are also quite serious.

The textbooks must contain the ideas focused on mentoring the schoolchildren in the spirit of national, moral and cultural values of Azerbaijani nation, love to their family, nation and Motherland, as well as respect towards human rights and global values, the age-specific psychology and physiological characteristic of schoolchildren should be considered, the principle of worldliness must be observed, verifiable data obtained from authoritative sources concerning the latest achievements of science, technology and culture must be reflected, illustrations must be brief and relevant with the topics, and the ideas contradicting to the Constitution and laws of the Azerbaijan Republic, as well as to the international legal acts joined by the country must be avoided.

The main demands put forward also include the absence of any data in the textbooks that may propagate national, religious, racial and political discrimination and cause arguments and/or scientific contradictions, consistence with the curricula worked out on the basis of National Education Standards, development of the schoolchildren's skills for independent researches and creativity urging them to thinking and advancing their logical mind, availability of integrative features in the practical character and formation of the democratic world outlooks in the pupils.

The funds for the textbooks to be provided for pupils of the general education schools is allocated for the Education Ministry. The textbooks bought with those funds are freely distributed among the schools.

The textbook supply of our compatriots living beyond Azerbaijan is also an issue kept in the focus of attention. For this end, a big amount of textbooks is delivered annually to the Azerbaijani schools in Georgia as a humanitarian aid and submitted to the heads of regional education departments in charge of the schools for Azerbaijanis living compactly in 11 regions. Approximately 12 thousand textbooks have been allocated also for the Azerbaijani schools located in Dagestan.

Textbooks have also been sent to the Sunday Schools active in Moscow, Surgut, Donetsk and several cities of Middle Asia, as well as New York, London, etc. as a respond to their appeals.

3.4. Criteria of the Information Century

In the modern times, the development of information and communication technologies and the societies' level of information inclusiveness have become a superb factor of the humanity's cultural advance. The major goal of information society is to form the information resources and phases of different orientations using the databank of modern information technologies in order to meet the information demand of society in general and individuals in part.

Establishment of the information society in Azerbaijan has been adopted as a major priority of the national policy. The main tasks herein cover the creation of legal bases for the information society, development of the human factor, the citizens' rights to obtain information, spread and use it, formation of transparent state and local self-governing institutions, e-government and e-trade, reinforcement of the country's economic, social and intellectual potential, establishment of the competitive economic grounding on the information and knowledge, creation of the information and knowledge market, maintenance of the historic, literary and cultural heritage, creation of the modern information and communication infrastructure, formation of a single national electronic information space, ensuring of the information safety, integration to the global information horizons, production of the

national ICT products, elimination of the country's electronic backwardness as well as other important issues.

In general, the information-inclusive society provides unmatched opportunities for publicization of individual knowledge through the Internet environment and formation of the collective thinking. The information-inclusive society also shapes up a new type of economy – the one, which is based on the most superior form of product – knowledge and data.

The information society has an exceptional value in the globalization process ongoing in the world, as well as emergence and development of the interstate integrative relations. Under such circumstances, administration of science in accordance with the market economy requirements, formation, protection and commercialization of the intellectual property, Internet-based migration of the knowledge of scientists once migrated to developed countries as opposed to the so-called brain-drain process and settlement of other problems require new conceptual visions, approaches, as well as organizational and economic-legal mechanisms.

As it is known, the national leader Heydar Aliyev approved the ICT National Strategy (2003-2012) for the Development of Azerbaijan dealing with the extensive application and development of information-communication technologies in our republic in February 2003. In the period passed since the adoption of the National Strategy, the Azerbaijani government has taken several complex measures in the field.

Enforcement of the law on Electronic Signature and Electronic Document in Azerbaijan enabled the emergence of electronic document turnover in the country and development of the new processes requiring application of electronic signature, as well as the new fields of economic activity. The adoption of the law created a legal basis for other legislative acts regarding the establishment of electronic relations.

The Law on Electronic Trade serves to realization of sale and purchase operations via network, rendering of different trade services and electronic conclusion of the agreements to be implemented, as well as to development of interstate economic relations in the globalizing world.

The Law on the Telecommunications reflects the telecommunications networks and operators, relations among them and the mechanism for the relevant government.

The Law on Obtaining of Information is a normative act regulating the implementation of citizens' right to obtain information based on the democratic legal state principles. In accordance with the Law, government and local self-governing authorities must ensure the usage of Internet resources and create their own web-resources.

Computerization of scientific institutions and schools, availability of the acces to virtual world for our young citizens, as well as the purposeful steps taken for them to acquire the skills to use information technologies are of particular importance for the development of human capital in Azerbaijan. The head of the state attaches a big importance to substitution of the republic's abundant economic potential with human capital through development of the information and communication technologies. It is no coincidence that after being elected as the President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev started his first foreign visit with participation in the World Summit on the Information Society organized in Geneva with the UN mandate.

As marked by the President Ilham Aliyev at the summit, the leading position of our republic in this field in the South Caucasus has quite serious grounds. Azerbaijan regards the direction of oil revenues to the non-oil sector, as well as the communication and information technologies development as a matter of exceptional essence. The purposeful policy pursued by the president aims at turning our republic to the region's transit and central country for information and communication technologies. Azerbaijan's transformation into one of the information exporting countries in the forthcoming years is also a major goal of the reforms ongoing. Azerbaijan is situated in a favorable geographic location intersected by fibre-optic channels and from this aspect, the republic's chance to become a suitable information transit location between the East and the West is quite high.

The Decree of the Azerbaijani President On the Measures for Accelerating the Socioeconomic Development in the Azerbaijan Republic dated November 24, 2003 and the State Program for Socioeconomic Development of the Regions of Azerbaijan Republic dated February 11, 2004 cover many fields, including especially the development of information technologies.

The main goal is to create a modern information infrastructure in Azerbaijan that would meet the demands of the XXI century, as well as the information and communication products sector, which has a fundamental

and priority position in the local economy. Experience of the developed countries shows that development of these science-inclusive fields provides directly the formation of human capital and Mr. Ilham Aliyev seriously considers this factor.

The signature of the State Program for Development of Information and Communication Technologies in the Azerbaijan Republic for 2005–2008 (Electronic Azerbaijan) pursuant to the president's decree dated October 22, 2005 is noteworthy as a perfect conception enabling the extensive application of information and communication technologies in the government's activity. Owing to the actions covered in the program, Azerbaijan will reach the global average indicators for the development of information technologies in 2008 with 150 million US dollars allocated for the sector's development. The signature of the mentioned State Program serving to the broad application of information technologies has certainly arisen from the country's general socioeconomic development tempo.

Building the management on the basis of modern technologies in the comprehensively developing Azerbaijan emerges firstly from the time's demands. The State Program also serves to elimination of the "digital abyss", i.e., the information abyss danger. This means that modern technologies are rapidly advancing in the capital and other big cities, while the same process delays in the regions. From this standpoint, application of the digital system in regions and development of Internet, as well as modern information and communication technologies is of particular importance. This contributes into both the socioeconomic and cultural-intellectual development and progress of the human capital.

In November 16-18, 2005 the 2nd phase of the Information Society Summit took place in Tunis. Azerbaijan prepared for the summit with special activeness and our republic was a member of the summit's Organization Committee and one of its sponsors. The summit declared a new motto of the XXI century – The Role of Information and Communication Technologies in the Society's Democratization and Protection of Human Rights. One of the main authors of the thesis is definitely Azerbaijan. The event made a significant contribution to the development of human capital in Azerbaijan.

Delivering a speech at the opening ceremony of the BAKUTEL–2006 International Telecommunications and Information Technologies exhibition-

conference, the head of the state, Mr. Ilham Aliyev once again underlined the strategic importance of this area for our country. "... Our young generation has to be educated and aware of the processes going on in the world and track them. The most advanced technologies have to be brought to Azerbaijan. In short, the country's development has to continue exactly in this direction. If to consider the experience of the world's successful and developed countries, we will see that major reasons of such a development and progress is not the natural resources. Precisely the knowledge, education and new technologies – all of these bring success, welfare, development and modernity to the country" – he said.

In this context, as an essential step taken by the Azerbaijani President Mr. Ilham Aliyev for the development of science and education, the Program on providing the education institutions with information and communication technologies is of particularly exceptional importance.

The Program on Providing the Azerbaijan Republic General Education Schools with Information and Communication Technologies (2005–2007) approved by the head of the state's decree dated August 21, 2004 aims at creation of a single educational information environment serving to improvement of the education quality with application of new information technologies in the country and stimulating the integration into the world education system, as well as preparing the population for the information society.

In compliance with the program, for informational supply of the education system, purposeful measures have been planned including the establishment of common information environment in the sphere, ensuring of the acquisition of new information technologies built on the computer technologies and usage of all of its opportunities, providing the effective management of the country's education system, improvement of the scientific-methodological works efficiency and creation of productive relations with the world's education systems through the international information networks. Besides, several tasks aiming at achieving the program's objectives and ensuring effective employment of the common information environment have found a comprehensive solution. Furnishing the general education schools with modern computer equipment, teaching the general education school teachers, administrative and technical workers to use the new information and communication technologies in their fields

of activity, development of normative and methodological base for application of information and communication technologies in education, development, distribution and application of modern electronic education materials, e-textbooks, e-libraries and digital education resources in Azerbaijani language in the education process, creation of the Azerbaijan Republic education system's information infrastructure (including the scientific-methodological and scientific research resources and information systems, as well as those used at all levels of qualification), development of the modern education methodology based on information technologies, scientific-methodological sourcing of the information feeding process, establishment of distant education service for pupils, designing of the education portal and sites, as well as the development of terminology for information and communication technologies in Azerbaijani education and scientific-methodological editions and its employment in the scientific turnover are some of the tasks performed as part of the program. Arrangement of the computer rooms at schools, loading of the necessary software, training of the relevant cadres and formation of the education supportive personnel at computer classes to assist the teachers are also successfully followed through for the project's implementation. The project has enabled opening of around ten thousand workplaces in the country during 2005–2007, 4521 schools have been provided with computer equipment and Internet access, employment of information and communication technologies in education has stepped into a higher level, organization of the variative education process (Internet-school, distant education) has become possible, the general information culture has shaped up among pupils and teachers, and new information environment has emerged in the republic thus making the program signed by the President Ilham Aliyev a substantial step towards the passage to information-inclusive society in Azerbaijan along with all of its respective features.

The President has clearly expressed the importance of school ICT supply: **“At present, the computerization program is being implemented. Computer classes will be created at all schools and I am sure that this will cause a serious advance in the education sphere. We must lead all the schools in Azerbaijan to the highest level. Certainly, they have to have both the so-called good conditions and the infrastructure.**

We have set such a task before us to create computer classes at all schools and provide the children with direct access to Internet and get information about the processes ongoing in the world. Azerbaijan is pursuing the policy of integration to the world community and all the events taking place in the world, as well as the novelties and new technologies being created – all of them must be at disposal of our children through Internet and computer”.

According to the previous economic theories, before the revenues from production factors were balanced throughout all the regions, the labor resources were moving from the regions with lower salaries to those with higher salaries, while the capital resources were moving the reverse way. That means, since the countries like Azerbaijan have low salaries for now, the companies of USA, for ex., would engage in production activities not in their home countries, but in Azerbaijan. Thus, the acute welfare differences between the countries would be reduced.

Yet, the new theories shattered all these ideas. It appeared that both the capital and investments, as well as the labor resources mainly tend from the countries with poor economies towards those with richer economies. Because, the countries with rich economies living the knowledge (information) challenge are achieving quite high productivity rates through application of education and newest technologies to the production process. It may be understood like this: an employee receiving salary of 3000 dollars in the USA creates more additional cost than the one receiving salary of 100 dollars in Azerbaijan. Therefore, today the countries like Azerbaijan, which suffer a lack of quality labor resources and experts (with exception of the power sector) fail to get a sufficient share from the capital measured in trillions of dollars travelling along the world financial markets.

The Hungarian experience showed that even if a country manages to attract foreign investments without a necessary preparation, this may not raise the intracountry welfare conditions to the desired level. If we want to both attract the foreign investments to our country and see its positive yields on the welfare state, we have to prepare for this as seriously as Ireland and gain electors in the context of foreign investments. For ex., while the foreign investments attracted to agriculture has a very limited influence over the welfare matters, the foreign investments attracted to the information and

communication sector is causing a much more positive effects on the welfare. Ireland started the preparatory work with the reforms exactly in the education field. Every year, universities of Ireland train ICT experts and many engineers as part of these reforms.

Some of the most important Development Objectives of the millenium, human development and poverty reduction, as well as the issues concerning the use of ICT and other modern technologies remain a priority issue of the state also in Azerbaijan on the background of civil society development. The programs worked out for various sectors of economy and public life reflect a deeper understanding of the significanceew of these objectives and Azerbaijan has already achieved certain success in regard of this issue.

The most important factor in the human development is, certainly, the knowledge obtained from education. Employment of modern technologies, including the ICT, for transfer of knowledge and information has been defined in the Millenium Development Objectives as a tool providing for equality and development at the national and global levels. Azerbaijan has a special position in this aspect, for it has abundant oil and gas resources. Azerbaijan is gradually becoming a bright sample for all the world countries, which are following similar development paths, for transformation of the exhaustible resource of “black gold” to the inexhaustible capital of “human gold”.

The process of human gold formation means the development of human capital is a process serving not only to the development of technical fields’ economic oportunites, but also to application of modern technologies in the production, planning and management fields.

Formation of the human gold represents the most essential precondition of human development in the process of mastering the latest knowledge and technologies.

The Decree issued by the President of the Azerbaijan Republic concerning the Program on Providing the Azerbaijan Republic General Education Schools with Information and Communication Technologies also points out the role of modern technologies in improvement of the education quality, youth development and generally, for the future of Azerbaijan.

The education reforms are of fundamental importance in the background of the rapidly changing world and permanent improvement and broad

application of the technologies, which acquire more and more complex character. The content and quality of education, as well as its correspondence to an individual's demands at the decisive level identify the state of the modern society's intellectual potential. Intensive advance of all the spheres of education based on the application of information and communication technologies is becoming a substantial national priority.

The program signed by and kept under strict control of the Azerbaijani President also has the main goal of transforming the country's available economic potential into the human capital and identifying out future development course exactly on this line.

The exceptional role of the Virtual Silk Road Project in effective implementation of science and education reforms in the Azerbaijan Republic, coordination of the Azerbaijani science and education level with the world standards demands, as well as the application of advanced experience and potential of the developed countries' leading scientific research and education centers by our national cadres is also noteworthy.

3.5. Distance education in Azerbaijan

All of these achievements made in the education sphere through the development of information technologies bring to agenda also the notion of distance education, which is still quite new for our society. Receiving the higher education in the globalizing environment is gradually becoming an utmost necessity for more and more people. Traditional way of educating so many students is quite difficult even for the developed countries, which are the recognized leaders in the education field. Therefore, the demand for the newest and effective education technologies, including those of distance education, will keep growing. Recently, a new form of rendering the education services – distance education (DE, network education), which is considered a kind of technological revolution in the education sphere has been rapidly advancing. History of the distance education is a practical demonstration of that it is an adequate form of education relevant to the society's new requirements for the education sphere in many countries of the world. Ensuring a higher operativeness of the rendering of education services, distance education will become the most efficient form of education in the

XXI century. DE enables providing the availability of education services, while maintaining the high quality of education, through creation of a mobile virtual education environment and cut of the charges per student by 2–3 times versus the traditional education systems. The potential of WEB-technologies makes it possible to accumulate the education resources of the entire world. Aggregation of these resources in conditions of globalization, integration of the education space and provision of the mobility, openness and operativeness of the rendered education services is of particular importance. The openness of distance education, i.e., guarantee of the possibility of receiving higher education without the entrance exams is also an essential factor for potential users of the network education services.

Presently, at the high schools of many countries worldwide, active work is ongoing for changing the traditional methods of teaching the theoretical subjects through effective application of the computer teaching programs. This fact is explained by the possibility of presenting almost all of the theoretical education courses in an electronic form. This, on one hand, enables usage of different multimedia tools, – video films, cartoon films, music and verbal speech, which are analogues of the traditional teaching tools – texts, graphs, formulas and pictures, while on the other hand, allows computer modelling of the content of laboratory and practical works creating the habits for working with complex devices, which is a necessity of the modern time. Availability of the computer teaching programs is provided through the possibility of delivering these programs in floppy discs and laser compact discs (CDs) in the distance education process. These programs may be used in every computer, which has the parameters meeting the minimal requirements. All the experience gathered in the extramural education system is used in the distance education, which applies the new technologies. DE can be done in the intramural, intra-extramural (evening), extramural and non-residence forms, as well as combination of these forms. A higher school may organize the distant education in both the independent way and through its structural divisions – affiliates and representative offices. “What about the necessary requirements set before the informational environment in which the distant education will be provided? This environment must: ensure the economic effectiveness of the process, as well as the cheapness and competitiveness of the distant education compared to the existing forms of

education; guarantee the equitable and full-fledged participation of all the participants of education process – pupil, teacher and education institutions in the network; provide the opportunities for operative creation and edition of the compact didactical material, which is easy to use in the online regime; and create conditions for the education institution to become a dynamic and mobile structure, which accumulates and uses the most different education resources enjoying the demand of society”. [1. p. 92]. Application of the telecommunication tools in the distance education process and usage of the pedagogically organized set of information technologies allows ensuring fully or partially the interaction of student and teacher through indirect means irrespective of their locations. Distance education intends the student’s usage of personal computer, interactive teaching/education programs and electronic computer networks for keeping operative contact with the tutor (network administrator providing the student’s contact with the teacher). In the developed countries of the world, the traditional asynchronous (extramural) education process provides a pack of information tools and the education institution ensures the acquisition of knowledge and formation of capacities and skills through a systematic control. The essence of the synchronous (distance) education form suggests that the person taught receives education in synchronous interaction with the tutor, the distance information base worked out particularly for this purpose and a system of e-testing tools. In the modern time, this form of education is gradually suppressing the asynchronous form of education.

“For organization of the distance education process, the following tools of distance education are used along with the traditional resources: specialized textbooks equipped with multimedia observation applications, electronic educational-methodological complexes consisting of electronic textbooks, education applications and computer training programs, computer laboratory courses, control-test batteries, training videofilms, audio records, etc. Usage of the methodologically (didactically) developed distance education data banks as the key information resource in the education process ensure their correspondence to the level of modern requirements, which are due at the time they are used, as well as to the requirements of national education standards applied for the main curricula of certain volume and content, or to those set before the additional professional curricula content. The distance

education data bank includes the main educational literature and training-methodological database in the form of editions worked out in different types of carriers, periodicals relevant to the cadre training profiles, editions of inquiry-bibliographic character, as well as the database of central and local mass public-political editions, monographs on the profile of every curriculum and database of scientific literature represented by periodical scientific editions.” [2]. The most popular way of providing the DE training materials is the Internet Books. These are e-versions of lectures and books, which are very available, since neither special knowledge in programming, nor the Hyper-Text Markup Language (HTML) or JAVA is needed to use them. This is due to the fact that assisting software enable transforming almost all of the necessary materials from any kind of text editor into the HTML format.

Distance education may be fully transferred in case at least 70% of the total lesson hours and curricula intended in the education plan is acquired by the students with the help of distance education technologies. The types of distance education technologies include the case, Internet and telecommunication technologies.

Higher schools applying the Case Technology should have Internet access and its own web-site, which reflects all the necessary educational-methodological and educational-administrative information to provide full bilateral relations between the teachers and the students. Presence of the web-site is confirmed by the URL indication, agreement with the service providers and the pack of documents approving the site’s operation. A separate department of high school’s web-site must contain some information reflecting the answers to the frequently asked questions concerning the rules of entry to the higher school, document registrations, education fee payment rules, organization of the education process, etc. The educational-methodological case must comprise the following components: curriculum of every specialty, a student’s individual work plan for every semester, brief annotational list of the content of all the theoretical module-courses meeting the demands of national educational standards (this includes the syllabuses of all subjects, e-versions of lectures, work-books, laboratory manuals, methodological recommendations enabling the supervision over a student’s independent work in the interactive mode, self-controlling tests and exercises, schemes, tables, term of glossary to be acquired by the

student, collection of exercises and assignments necessary for attestation, e-library, etc.). The educational literature is published in floppy discs or CDs, hyper-text or hyper-media formats and in the form of video and audio programs. The case also includes recommendations concerning the forms of performance of the following actions: 1) interactive communication between the higher school administration and tutor and the student; 2) education time planning; 3) report system in the specialty internship practice; 4) test trainings. The case technology suggests students' unlimited use of the set of Internet resources located in the high school's web-site and their opportunities to participate in the Internet forums held in a delayed time mode. Besides, application of a virtual conference in a real time mode, as well as simultaneous Internet-seminars, consultations and trainings with several listeners in this process are also tested; ICQ resources are applied for individual "face-to-face" distance consultations between a student and a teacher in a real time mode.

When Internet (network) technologies are applied, education is based on the usage of educational-informational resources irrespective of the location of its subjects and intends the availability of methodological, organizational, technical and software tools for implementation and management of the education process. When applying intramural form of distance education with network technologies, a higher school is bound to provide every student with such work place (in case the student does not have his own or rented individual work place). Application of the Internet technology in the intramural education form does not claim obligatory creation of the education-work places: in this case, effective process of educational exercises, current control over the knowledge, as well as creation of computer classes with Internet access for intermediary and final attestation will suffice. In this case, every teacher has an opportunity to maintain interaction with the students in both the synchronous and asynchronous modes, as well as work with the educational-informational resources of distance education and supervise over the education process. A student must have computer access, telephone and Internet access to receive Internet-based education.

A specific feature of realizing the distance education through Internet technologies is that every student's computer used as his working place for getting education must be connected to the global Internet network via the

communication channels with minimal 30 kbps capacity, while the information resources for a student must be placed in the portals with foreign or special channels with minimal 1 kbps capacity. In the distance education with application of network technologies, the higher school must develop a full informational supply of the training-educational activity for students. In this case, the information resources must be placed in different carriers and cover the operative usage applications based on the computer networks and technologies. Network technologies also assume the presence of an effective automated management system for controlling the education process. This system covers the databases providing information on the education with limitations of fully comprehensive information regarding the education process documentation, as well as application of some education materials, for ex., control assignments. The education services rendered through Internet-technologies may be fully valuable only in case all the subjects intended in the curriculum have corresponding e-manuals, electronic assignment books, electronic case studies, methodological tools and practical multimedia applications. A large portion of education materials must be designed for a student's individual work, and the rest, for ex., multimedia complements – for usage in the work with small groups (each being not more than 8 students).

The telecommunications (information-satellite) technology is based mainly on the usage of cosmic satellite applications for translation of informational-educational resources, as well as the global and local networks to provide effective contracts between teachers and students and enable the students to use the higher school's data banks, which cover the digital libraries, video lectures and other information. The distance education telecommunications model may be realized both in the off-line mode applying the e-mail protocols (POP3 and IMAP4) and in the on-line mode based on the http, ftp, gopher and other protocols enabling the application of interactive teaching technologies. The following conditions must be provided to ensure effective education based on the telecommunication (information-satellite) technologies: at least 1-mbps capacity of the communication channels directed towards the student and at least 8-kbps capacity of the communication channels directed from the student. In this case, the computer working place configuration must provide real opportunities for effective

implementation of different kinds of educational activity. Availability of CD device, voice cards and headsets in all the working places is also a necessity. For organization of the education process with application of telecommunication (information-satellite) technologies, education-working places equipped with individual computers, testing devices and special devices for video recording and demonstration must be provided with consideration of the lesson successiveness. In addition, availability of video-projection and tele-lecture studios in those working places enables participation of all the students at tele-conferences and collective watching of the computer and TV programs, as well as the video films.

Every single higher school uses all of the above-listed education programs, which are applied in the distance education system, in its own individual way. In this case, most effective technologies on the one hand and the users' most demanded form of rendering the education services on the other are preferred.

The formation of distance education system is one of the strategic directions of the higher education upgrade in the post-Soviet territory as well. Practical analysis of the education experience of the former USSR countries reveals certain general trends in the development of these countries' distance education. For ex., in Russia, a characteristic feature of the distance education modern development stage is extensive application of various modern education technologies acknowledged by the world practice. The process commenced in the first half of 90s. According to the decision adopted by the Committee for Higher Schools of the Russian Ministry of Science, Higher Schools and Technical Policy in 23 May 1993, the network of distance general education institutions providing the use of newest applications and information technologies for direct delivery of the training materials and information irrespective of the user's location must become an integral part of the Russian Federation higher education system. Establishment of such a network means ensuring a new channel of rendering education services to millions of Russian citizens and leads to the humanistic character of national policy in the education sphere, commonness of the education environment, availability and democratic character of education for everybody, adaptiveness of its requirements to properties of the developmental and preparational level, as well as a personality's independent development. Russia's socioeconomic

development courses and liberalization of higher schools in the country necessitates creation of the humanitarian distance education system in this country. The distance education system may only be effective if the centralization of its key structural elements at a certain level is achieved and is linked with the independence of regional centers. Therefore, the distance education system must be of the national character and supervised through the Russian Federation State Committee for Higher Education. In 1994, the RF Distance Education Institute was created. During 1997-1999, the results of the experiment conducted by the RF Education Ministry in the distance education field paved the way for identification of the primary tasks and numerous problems in the distance education area, as well as of the necessity of developing the national standards for distance education as a ground for introduction of a normative-legal base to regulate the legal aspects of rendering this form of the education services. Some leading higher schools of the RF have already achieved certain successes in the organization of distance education.

If to consider the demand of contemporary Azerbaijani population for the new education, political changes occurring in the country, the need for relevant education technologies, expansion of international relations, as well as in the education area, intensive development of qualitatively new technical applications of information exchange among the education process participants, advance of the international integration level accompanied by the growing education services competition observed in the world markets and formation of a world-scale common education space, the advantages of distance education are obvious. While its development is of particular topicality for the Azerbaijani education system.

The lack of work experience regarding the computer networks in Azerbaijan, the funding-related difficulties, as well as absence of highly qualified cadres have all led to practical non-materialization of the distance education system, which is based on the programs and plans adopted so far, as well as on the telecommunication tools. Actually, there is no distance education system in the country, which would use the network technologies. The professional level at higher schools is so low that most students have much better command of the computer technologies than their teachers.

The urgency of working out the distance education system in the country is also explained by much farther location of different cities, where the scientific-educational potential is highly centralized, from the potential users of the education services. Yet, the establishment of distance education system may not be organized in every single higher school, for the new education technologies may only be applied after reaching a certain level in funding, cadres, technological and technical supply.

The most important issue to be solved at the stage of applying the new form of education in the Azerbaijani education system is ensuring the availability of the distance education, its competitiveness and quality network education programs. It is obvious that the duration of distance education, as well as the forms of organizing the education content and general process must be defined within the framework of specific subject curricula developed in accordance with the national education standards and curricula; the students' passage from one course to another should be based on the current control over the education, as well as the results of pass exams and exams; in accordance with the education results, a student having graduated from the distance education form of a higher school must be awarded with the Bc scientific degree and national diploma after defending his diploma work.

At organization of the distance education in Azerbaijan, orientation on the concrete social groups, which are potential users of this form of education services must be considered. These groups may include the people of most different ages living in the regions located far away from the country's education centers, the specialists having already received a higher education and willing to improve their professional level, the students willing to receive parallelly a second education, the persons registered in the employment services, officers of the MIA and border troops and soldiers having their temporary service, the youth deprived of the opportunity to receive education owing to the limited capacity of the education system and the necessity of combining education with work, the persons serving at the country's Armed Forces, the persons failing to get education with traditional education technologies due to the specific features of a specialty, the people in the detention places, as well as those with negative medical states for receiving education in the traditional form. The primary conditions for education of the representatives of all the above-mentioned social categories cover the

possibility of receiving education without leaving the work, low prime cost compared to the traditional forms of education services, the quality of these services and other factors.

The distance education courses may firstly be developed for the medical, law and other faculties considered as prestigious in the Azerbaijani national mentality, as well as for the higher schools with real chances to deliver education services, particularly the Oil Academy.

At present, the issues linked with the country's higher schools joining to the world distance education networks, as well as the development of telecommunication education projects to ensure sufficient expansion of the distance education courses and education networks come to the forefront. However, all the forces and means should not be focused mainly on the solution of technical matters, including the creation of a network information transfer ground, since the development of educational-methodological applications and cadres retraining is the most labor expenditure and funds assuming aspect of the distance education. Ensuring of the availability of the required number of tutors, that is, the network administrators to provide the effectiveness of distance education is of exceptional essence. To fully organize the distance education, Azerbaijani higher schools must create a special individual virtual education environment by ensuring the following factors: training of the teachers having acquired the skills for working in a specific informational-educational environment both for every single student and for targeting of education towards one or several groups, availability of special cases covering a set of individual educational-methodological materials by using electronic educational-methodological complexes or multimedia applications for all education subjects, availability of special (as well as electronic) informational-documentary circulation ensuring a comprehensive administrative regulation of the education process in accordance with modern requirements, creation of the didactical supply for effective lessons applying the TV, computer and network applications, as well as availability of the rooms supplied with special equipment enabling effective organization of the education process for all subjects in compliance with the national education standards. The informational-educational environment of distance education at higher schools must represent a systematically arranged combination of the data

banks, information resources, interaction protocols, firmware and organizational-methodological supply aimed at meeting the students' education-related demands.

Settlement of two key issues is vital in the process of distance education organization at higher schools: organization of education and scientific-methodological supply. The organization-related issue is solved through creation of the education-methodological affiliates in the center and regions to perform the following functions: marketing of regional education services, relevant advertisement campaign and attraction of graduates, organization of the entry exams and officialization of the admission to higher school and organization of the education process (initial and advisory lessons, different forms of current control and final control: exam-pass exam preparations and defense of the term papers and graduation works). These centers should also provide the electronic database – a quality document circulation intending the creation of “e-deanary” (the system covering necessary information regarding the student personnel records and control over the education process: the students' passport data, basic education and achievements). The interactivity of distance education process also covers the functions, which imply the testing of the students' level of knowledge acquisition. The students must fulfill a set of testing exercises and answer to the test questions in the computer program interaction process. In case a material is not fully acquired, the program automatically returns the student to the chapter or subject he/she has not sufficiently conceived.

Another important issue to be solved at creation of an effective model of distance education in Azerbaijan is identification of optimal and effective forms of current control over the students' education and intermediary attestation using both the traditional approaches to assessment of the their knowledge, capacities and skills, and electronic forms (e-testing, etc.) of controlling the education quality ensuring a personality identification (for ex., special devices invented in the USA enable identifying a student's personality through the speed and method of his printing results). The intermediary attestation in the distance education system must be based on the rating (collection) principle of the students' knowledge assessment and cover the organization of exams, pass exams, test assignments and control attestation, as well as performance of the term papers and individual projects.

At the end of each academic year, a final written integrated exam must take place in all the subjects in accordance with the curriculum requirements. This will enable sufficient reduction of the school expenditures for organization and implementation of the attestation. The students' final attestation must be performed using the traditional assessment methods only.

In order to organize the distance education, a higher school must compile a special collection of educational-methodological materials for every student in his learning of precise academic courses. This includes the course basic subject textbooks, reading books recorded in CDs, lecture courses burnt on e-carriers (CDs), methodological recommendations, exercises, special tests and self-control questions, topics of the tests, term papers and references, list of the relevant literature and glossary of the terms to come across the students in the education process, as well as information concerning the higher school's e-library literature.

The following components must also be covered at the development of distance education technologies: work with hyper-text – virtual textbook, scientific-theoretical review, analysis and annotation of the learnt material, fulfillment of the home work, watching the imprinting lecture-videofilm, watching the satellite TV lecture, work in the computer classrooms, discussions, interactive seminars in the form of business and role games, performance of verbal and written term papers, studying the glossary using individualized original methodology, individual exercises in the Internet network, work with the universal modules for laboratory works and practical exercises, as well as e-library funds, current module testing and written graduation exams. In case the off-line training technology is applied, a student can get access to all the training materials via e-mail without access to Internet. In the distance education system, settlement of several additional problems regarding the application of broad information base, protection of information, observation of the author's and property rights of the developers of applied program tools, as well as the testing and certification of those tools is a necessity.

Application of the organizational forms of education activity widely spread in the world practice – teleconferences, business games, group discussions, methods of work with interactive training materials and case study methods in the distance education is appropriate. Another fact should

also be considered that in the distance education system, the form of training lessons completely changes: in this case, the tutorials conducted in the form of active and intensive lessons (business games, brain attacking and case study), practical exercises and laboratory works are preferred. Another effective form of organizing the education process when distance education is applied is group and individual consultations. This method is particularly efficient in the process of solution of different problems faced by the students.

The education materials intended for distance education should meet the following demands: information transparency, non-obligatory admission of the education materials, their simplicity for understanding, easiness of the editorial and annotational works, thrift, high level of self-control and availability of interactive opportunities for establishing reverse contact. Both the distance education process in general and any education course in part has to start from opening lessons and explanations. At these lessons, students receive information concerning the teacher, familiarizes with the summary, aims and objectives of the education course and is informed about the textbooks and additional training materials he can use in studying every single course, as well as the forms of current and final controls. A glossary of relevant terms must be added to the training course. the meaning of all the new terms used in the very knowledge area and to be faced by the student at the training course is explained in the glossary [3].

The development of distance pedagogy direction of the pedagogy science in our country should also be added to the list of primary issues to be solved without a delay. “The problem of distance network training is of complex character: it has psychological-pedagogical, sociological and economic elements. It would be the most proper option to name this area of education emerging before our eyes the distance pedagogy. Already today we can say with confidence that the most complex issue pending before the distance pedagogy is replacement of the conveyer pedagogy, which is characteristic for the new time, with individualized models, and the technological processing of such models is already on the agenda. In this case, the traditional approach to the settlement of “equipment + program” problem is not quite sufficient, because a pure hope for a mystical automatic start of the scattered functional elements to operate systematically without

forming a distance education philosophy and without imagining this process in full would only disgrace the idea of distance education. It is necessary to know which equipment is definitely needed and how it will be used, real opportunities of the purchased software and exactly which part of the new concerns the education institution is likely to face will be solved by that software, as well as the role of each participant of the education process” [1, p. 89]. In the DE, the teacher’s role changes substantially. He is already not the main source of information, he becomes a kind of guide for the students in the information space.

Summing up the above-mentioned, we can reach the result that implementation of the following actions is a necessity to enable effective application of the DE system to the education practice in Azerbaijan: 1) to learn the social order, i.e., the Azerbaijani demand for DE, its state and development perspectives; 2) to discover the developed countries’ leading tendencies in the DE systems advance; 3) to create a national program for the DE development; 4) to develop the DE educational-methodological, scientific-methodological supply, as well as software and hardware on the basic education subjects at different levels of higher education: to commence the video filming of the leading teachers’ lectures and creation of the video bank, CD-bank and CD-copies of the education literature, as well as the computer tester-exerciser bank on the subjects to be studied based on the distance education technologies; 5) to train the DE cadres and create their retraining and qualification system; 6) to create the DE normative-legal, informational-analytical and marketing supply; 7) to organize the training of experts to be employed in the DE system; 8) to identify the financial mechanisms ensuring the DE system development in the country and form the relevant organizational-management structures; 9) to create both the traditional – current and final control mechanisms, and the DE-specific e-control mechanisms; 10) to improve the communications infrastructure for realization of the DE information and education technologies; 11) to active the development of DE international cooperation and involvement in the international education projects; 12) to provide the higher education standards and quality through application of the complex integrated education programs developed with consideration of the best educational traditions in our country, advanced international experience, the newest psychological-pedagogical, as

well as the information, communication and other technologies; 13) to materialize the principle of precise and addressed DE content paying due regard to the particularities of the student contingent and the specific features of the social and education-related issues they solve; 14) to create a positive public opinion concerning the DE in the country and favorable investment conditions for the organizations and persons having expressed their will to participate in the DE system development; 15) to ensure the multi-channel supply of the DE funding and gradual passage to the self-funding regime after the starting funding by the state at the initial stage of DE system formation.

Implementation of the above-mentioned measures will enable including the DE to the modern social context. This is a top priority and a strategic course of upgrading the Azerbaijan Republic higher education system.

3.6. Education against poverty

Succeeding in continuing the national leader Heydar Aliyev's socio-economic development strategy, the purposeful policy pursued by the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev leads to substantial progress in the most different spheres of the public life. The country's private sector is developing, inclusive programs are developed aiming at building the national economy on the non-oil sector in the near future, new-profile production-processing enterprises are established in the republic's regions and important steps are taken for the advance of machine-building, metallurgy, light industry, tourism industry and other areas of industry. All of these, naturally, require a bigger cadre potential, the main part of which must come from the vocational-technical schools preparing dedicated experts in the mentioned profiles.

From this aspect, the Azerbaijan Republic Vocational Technical Education Development Program (2006–2009) is of particular importance. It is known that being a part of the Azerbaijan Republic education system, the vocational-technical education has formed at different stages of society and undergone a historic path playing an important role in meeting the demand of all fields of the republican industry for specialized worker cadres.

With the development of scientific-technical progression and introduction of modern technologies, vocational schools and lyceums have become the education institutions training the specialized cadres with more complex and broader profiles and high intellectual level.

The vocational-technical education in Azerbaijan developed more rapidly in 1969–1982, when the republic was headed by the national leader Heydar Aliyev, over 100 vocational-technical schools were established at that period with the number of the students growing from 40.9 thousand to 109 thousand. The complex situation occurred in Azerbaijan during 1988–1993 influenced negatively the development of vocational-technical education along with all the other fields.

After the national leader Heydar Aliyev's return to power in Azerbaijan in the mid 1993, non-stability in the country's political-public life was eliminated, the vocational schools' activity was directed towards the development of socioeconomic fields in the country and favorable environment emerged for the radical reforms in the vocational-technical education, as well as in all the fields of economy.

The vocational-technical education institutions operating in the republic received the status of vocational schools and lyceums pursuant to the Decision # 116 of the Azerbaijan Republic Cabinet of Ministers On the Measures of Improvement of the Vocational Education System in the Azerbaijan Republic dated August 23, 1996.

After 1994, 58 vocational-professional schools with weak logistical supply and limited capacities for training highly qualified cadres were annulled or amalgamated.

The improvement of the Azerbaijan Republic Education Reforms Program created conditions for purposeful implementation of the new vocational-technical education policy. In accordance with the Program, substantial work has been done for upgrading the vocational-technical education content. The content and structure of the education plans and curricula were improved, different subjects were integrated, the extra weekly lessons burden was reduced without affecting the level of the pupils' knowledge and skills, and the General Education Subjects chapter was redrafted pursuant to the Azerbaijan Republic Cabinet of Ministers Decision # 72 On Confirmation of the National Standards of General Education in the Azerbaijan Republic dated April 29, 1999.

After the Reforms Program was adopted, 26 legal-normative documents regulating the activity of vocational-professional schools were redrafted, approved by the Education Ministry and published as a booklet.

In order to improve the informational, educational, scientific-pedagogical and methodological supply in the vocational-technical education, the *Senetkar (Craftsman – trans.)* journal started publishing since 2000.

To increase the effectiveness of education-training process at vocational schools and lyceums, enhance the pupils' interest and aspiration towards the professions and subjects, reveal the talented pupils and improve the forms and methods of work with them, a growing attention was paid to organization of the dedicated olympiads and vocational competitions.

During the years of activity, the vocational-professional schools trained and assigned in industry over one million highly qualified cadres in the fields of machine-building and instrument engineering, oil and oil chemistry, electronics and electronic industry, construction, transportation, communication, agriculture and melioration, trade and public, light and food industry, services and other fields.

Reconstruction of the Professional Training system, improvement of the vocational orientation, vocational training and retraining system, organization of the training courses aiming at reducing the female unemployment, increasing the farmers' managerial and technical knowledge, development of the environmental education programs and the relevant public enlightening, training of and refresher courses for the tourism experts and other actions are also intended as part of the National Program for Poverty Reduction and Economic Development (2003–2005) of the President of Azerbaijan Republic, Mr. Ilham Aliyev. On the other hand, the Presidential decrees and enactments concerning the National Program of the Development of Small and Medium Entrepreneurship in the Azerbaijan Republic (2002–2005), the National Program of Azerbaijan Republic Regional Socioeconomic Development (2004–2008), the National Strategy on Information and Communication Technologies for the Development of Azerbaijan Republic (2003–2012) and the Azerbaijan Republic Employment Strategy (2006–2015) show a grave need for the improvement of professional cadre training, further development of the relations between the vocational-professional education institutions and employers, as well as the meeting of the modern requirements.

The Azerbaijan Republic Vocational Technical Education Development Program (2006-2009) is aimed at solving the problems in this field and has the objectives of upgrading the vocational-professional education institutions through application of the modern logistical equipment (devices, agriculture technology, machines, mechanisms, etc.), computerization of the education process, implementation of the measures for application of new education technologies, expansion of the cadres training for the high technology-consuming production and service areas relevant to the development of national economy and labor market demands, optimization of the network of vocational-professional schools, creation of the new-type graded complexes training competitive and highly qualified cadres in the labor market and wide application of the corresponding international and local institutions' practice in organization of these activities, development and publishing of the education plans and curricula meeting the national standards, improving the effectiveness of education-training process, creating the conditions for the pupils to acquire deep and strong knowledge and high professional abilities, retraining and requalification of the engineers and pedagogical workers to help them form modern economic thinking and skills to manage the new equipment and technologies.

The program also covers precise provisions regarding the preparation of appropriate new specialty and specialization classifier to adjust the vocational-professional education to the changing demands of the labor market, ensuring of a balance between the cadres training and number of available workplaces, coordination of the cadres training system, as well as the professional training and requalification network activity with the labor market demands, focusing specially on the training of cadres for the non-state-owned sector of economy, identification of the demand for various specialized cadres in accordance with the cadres demand structure in the labor market and the relevant forecast, as well as further improvement of the permanent professional education system using progressive forms of education and thus, creating conditions for the workers to continue their education at own workplace.

For the rapid development of non-oil sector in the country, expansion of the cadres training for agriculture, tourism, processing and service fields, ensuring of that the people at confinement places acquire the professions

corresponding to the labor market's demand for worker force, raising the private sector's share in the country, assisting in the creation of private vocational-professional schools in regard of the rapid advance of small and medium entrepreneurship, organization of social partnership relations between the employers and vocational-professional schools and establishment of the state-level coordination council to regulate the process, providing the vocational-professional schools with access to Internet and other information channels and creation of a relevant database in order to receive information from the developed countries through a more effective application of the information technologies, as well as the development of the Azerbaijan Republic Law On the Vocational-Professional Education also rank among the objectives set forth in the Program. The Constitution of the Azerbaijan Republic, the Law of the Azerbaijan Republic On Education, the Law of the Azerbaijan Republic On the Rights of Children, the Decision approved by the Decree # 188 issued by the President of Azerbaijan Republic dated 30 August 1999 About Application of the Law of Azerbaijan Republic On the Social Protection of the Children Having Lost Their Parents and Deprived of the Parental Care, the State Program of Development of Small and Medium Entrepreneurship in the Azerbaijan Republic dated 17 August 2002 (for 2002-2005), the State Program for Poverty Reduction and Economic Development approved by the Decree # 854 dated 20 February 2003, the National Program of Azerbaijan Republic Regional Socioeconomic Development (2004-2008) approved by the Decree # 24 dated 11 February 2004 (for 2004-2008), the Decision on Confirmation of the Azerbaijan Republic Day of Knowledge and Regulation of the Work Regime at Education Institutions approved by the Decree # 1 dated 21 August 2004, the Azerbaijan Republic Program of Education Reforms approved by the Decree # 168 dated 15 June 1999, the Exemplary Regulation of the Azerbaijan Republic Vocational Schools and Lyceums approved by the Decision # 291 of the Azerbaijan Republic Cabinet of Ministers dated 3 August 1994, the document titled On the Measures of Improvement of the Vocational Education System in the Azerbaijan Republic approved by the Decision # 116 dated 23 August 1996, and the Vocational Education Specialty and Specialization Classifier approved by the Decision # 96 dated 17 June 2002 constitute the Program's legislative base.

The Program's implementation will lead to improvement of the normative-legal base of vocational-professional education, the supply of vocational-professional schools' logistical and educational base with modern equipment, higher effectiveness of the education process, creation of positive environment for the training of highly qualified experts, further development of the vocational-professional education on strategic courses, creation of new legal, economic and informational supply of the vocational-professional education, as well as enhancement of the vocational-professional schools' scientific-methodological and informational supply. A substantial breaking point will occur in the development and publishing of the programs, textbooks and manuals reflecting the training materials concerning the modern devices and technologies. The content of training and education will be relevant to the pupils' opportunities and be grounded on the demands of the state, community and individual.

A brisk mechanism of the cadre training planning will be worked out, the cadres training will be coordinated with the labor market's demands and the state-owned and other enterprises' cadre demand will be fully met.

The structure of the pupil contingent will improve qualitatively and the cadre training for the newly-emerging fields will expand. The structure and managerial mechanism of the vocational schools and lyceums will be improved and new types of state-owned, as well as private vocational education institutions will be created in the regions.

The profile of the vocational-professional schools failing to meet the regional demands will be changed and the vocational schools and lyceums with weak logistical supply will be annulled. The pupil's social protection will strengthen and wider opportunities will be ensured for organization of different public-cultural and sports-welfare actions for them.

An economic model reflecting a new mechanism of funding the vocational-professional education will be formed. The social protection of engineers and pedagogical workers will improve, which will lead to the growth of their pedagogical skills and methodological training, as well as expansion of their professional knowledge. All of these are among the highest achievements of Azerbaijani education due to the President Ilham Aliyev's attention and care and our society will soon see the yields of these accomplishments.

Several serious results have also been achieved in the areas of music and generally, the art. It is known that the Azerbaijani nation having rich traditions in the development of culture and art has made decent contributions to the world cultural heritage for centuries and the humanity has been astonished by the magnificence of our national music along with with our other cultural glories. The development of art traditions in Azerbaijan at the present level is linked with the name of our national leader Heydar Aliyev. The steps taken by the eminent leader in this field have truly laid the foundation of the renaissance period in the history of development of Azerbaijani culture. Most of the art-profiled education institutions active in our country were created exactly during the power of Heydar Aliyev in Azerbaijan. The national leader always appreciated highly the labor of creative intelligentsia and men of art, who have had special merits in the progress of our culture. Hundreds of musicians, composers, band-masters and men of art received the highest awards and honorary names of the former USSR and Azerbaijan owing precisely to Heydar Aliyev's efforts. Honoring the men of culture with the national awards of Azerbaijan, institution of the Presidential Pension and including the names of the youth demonstrating particular talents in the fields of art, as well as music into the Red Book are historic steps taken in the developmental path of Azerbaijani culture. Founded by Heydar Aliyev, this progressive tradition is continued by the most decent successor of the national leader's moral heritage, the President of Azerbaijan Republic, Mr. Ilham Aliyev with a greater will marks the success of each of us. The people having special merits in the development of our national culture, as well as the music, are surrounded by the state's care also today. The state has ensured all the conditions for education of the talented youth and a special program has been adopted in regard of this. Since the higher and high professional education institutions of musical and art profile have irrefutable role in the development of Azerbaijani culture and art, the special care rendered to this field by the state leadership is of particular importance. It is worth noting that at present, the music and art related specialties are taught at 7 higher, 18 high professional schools and 1 art gymnasium in the republic. 18913 students study at higher schools, 18816 – at the high professional schools and 1438 – at the art gymnasium, which means totally 39167 students study those specialties. The higher schools have 1326 students continuing their education to receive the

Masters Degree. Totally 5626 teachers work at these education institutions. Thanks to the activity of the mentioned education institutions, our national music culture has managed to maintain its unique features and developed further. The professional dedicated training in music and art is ongoing in all regions of the republic. The education institutions training cadres in these fields are located in the cities of Nakhchivan, Ganja, Sumgait, Lenkeran, Sheki, Aghjabedi, Shamakhi and Aghdam. The Shusha Music and Cultural Enlightening Schools of this profile also continue their activity. In accordance with the humanitarian policy pursued by the head of state, recently the Education Ministry has strengthened the efforts aimed at improvement of the musical education institutions' logistical supply. The Baku Music Academy, Sheki, Ganja and Sumgait musical schools have been repaired and the Music College attached to the Azerbaijani Music Academy has been provided with a new building. The role of the Music, Singing, as well as Fine Arts subjects taught at the general education schools has been increased in the high school curricula and it is intended to make a broader and more effective usage of the opportunities of these subjects in the personality formation. Following the decision of the known collegium meeting, we have sufficient grounds to expect sooner settlement of these problems with the support of the state leadership. The Education Ministry has identified new perspectives for improving the musical education in the country. A committee consisting of the most skilled pedagogists and men of music has been created and started a comprehensive activity in drafting the five-year State Program aiming at the development of national musical education.

3.7. Development prospects of higher education in Azerbaijan

Student admission to the higher and specialized secondary education institutions and fully objective and transparent course of the process represent a strategic line of the education policy pursued by the national authorities.

The process has long been driven by the State Students Admission Commission (SSAC) in a centralized way with application of the test method.

Since the time it was created, the State Commission has always demonstrated a deep understanding of its liabilities, strived to build its entire activity on scientific grounds and improve it permanently, and made substantial achievements in this field. The role of the attention and care displayed to the Commission by the national leader Heydar Aliyev and the most decent successor of his moral-political heritage, the President of the Azerbaijan Republic, Mr. Ilham Aliyev in the achievement of these successes is exceptional.

At present, the State Students Admission Commission has proved in practice the application of modern computer technologies not only in the students admission activities, but also in the mass processes of completely different nature.

The thematic olympiads, monitoring exams, election of the candidates to the court and prosecutor authorities by the test method, cadres attestation at the other national authorities and other actions may be cited among the practical samples of this experience.

The creation of the Central Elections Committee's automated information system of elections with close participation of the the State Students Admission Commission may be regarded as one of the major results of its relevant activity.

During the time of its activity, the SSAC has passed through a long way of development and every passed year was accompanied by several vital achievements in the Commission's activity. It is worthy of note that in 1992, when the Commission was newly organized, the student admission to the higher and specialized secondary schools was combined: the graduates could indicate only five specialties of these two educational stages in their applications. A special operators group consisting of 20-30 men entered the application data into the computer within 15-20 days, the answer cards were published in the Turkish Republic to be taken back to the brotherly country after the exams and read with the help of optical reader and the speciality distribution was conducted. That year, the Commission bought 5 IBM 286 computers only. The exam tests in the depository were prepared directly by the teachers in one version.

In 1993, the graduates were provided with the opportunity to choose up to 10 specialties at the higher and specialized secondary schools. The State

Students Admission Commission bought two optical readers and the applicants' knowledge assessment and specialty distribution started to be done with the software created at the SSAC. Now, the exam tests in the depository were prepared by the teachers in two versions as opposed to the previous year.

In 1994, the Graduate's Application Form relevant to the optical reader's demands was prepared the first time, the application data were recorded in the computer through the optical reader and processed. The graduates were entitled to choose up to 10 non-paid and 5 paid specialties of higher schools, as well as up to 5 specialties of the specialized secondary schools.

The results of admission exams were announced within 15 days and centralized organization of the admission tests to military schools also commenced. The admission programs for all exam subjects were developed for the first time and delivered to the applicants.

Thematic scientific-methodological seminars on individual subjects were arranged in order to improve the test development methodology and the republic's famous figures of science, teachers of the high and higher schools, as well as the experts of scientific and methodological centers were involved in its work.

In 1995, the exam subjects differentiation was introduced and 8 subject blocks were formed. The distribution in the specialties requiring aptitude exams was also conducted by the SSAC. High-speed printers were purchased. The coding and processing of the Applicant's Form and Answer Card were already implemented not in the Turkish Republic, but directly at the State Students Admission Commission. The results of entry exams were operatively processed and announced within a week. The Commission's expert councils and test banks were instituted. The test assignments entering into the SSAC were analyzed by the expert councils and gathered in the test banks.

The SSAC press body, the *Abituriyent* journal was opened and its first editions were delivered to people. The *Abituriyent* (Graduate – *trans.*) TV programs were started. The Commission received a building and it was overhauled.

Broad scientific-statistical analysis of the results of admission exams was organized. The materials received were published and presented to the

graduates, teachers and education management authorities. This type of research has been ongoing every year since then on.

In 1996, another important step was taken toward improvement of the SSAC activity – the test bank management and tests selection from the bank have both been automated. The exam tests formation in the depository was done through computers for the first time and the results of military school admissions were announced in a day. The non-residence exams and thematic olympiads with application of the test method were held by the order of the Education Ministry.

An automated system was created for conducting logical checks in the graduate data and revealing the presence of false attestations. To enable the applicants to check their level of knowledge and acquaint them with the test exams technology, the check exams started to be applied in SSAC and regional centers. The *Abituriyent* started being regularly published and the journal's 10 editions were published the very year,.

In 1997, the student admission to the paid and non-paid specialties was done simultaneously. The process of exam controllers distribution over the halls and certificate preparation were automated.

A special program was developed for ensuring operative control over the course of exams and investigating the different cases occurring, a new technological scheme was applied for discovering and preventing the cases of copying at the exam halls and 4-version test assignments were introduced.

A local network was created to increase the operativeness of the inter-computer scale information exchange. The SSAC publishing house was established and the test booklets used at the admission exams were developed at the SSAC publishing house for the first time, thus the system's confidentiality and reliability was fully nesured. The SSAC organized training courses to help the graduates prepare for the entry exams.

Within 1998-2000, the Document Admission Commissions were created in all of the republic's district and city education departments to ensure the applicants' comfort at the documents submission to higher schools and a new high-speed optical reader was purchased.

To accelerate the publishing work, 2 pieces of MANNESMAN high-speed printers and 25 pieces of Pentium-processor high-speed modern computers were bought.

A new perfect technology was worked out to reveal the cases of admission offences, when another person passes the exam instead of the applicant and 53 analogical cases were discovered through application of this method. The issue of taking appropriate measures for the guilty was raised before the relevant administrative authorities. The test assignments used in the 1992–1998 entry exams were published in the form of separate books – test collections in order to help the applicants to prepare for the admission exams more effectively with every collection covering approximately 1000 test assignments.

The booklets reflecting the exam results of applicants in every region and school were prepared, published and distributed freely to the republic's schools. To provide permanent electricity at the SSAC, a generator was installed in the building and its 5th floor was fully adjusted to a closed working regime. Video-control devices were installed in the building to fully control the closed working regime.

The base of controllers' and applicants' pictures was created using the modern video cameras and the photo-blaster added to the computers, which has ensured a more reliable check of their ID at the exams.

To improve the pupils' skills of working with tests and enable them to better acquire the subjects taught, the sets of subject and class test assignments started to be published as special editions of the *Abituriyent*.

A book titled *Our Higher Education Institutions* was published to familiarize the graduates with the higher schools' network of specialties, logistical supply, scientific-pedagogical cadres potential, future prospects, achievements, relations and social-cultural life and assist them in the specialty selection.

The INIKAS Scientific Production Center attached to the SSAC conducted a Gallup poll among the first-year students of the country's higher schools, which helped in learning the Azerbaijani student youth's attitude towards the problems of test system emerging in several areas.

The SSAC conducted the first test exam in the republic for selection of the candidates to the position of court judge pursuant to the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic dated 17 January 2000. The local and international observers watching the exam organization and implementation process expressed a positive opinion concerning its transparency and objectiveness in accordance with the international standards.

The State Commission has started joining the organization of several global events and representing our country in the settlement of problems with participation of international organizations. The very year, the Commissions took an active part in the Settlement of the Problems of 2000 forum having inclusive areas of discussion and covering all the world countries with the status of National Entity.

The SSAC was closely involved in the creation and application of the automated information system for elections to the National Assembly together with the Central Elections Commission.

In 2001-2002, a bank of tests gathered and kept in confidentiality at the State Student Admission Commission since 1994 – a rich source consisting in the average of 4 up to 8 thousand test assignments per subject and up to 100 thousand test assignments in total was published and presented to the graduates and teachers.

The SSAC joined the Internet and the Commission was provided with Internet service in order to expand the collaborators' Internet usage opportunities.

The SSAC Internet site has been put into operation. The site has enabled the graduates to check their knowledge and receive operative information concerning the document admission, exam preparation and exam process. Only in that year, up to 100 thousand applications entered into the SSAC site from the applicants and the community in general on the eve of exam preparation and the exams.

In order to accelerate the printing process, the SSAC was provided with Printronix high-speed printers. The modern publishing house supplied with modern equipment has paved the way for printing the optical forms in our country.

Considering its positive experience in the implementation of international projects and application of modern information technologies, the SSAC was appointed the executive body of the Development and First-Stage Implementation of the National Information Communication Technologies Strategy Project and the SSAC chairman was appointed the Project's National Coordinator. The SSAC chairman was entitled with the power of signing the mentioned Project on behalf of the Azerbaijan Republic by the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic Heydar Aliyev dated 9 January 2002.

In 7 February 2002, the project of NICTSP development and first-stage application was signed in Baku between the UNDP and Azerbaijani government.

In September 10, the State Commission conducted test examination of the people wishing to be employed by the Prosecutor Authorities in accordance with the Regulation On Interview with the Candidates to the Prosecutor's Office Positions approved by the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic dated 19 June 2001.

Pursuant to the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic dated 17 January 2000, the State Student Admission Commission conducted test exams in the Nakhchivan city in 17 October 2002 for selection of the candidates to the vacant judge positions in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic together with the Judicial-Legal Council, the exam was observed by international observers, including the representatives of UN in Azerbaijan and other international organizations, as well as of the mass media.

In 2003-2004, the SSAC led the first monitoring-type test exams in the Sumgait city for the first time in the Republic to check the level of knowledge of the XI grade pupils, over 4000 pupils studying at the city schools joined the exam with over 350 teachers controlling the exam process.

The SSAC prepared and started publishing test booklets for different subjects and classes based applying a special methodology to check the pupils' and graduates' level of comprehension of the curriculum materials, strengthen their knowledge and increase their skills for working with test assignments. These booklets worked out based on new curricula and textbooks gained the status of high school textbooks.

The presentation of this manual and new SSAC Internet sites – My School Project, Polyglot Electronic Dictionary and the Classman Project, as well as the site of the *Abituriyent* took place at the Education Ministry with participation of the education field representatives.

The National Information and Communication Technologies Strategy for the Development of Azerbaijan Republic (2003-2013) was approved by the Presidential Decree dated 17 February 2003 and the Cabinet of Ministers was charged with solving the issues arising from the Decree.

In April 6 in the city of Nakhchivan, the SSAC conducted test exams for 94 candidates to positions in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic prosecutor

authorities in compliance with the Regulation On Interview with the Candidates to the Prosecutor's Office Positions approved by the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic dated 19 June 2001. The results of the test were processed in April 7 and sent to Nakhchivan on the very day by fax and e-mail.

To ensure a deeper check of the graduates' knowledge of the Azerbaijani language and literature pursuant to the Law of Azerbaijan Republic On the State Language in the Azerbaijan Republic, the number of questions in the Azerbaijani Language and Literature block was raised from 25 up to 35 in the Azerbaijani section and tests consisting of 10 questions in the subject of Azerbaijani Language were added to the Language and Literature subject block in the Russian-speaking sector.

Pursuant to the appeal of the Azerbaijan Republic Defense Ministry, the SSAC provided test exams for the teacher willing to teach at the J.Nakhchivanski Military Lyceum in August 28 at the very education institution. Both the pedagogists working at the lyceum and the teachers from the city's other schools took part in the exam.

The application of test assignments at enrollment of citizens to governmental positions is intended in the Presidential Decree and this has been assigned to the SSAC.

For the first time in the republic, the SSAC has commenced the development and scale publishing of e-test educational-methodological manuals to enable the high school pupils and graduates to check their knowledge via computer. Each of these manuals produced in the form of compact discs contain the test assignments covering new curricula for 11 subjects.

In 2004, the SSAC applied special technological programs to expertize the answers of the graduates passing admission exams at higher schools and discovered that a part of graduates applying for the III specialty group used ready answers (cheated) during the exams. The SSAC annulled the exam results of 99 applicants in accordance with the Provision 12 of the Student Admission Rules and made new distribution in the III specialty group. As a result, 403 applicants were placed in the specialties they wished most and indicated in their application forms, while 34 applicants taking part in the competition gained the status of student. The outcomes achieved from the initial investigation in regard of the Admission Rules offence were reported

to the President of the Republic. The head of the country charged the National Defense Ministry (NDM) with the further investigation of the issue. As a result of the NDM operational investigation measures, a group of persons having achieved to winkle out the booklets with ready answers of the exam questions from the Commissions publishing house, which is working in closed conditions, worked out, copied and distributed the relevant answer options based on these booklets among the parents and graduates. The NDM investigations also revealed that no intervention was made to the SSAC information based and the developed system has managed to protect itself reliably on an intellectual level.

In November 2004, test exams were conducted to select employees to the vacant workplaces at the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry for the first time in the country.

In accordance with the Regulation on the Rules of Interview with the Candidates to Prosecutor Authority Positions approved by the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan President dated 19 July 2001, the Republic Central Prosecutor's Office together with the State Student Admission Commission conducted a competition consisting of test exams and conversation among the persons willing to be employed by the prosecutor authorities.

The tradition of awarding the students having gathered the highest points at the entry exams with the Presidential Scholarship has been successfully continued also during the power of Azerbaijani President, Mr. Ilham Aliyev. 100 students having authored the highest results at admission exams have been provided with the Presidential Scholarship amounting to five hundred and thousand manats for each under the Presidential Decree dated 30 September 2004. The number of the Presidential Scholarship recipients was increased from 25 up to 100 men and the amount of the scholarship – from 200 thousand manats up to 500 thousand manats based on the Presidential Decree dated 30 September 2004.

The SSAC assesses the level of knowledge of the graduates applying for education at the universities grounding on the standards worked out within framework of the curricula and courses of general education schools. The admission exams process consists of the development of visual forms used for test assignments, national standards for evaluating the applicants' level of knowledge, creation and regulation of the database for graduates,

cadres, experts and education institutions, selection and training of the cadres involved in the test exams process, providing every graduate with information concerning his results and every education institution – concerning its leading graduates, as well as statistical analysis of the results and preparation of recommendations about the future course of the process. All the mentioned stages have been developed through fully automated technological procedures in the form of an open social technical system.

The bulk of the admission exams applying the modern technologies is that these technologies enable assessing not only the graduates' level of knowledge through the short-term test exams conducted in accordance with the specialties, but also the general education at the levels of country and province, city and village, as well as school and citizen. Application of information technologies provide opportunities for saving time and human resources, as well as maintaining the objectivity during the test exams.

The use of Information and Communication Technologies ensure the following processes: transparency of the test exam process; acceleration of the results' development process; maintenance of objectiveness at knowledge assessment; equal provision of education for different strata of population; reduction of the government- allocated financial and human resources for the test exams process; and ensuring of a bigger stimulus for the education process.

The report titled the Students and the Test System (“Poll among the freshmen studying at the Azerbaijani higher education institutions”) says: “The analysis of the answers given to the questions regarding the attitude towards the test system has shown that 70 percent of the students, whose parents do not require particular specialties from them and work at agriculture-related positions, believe the test exam broadly demonstrate their level of knowledge. This fact once again proves that the test system creates equal conditions for all students irrespective of their social status. Therefore, a big portion of the students from poor families prefer the test system unlike the other social groups of the population”.

*3.8. The Bologna Process – realities,
problems and prospects*

The republic's join to the Bologna Process in the education area has a particular place among the utmost achievements made recently in Azerbaijan in regard of the higher education development. By joining the Bologna Process in 19 May 2005, Azerbaijan has actually identified the main directions of the reforms to be carried out in our higher education system in the near future and the Education Ministry has undertaken liabilities on the exchange of information and experience in accordance with the European norms and standards aiming at improvement of the higher education legislation, implementation of reforms in this sector and acceleration of integration to the common European education environment.

Today, Azerbaijan defines the priorities of own education system through integration to the processes ongoing in the world, including in the Europe. At present, exactly this principle represents the key direction of the reforms carried out in the field of higher education. Currently, integration of the European countries' education systems and formation of the all-European higher education environment is of particular topicality. In this aspect, the Bologna Process joined by 45 countries of the world has an exceptional importance.

There are European standards also in the education field and they form as part of the Bologna Process. The Bologna Process assists in the creation of European Higher Education Zone. In 1999, Education Ministers of 29 European countries signed the Bologna Declaration to create the European Higher Education Zone till 2010 applying consensus and cooperation. The main goals of the Bologna Declaration include the adaptation of easily understandable and comparable degree system, adaptation of one system built on two key stages (Bc and Mg), establishment of the credit system, supporting the dynamism for application of free movement actions bridging over the difficulties, presenting of the European cooperation as a grant of quality and promotion of the European aspects in the higher education programs.

In 2001, the goals of education through the life-time, involving the higher education institutions and students actively in the Bologna Process

and increasing the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Zone were added to the Bologna Declaration as part of the Prague Declaration. The Bologna Process was further developed through the Berlin Declaration signed in 2003 and the Bergen Declaration signed in 2005.

The main profits expected from the Bologna Process consist of enabling the universities to measure own potentials, making the universities better known by the academic world, increasing the universities' European and global competitiveness, ensuring their opportunities to reach the European Union assignments, access to the network and take samples of the successful practices, as well as ensuring the European Union funds for these practices.

Which results do we expect in the higher education from joining to the Bologna Process? We think, firstly, the content of education will be adjusted to the requirements of leading universities, the opportunities of attracting foreign experts and scientists to the republic's higher schools will be expanded, the democratization of higher education will be achieved through identification of individual education path for every single student, the mobility of students and teachers will be ensured, our higher education system will be more attractive for the citizens of foreign countries, the diplomas of our higher schools will be adjusted to those of the European higher schools, quality of the higher education will be increased through identification of the criteria meeting the international demands, the experts trained in our country will be competitive in the international environment and so on.

A decision has been adopted in accordance with the Bologna Process requirements regarding the free award of diplomas (forms) to students since 2006. A working group has been created to develop the normative documents regarding the liabilities under the Bologna Process and a plan of activities for 2006-2010 has been worked out.

The work on improving the content of the two-stage (Bc and Mg) higher education system keeps on. The regulation on attestation and accreditation of the higher and specialized high education institutions has been approved. The rules worked out in compliance with the Regulation have been registered at the Ministry of Justice.

A sample regulation has been drafted concerning the organization of credit system at higher education institutions and relevant activities have already commenced.

In the recent years, certain work has also been done by the Education Ministry and higher schools for increasing the quality of higher education experts training, passage to the multi-stage education system and accordingly, equalization of specialty degrees awarded, introduction of the multi-point system in the assessment of students' knowledge, application of the attestation and accreditation as a modern mechanism for controlling the education quality, etc. for performing the Bologna Process requirements.

Another substantial change made in the higher education system is the development of new-generation national education standards in all directions. In accordance with the international practice, the number of auditorium hours has been reduced (to 20 percent), while the number of hours for selected subjects has been increased in the new standards. In accordance with the Bologna Process demands, the number of theory weeks has been reduced and the term of experience has been increased with regard to the specialties.

As we know, one of the major demands of the Bologna Process is application of the credit system in higher education. There are different approaches to the credit system in the world practice. Depending on the content and organizational forms of education in different countries, the credit system is applied in different forms. Yet, despite of the difference in approaches, the objective is common – to establish democratic principles in higher education and increase the education quality.

Certainly, introduction of the credit system is linked first of with its particular advantages. Let's review some advantages of this system:

In this system, every student develops his/her individual plan of education and has the right to determine the successiveness of studying the subjects. Thus, the direct participation of students in the organization of education process is ensured.

Every student has the right to choose the teachers of different subjects in compliance with the higher school's opportunities, which serves to a more effective building of the teacher-student relationships and may prevent the negative cases existing to date.

The academic debts may be annulled only after the repetitive hearing, and not after a little time as opposed to the existing rules, which prevents the grading of students without a due knowledge of the subject and eliminates several negative cases. The teachers' lesson burden is defined by the students'

individual curricula, which largely increases the teachers' responsibility. The requirement concerning leading of the lectures and seminars by one single teacher creates conditions for involvement of highly-qualified experts to the education process and optimal formation of the educational burden. This affects positively the education quality.

The curricula and syllabuses are coordinated with the appropriate documents of the all-European higher schools. This, in turn, ensures the student mobility both inside the country and in the European space. That is, according to the agreements concluded between the higher schools, the students of the republic's higher schools may be sent to the European higher schools and the credits they gain may be mutually acknowledged by the higher schools. Thus, the students will be enabled to get double or two diplomas. In addition, extensive actions are undertaken to ensure the acknowledgement of diplomas in Europe and foreign citizens' study at Azerbaijani higher schools.

Favorable conditions are being created also for students to acquire another close specialty during one education term. For ex., the persons studying the specialty of mathematics may acquire also the specialty of information sciences by studying the related subject, and the students of the philology specialty may also study journalism, etc.

Besides, the talented youth are provided with conditions to finish their education before the fixed term. Since the students are granted the opportunity to learn and repeatedly listen to the subjects upon their choice, they can finish their education during a certain period without being dismissed from the higher school. The new design of the annex to diploma and reflection of the content of taught subjects here, as well as identification of relevant credits for every single subject and evaluation meeting the European standards extensively facilitates the acknowledgement of diplomas in the mentioned location.

Separate block (module) identification of every single subject enables the teachers of this subject to teach it during one semester or one year at the foreign higher education institutions partnering with the higher school, where he works, which ensures the teacher's improvement by learning the foreign experience. {21.}

The above-mentioned are the factors underlining the importance of passage to the credit system. Yet, since the system is new for Azerbaijan, several

actions are still needed for acquisition of these novelties. For this purpose, extensive enlightening of the higher school students, teachers and parents should be undertaken.

Other difficulties are related to the conversion of national education standards and relevant curricula with reference to the credit units of national education standards in the experimented directions and accordingly, the curricula, identification of the teachers' lesson burden in accordance with the credit units, as well as development and application of the normative documents ensuring the education process during the experiment period.

The urgency of solving all such problems has come with creation of a working group at the Education Ministry consisting of the higher school experts to implement those functions, work out the common rules of applying the credit system at our higher schools and development of the appropriate normative documents, the working group has studied the experience of several foreign countries in application of the credit system and conducted seminars, conferences and round tables with involvement of international experts, as well as discussions with the higher school authorities. Consequently, the Sample Regulation of Organizing the Education with application of Credit System at Higher Education Institutions was developed and approved by the Education Ministry.

Since September of the 2006-2007 academic year, application of the credit system on several specialties commenced in the country's 8 higher education institution (Baku State University, Azerbaijan State Oil Academy, Azerbaijan Technical University, Azerbaijan Architecture and Construction University, Azerbaijan State Economic University, Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University, Baku Slavonic University and Azerbaijan Languages University).

It is worth noting that higher schools regarded this work responsibly, conferences, seminars, round tables and trainings have been organized at the higher education institutions with participation of the professor-teacher personnel, students and their parents, the directions in which the credit system will be applied and relevant education groups have been determined and the tutor (education consultant) service has been established.

Besides, pursuant to the sample regulation approved by the Ministry, regulations, curricula, the teachers' education work plans and the students'

individual and working education plans have been developed and approved in compliance with the higher school profiles.

Another key factor in the introduction of credit system is the multi-grade system ensuring the objective assessment of students' knowledge and subject acquisition. The Education Ministry started experimenting on the multi-grade assessment of students' knowledge at most higher schools way back since 1999. It should be noted that the normative documents ensuring the system were developed and certain amendments were made to the documents in the course of gaining experience. Today, it can be boldly said that most of our higher schools have gathered certain experience regarding the application of this system. Therefore, the multi-grade system tested at our higher schools has already found its place in the organization of education with application of the credit system. Certainly, there is a need for improving the multi-grade assessment of student's knowledge due to the passage to the credit system, which will be fully solved in the course of the process.

The steps taken in this field constitute only a small part of the inclusive activities to come. Many problems arise as the system is applied and such problems are not excluded also in the future. Namely, certain concerns relating to the award of student scholarships, identification of the teachers' lesson burden, organization of the summer semesters and accordingly, the payment of teacher salaries, formation of groups with reference to the minimal number of students in the selected subjects, determination of the rules for a student's repeated hearing of a subject, introduction of amendments to the existing norms defining the professor-teacher personnel's timing in accordance with the credit system, etc. are already starting to appear.

However, there are quite good chances for solving these problems and they are applied more and more intensively.

Azerbaijan's joining to the Bologna Process has created the necessity of preparing the structure of minimal national requirements set before the content and level of Bachelor preparation and new relevant standards. In regard of this, a new draft structure of the basic education programs ensuring the Bachelor training has been worked out.

In the draft structure, the number of lecture hours has been reduced from 4140 to 3305 on average (20 percent), and the number of obligatory subjects in the humanitarian division has been reduced from 10 down to 3. These

obligatory subjects include only Azerbaijani History, Azerbaijani Language (for those studying in other languages) and Foreign Language. The other subjects have been identified as selective subjects in the form of offer.

The number of hours ensured for the selective subjects has been increased from 5 percent to 20 percent in compliance with the international experience. To meet the Bologna Process demands, the number of weeks has been reduced from 133 to 115 in regard of the future application of the credit system and starting of the lessons since September 15 pursuant to the Presidential Decree. The term of pedagogical experience has been increased from 10 up to 18 weeks.

Certain measures are being taken for improvement of the multi-stage cadres training, control over the educational quality (accreditation), raising the student and teacher mobility, acknowledgement of the diplomas, employment of the higher school graduates, adult learning and other solutions as part of the Bologna Process.

The Regulation on Attestation and Accreditation of the Higher and Specialized Secondary Education Institutions has been approved by the Decision #49 of the Azerbaijan Republic Cabinet of Ministers dated 15 April 2004. In accordance with this document developed to correspond to the Azerbaijan Republic Education Law and other legislative acts and identifying the rules of attestation and accreditation of all the higher and specialized secondary education institutions active in the territory of Azerbaijan Republic and their branches irrespective of their subordination, for of ownership or organizational-legal status, the main goal of attestation and accreditation is to ensure the establishment of citizens' education rights defined by the Constitution and education institutions' activity at the level meeting the requirements of education legislation and national education standards.

Attestation and accreditation of all education institutions located in the territory of Azerbaijan Republic (as well as the branches and departments of other countries' education institutions operating in Azerbaijan) is implemented by the Azerbaijan Republic Education Ministry irrespective of their subordination, form of ownership or organizational-legal status. For this purpose, the Education Ministry creates the accreditation commission on permanent working mode.

The accreditation commission may include the Education Minister (as Chairman), his deputies, heads and experts of the relevant leading offices

and departments, head of the Institute of Education Problems, as well as the representatives of ministries, organizations and entities governing a higher and specialized secondary education institution.

Attestation of the higher and specialized secondary education institutions is the main form of national-public control over the education quality at education institutions and represents a procedure determining the correspondence of specialist training to the requirements of national education standards.

Attestation of the education institutions is usually conducted by the Azerbaijan Republic Education Ministry every four years. Attestation of a newly-opened education institution, as well as an active education institution's newly-established directions (specialties) is conducted after the graduation of specialists. In case of necessity (students' appeal regarding the education quality, etc.), or based on an education institution's application, an extraordinary attestation may also take place.

Education institutions may implement a pre-attestation self-analysis procedure referring to the rules established. The results of self-analysis are taken into consideration after being specified.

During the attestation, correspondence of the education institution's education content and quality to the national standards, implementation of the education plans and curricula, students' level of comprehension of different subjects and results of the national exams, results of the students' knowledge attestation conducted by the commission created for attestation of the education institution, scientific, pedagogical and scientific-methodological supply of the education, distribution of pedagogical cadres, their specialty considerations, education institution's medical-social state, logistical supply, development dynamics and other issues are investigated. Also, the data concerning the results of self-analysis are specified.

The primary condition of attestation of an education institution and its relevant structural divisions, different directions and specialties is the positive assessment of more than half of the students by the commission established for attestation of the education institution.

The attestation form of students' knowledge is defined by the Education Ministry.

An education institution having failed to pass the attestation may pass repeated attestation in a year. No student admission is planned for the

education institution having failed to pass the attestation or for the academic year, when cadres training in different directions (specialties) was intended.

In case an education institution fails to pass the second attestation, its education activity is stopped and the Education Ministry, as well as the ministries, committees and entities having subordinate higher and specialized high education institutions take collective measures regarding the further education of the students studying there.

A positive order by the Education Ministry concerning the accreditation of an education institution is the main condition for its accreditation. If there is a positive order issued by the Education Ministry concerning the accreditation of the education institution, the relevant set of documents is submitted to the accreditation commission within a week.

Accreditation is a procedure of identification of an education institution's status (type and sort) and its list of education programs for which the institution is entitled to award an education certificate of national sample.

The accreditation commission reviews the submitted set of documents within a week and adopts a relevant decision. Based on that decision, the Azerbaijan Republic Education Ministry gives direction concerning the education institution's accreditation. The information concerning the accreditation of the education institution is published by the publishing entities.

In case the current status (type and sort) of an education institution does not coincide with the relevant norms established for the same-status education institutions, a negative decision may be issued about its accreditation. In this case, the education institution may only act with the status defined by the accreditation commission.

Education institutions are usually accredited for a 4-year term.

The order on accreditation of an education institution loses its force when an education institution's term of accreditation is finished, if the education institution has submitted a relevant appeal, if the education institution refuses attestation before it starts, if the education institution's license is annulled, or reorganized. Attestation and accreditation have already been performed in many higher education institutions of the country and justified itself.

Another novelty introduced to the education field is the start of the notification process – acknowledgement of the diplomas of Azerbaijani citizens having finished their education abroad.

The Azerbaijan Republic Cabinet of Ministers also has a decision on the approval of the Rules of Acknowledgement and Equivalency Identification (Nostrification) of Foreign States' Higher Education Specialties. These Rules have been prepared with reference to the 1st provision of the Decree #346 of the President of Azerbaijan Republic dated 6 March 2000 on some actions towards the implementation of the Law of Azerbaijan Republic on approval of the Convention about Acknowledgement of Higher Education Specialties in the European Region.

Acknowledgement of foreign states' higher education specialties means the approval of the viability of any document, diploma or another certificate given by the authoritative entities of foreign states confirming the successful end of a higher education program and providing this or another academic degree in the territory of Azerbaijan Republic.

Identification of the equivalency of foreign states' higher education specialties means ensuring of the same academic and professional rights to the owners of the documents, which confirm the acquisition of these specialties by the authoritative entities of foreign states, with the owners of documents confirming higher education given in the Azerbaijan Republic.

The Certificate on acknowledgement and equivalency identification of foreign states' higher education specialties entitles its owner to gain extra (second) specialty, be accepted to the post-diploma training stage, as well as involve in the relevant professional activities.

Acknowledgement and equivalency identification of foreign states' higher education specialties does not relieve the owners of the documents confirming the specialty acquisition from the observation of general requirements determined by the Azerbaijan Republic legislation at employment in the republic's territory.

Acknowledgement of foreign states' higher education specialties and issuance of the relevant Certificate is performed by the Azerbaijan Republic Education Ministry based on these rules.

The Certificate on equivalency identification of foreign states' higher education specialties is issued by the Azerbaijan Republic Education Ministry following the expert appraisal realized with reference to the provisions intended in the existing rules.

If the equivalency is fixed in the international and intergovernmental agreements joined by the Azerbaijan Republic, the Certificate on equivalency is provided without any expert appraisal.

Acknowledgement and equivalency identification of foreign states' higher education specialties, as well as the issuance of the relevant Certificate is performed with reference to the application by the document's owner, or an interested organization, as well as juridical and natural bodies.

The procedure of acknowledgement of foreign states' higher education specialties is performed in compliance with the existing international agreements and recommendations, national education standards and normative legal acts regulating the Azerbaijan Republic's education system.

Acknowledgement of the document on higher education for recognition of the higher educational specialties by the country, where it was issued, and the reflection of higher education specialties acknowledgement in the international agreements of Azerbaijan Republic are a necessity.

The content of the plan of instruction and curricula, attestation systems, volume of the learned subjects, results of the attestations upon subject, manufacturing experience and its term, as well as the result of final attestation are considered during the expert appraisal.

Expert conclusion regarding the correspondence of the content of education received abroad with the national education standards of Azerbaijan Republic and possible methods of eliminating the revealed inconsistency is submitted to the Azerbaijan Republic Education Ministry.

The motives leading to negative conclusions have also been specifically reflected in the rules. The applicant may submit complain in the determined way in case he is not satisfied by the reasons substantiating the non-acknowledgement and refusal to present the Certificate on equivalency.

3.9. New courses in the Azerbaijani education

Strong support to the new socioeconomic relations system in our society, Azerbaijan's integration to the global community on the way to the democratic development and generally, the world's changing demands have led to emergence of new courses in the national education. One of such courses still young for Azerbaijan is the Master's degree education.

Improvement of the Master's degree education has become one of the priority objectives set in Azerbaijan. Presently, the Master's Programme is active in the republic's 39 higher schools with over 10 thousand students studying the Programme. In order to ensure transparency at the Master's education admission process, the State Student Admission Commission has started to supervise the process.

The Master's Programme suggests intramural and extramural forms of education. Depending on the specialty, normative term of this stage of education may last for 1.5-2 (in the extramural department – 2.5 years) years as defined by the Master's Programme Curricula.

At the last semester of Master's Programme, the students defend the Master's Thesis in front of the specialized Scientific Council. The persons having fulfilled the individual plan set forth by the Master's Programme and successfully defended the Mastership Thesis are awarded with the Master's Scientific Degree in the appropriate specialty and the National Master's Diploma of the common form. Improvement of the education process at this stage of education and conformation of the Azerbaijani Master's Education Programme with the education standards of many developed European countries is a demand of the day.

Another interesting notion brought to our lives by the modern time is, certainly, the notion of private education. There is no need to underline the fact that private education is directly related to the free market economy and free entrepreneurship environment.

The Azerbaijani government is successfully continuing to pursue the policy intending further improvement of the conditions for free entrepreneurship activity in the republic, development of the private sector and entrepreneur funding policy aimed at formation of the medium stratum in the society. The steps taken towards the advance of entrepreneurial business are grounded on a systematic and successive activity conception.

The developed countries' progressive experience has long proved the reality that implementation of several strategic tasks pending before the society, ensuring of the economic advance, reduction of the unemployment level, streamlining of infrastructure, as well as achieving the solution of other social problems without creating optimal private-sector-oriented environment during the passage to market economy is a complicated mission. The

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev properly assessed this reality since his first days of power and the measures taken in the republic and aimed at development of free entrepreneurship have recently assumed yet more intensive character. The head of the state pays a special regard to liberalization of economy, market's release from monopolism and unjust rivalry, promotion of the private sector and granting of privileged loans to entrepreneurs. All of these pave the way for advance of private education in Azerbaijan. Big achievements are made in this field. The quality improvement of education offered by the country's private universities enjoys a special attention. The activity of fictitious, in name only "universities" having appeared as a result of the legal gaps existing in the early 90s of the last century are being reconsidered. The problems confronted in this area are gradually eliminated. Appropriate steps are taken for establishment of a free competition environment serving to development of the education field. Private universities progress up to the extent enabling them to compete with the leading state universities, their logistical supply improves and the cadre contingent strengthens. The citizens' attitude towards the private education changes.

Positive tendencies are also observed in the development of private sector active in the general education area. Our people start taking the investments made in their children's education as the most approvable investment aimed at the future and don't begrudge their financial opportunities in order to give them a better education.

Huge prospects are spotted in the higher education sphere. They include reforms in the higher education content, development of the new-generation national education standards for different directions (specialties) relevant to the structure of approved basic education programs, implementation of measures aiming at the integration to European educational system as part of the Bologna Process, expansion of the arrangement and introduction of the credit-system education, continuation of the higher education institution's attestation and accreditation process and attraction of international organization to the process, creation of e-manuals and e-libraries in the higher education sphere, reinforcement of the managerial and planning potentials in the higher education institutions, organization of the marketing service in higher education institutions, development of new curricula for the teachers' requalification education, strengthening of the higher schools' logistical and

educational supply, as well as the ensuring of full admission of the national education standards and basic higher education curricula meeting the modern standards.

Designing of the professional training forecasting system in vocational education meeting the labor market demands and needs, development of a new classifier serving as a ground for expert training, training of the primary school teachers upon the new strategy and conception worked out for the teacher training and development of the curricula and corresponding textbook for the Basics of Education subject, improvement of the passage mechanism for stepping over the education grades, as well as training of the managers for Azerbaijani education sector also rank among the most topical issues intended for the near future.

Public universities, lecture halls, libraries, information centers, clubs and tele- and radio-education programs have also been introduced to enable our citizens to receive free education. The citizens getting free education are entitled to listen to the lectures and participate in practical lessons at different education institutions through a corresponding permission.

A new requalification model has been developed and is currently applied in the additional education sphere based on the “order-and-supply” principle. The “prop mechanism” has been adopted in the requalification field and 20 new curricula for 6 subjects have been designed and applied. A ministerial strategy has been introduced for teaching the active/interactive training technology to teachers and effective international cooperation relations have been established for the teachers’ requalification (with UNICEF, British Council, OSI, Norwegian Women’s Organization, International Red Cross Committee, etc.). The concepts of adult learning, post-diploma education and distance education have been designed, the course of ICT application has been added to the requalification content and the regulative pack of documents supervizing the requalification education has been developed.

The activity of requalification and cadres retraining institutions is built on the principle of order based on the society’s demand and is implemented upon the agreements concluded with entities, organizations, offices and individual citizens with consideration of the state orders. The form, duration and content of the education is determined by the agreement reached with the consumer. The teachers’ personnel working at education institutions

without having pedagogical education is provided with retraining in pedagogical and psychological sciences. The prospects in the additional education sphere are quite big, too. Development of new curricula for the requalification education, reinforcement of the logistical and educational supply of requalification- and retraining-oriented education institutions, expansion of the distance education practice, strengthening of the legislative base for improvement of the adult learning system, development of the life-long – continual education in accordance with the Bologna Process terms, participation in international requalification projects, introduction of active/interactive and other new training technologies into the requalification curricula, improvement of the “teaching class” professional level and the requalification institutions’ structure are of particular topicality as issues of crucial importance.

As part of these prospects, survey of the international experience and modern technologies and expansion of their application potentials, creation of the monitoring and assessment mechanism for the requalification education, branching of the exercise of active/interactive and other training technologies, as well as introduction of active/interactive and other new training technologies into the requalification curricula are also important.

Certainly, the education sphere also has problems to deal with. Yet, the measures carried out and the high care rendered to education by the state are first of all aimed at elimination of the existing concerns.

The President of the Azerbaijan Republic, Mr. Ilham Aliyev has set substantial goals in regard of the settlement of existing problems and education development strategy: **“In general, the problems existing in the education sphere will find their solution. I do not doubt of this. First of all, positive yields are already noticed in the reinforcement of the logistical supply of education. This has to be done and we shall do it. At the same time, this needs an economic potential. We have it and it keeps growing. Yet, the issues linked with improvement of the level of education process are also essential. This field needs a special regard and the education quality must raise. The youth studying at high and higher education schools must get a good education and have substantial knowledge in order to serve effectively to our Motherland and country”**.

3.10. Adult Education

Azerbaijan is achieving certain success also in the adult education sphere, which has come to the agenda as one of the world's most topical concerns recently.

Being an integral part of the life-long education system, Adult Education (“Образование взрослых”, “Erwachsenenbildung”) is a process of education implemented on the basis of rapid curricula to ensure the citizens' conformation to the permanent transformations ongoing in the society and economy.

Though a quite extensive field, its shortest definition may be like this: adult education is an education process ensuring an adequate and brisk adjustment to the changes taking place (permanently) in economy and society. The target group represent the people having already passed the maturity age, living their own independent lives and having life experience and in many cases, a profession (conditionally, those older than 18).

The science of andragogy studies the scientific grounds of this education sphere. Considering the target group's characteristics in the Adult Education (AE), a special methodology and didactics are applied. In the European countries, the AE is accepted as an education system ensuring the men with constant engagement and active citizen's position. AE represents the fourth element (general, vocational, professional education and AE) of the Life-Long Education (LLE) system and a first-grade priority for the transition/developing countries.

The LLE concept differs from the continual education concept carried out in the former Soviet space mainly for providing the education process both in the vertical and horizontal directions. That is, people get knowledge concerning not only the fields directly related to their professions, but also additional fields. This enables the citizens adapt adequately and quickly to the changes occurring (constantly) in the economy and society. Another difference is that the LLE comes out as a huge care rendered by the state (partial funding, appropriate conditions for development and control over the compliance with general/framework rules determined by the state) and is independent, aimed directly at the demands of society (citizenship education, education for development of personal qualities, etc.) and labor market (professional knowledge), responds quickly to the ongoing changes, and is

therefore far away from the formality characteristic to the continual educational system existing in the former Soviet environment.

The work and life models are changing quite speedily in the modern time, which is called the century of knowledge. The citizens' successful adaptation to these transformations taking place regularly in the society and economy is possible only through the Life-Long Education. If in the XIX century there was the agrarian century and in the XX – the industrial century, the XXI century is named the century of knowledge/information. That is, the society should now meet own demands with the help of revenues received not from the manufacturing of agriculture or industry products, but from the intellectual products, or else, the society will decline. Therefore, the European Union has accepted the Adult Education as one of the keys matching the doors of the XXI century.

The traditional education field is very inert and cannot bring up the expert/citizen required by the economy/society, as the formation/reforms process in Azerbaijan has not finished up to date. This process will still continue a while. However, it is worthy of note that the aim of the LLE and its major integral part – AE is not correcting the gaps or errors of the traditional education system.

The knowledge and data obsolescence speed in the world is growing with every year and education received once fails to suffice the people until their life. Because, a substantial part of the knowledge provided even by a quite perfect education system becomes already a useless information having lost its original topicality when the process is finished. In other words, everybody should permanently upgrade, enrich and adjust to the time's demands his professional knowledge and skills, as well as personal qualities both quantitatively and qualitatively in order to take an active part in the society's economic, social, cultural and political life.

The country's present dynamic growth requires already today and this very moment an expert and/or an active citizen, who is competitive, brisk and has the new knowledge and "key competences" along with the professional knowledge and skills. Otherwise, a continuous development cannot be provided in any field.

At present, the problem is urgent for every country irrespective of its developmental level. For ex., science and technology is so rapidly advancing

in the modern Europe that every year, approximately 20% of the knowledge loses its topicality and thus, the content of professions gets completely obsolescent in 5–8 years. It is no coincidence that LLE is defined as a comprehensive training activity ongoing permanently with the purpose of increasing the knowledge and skills, as well as professional competence within framework of the European employment strategy. There are many documents of this type – European Memorandum on Continuous Education, the Hamburg Declaration, the Dakar Declaration, Sofia Declaration, etc. (<http://www.iiz-dvv.az/ob.html>.) Yet, these ideas and plans do not remain on paper, but huge projects and inclusive reforms are carried out respectively.

The above-mentioned points are of sufficient topicality for the countries with transition economies like Azerbaijan. Namely, the process of transformation of social-political structure in these countries as a result of passage to one socioeconomic formation to another has coincided with the passage to the post-industry society ongoing in the world. Therefore, the processes of building a legal state and a democratic society, as well as socioeconomic development ongoing in the country are accompanied by yet more complex concerns. That is, it is crucial to ensure the compliance of professions acquired and professional skills assumed during the planned economy and totalitarian ideology environment, which existed in Azerbaijan for quite a long time, with the modern requirements.

Citing only one fact will do: presently, about 60–70% of the country's workable population received education or worked during the administrative supervision system. At that time, a profession acquired once would provide one with a life-long employment. Nevertheless, the rapid replacement of technologies in the current market economy conditions requires a quick and dynamic growth of professions and acquisition of new specialties.

Due to the weak progress of these very processes in Azerbaijan, many people stepping onto the independent life and having certain professional education have confronted the acute unemployment and accordingly, the poverty problems. Because, the researches conducted unambiguously prove that the unemployment problem currently existing in the country has emerged not only from the lack of workplaces, but also from the non-correspondence of unemployed and job-seeking citizens' professional education and skills to

the demands of modern labor market. For ex., this is a fact that the market structures active in the country (and even the state-owned structures) are searching for the experts with work experience and knowing the market economy principles, while on the other hand, there is an army of unemployed people in the country with higher education. Hence, the employment of the country's unemployed and job-seeking citizens necessitates their acquisition of the adequate professionals and specialties, which are competitive in the labor market and meet the modern demands.

Another fact: every year, approximately over 140.000 youth finish the high schools (11th and 9th grades) in the country. About 28.000 of them enter into higher, 16.000 – into high vocational and 14.000 – technical-vocational education institutions, and the remaining, about 82.000 youth are obliged to seek for a position in the labor market and society without any profession/specialty. The failure of such unqualified people to get employed in conditions of strong competition emerged in the labor market owing to the country's grave socioeconomic conditions is clear.

There are certain differences between the adult education and traditional education. That is, if the traditional education system aims at training of decent citizens for society and necessary cadres for economy, the mission of adult education precisely is to ensure adaptation of the citizens having already had the traditional education system to the permanent transformations ongoing in the society and economy. Another specific feature of this education is i) its implementation through the brisk education curricula based on the andragogicsl principles.

The adult education contingent may include the following social-demographic groups:

- professional labor employees attracted to requalification and specialty diversion related with the changes and novelties occurring in the content of labor functions;
- those engaged in personal husbandry and individual labor activity;
- those willing to change their field of engagement or profession;
- those returning to the professional work activity after a long-term break, including the maternity leave;
- experts newly starting the independent life;
- those without professions;

- the unemployed needing acquisition of a new profession or requalification;
- those demobilized from military service;
- those in prison and former prisoners;
- refugees and IDPs, including immigrants;
- those unable to assume the education materials in common conditions and with limited health abilities;
- those obliged to adapt to a new social-cultural environment for different reasons;
- those willing to improve own personal qualities or expand their knowledge area, etc.

In general, the reasons actualizing the adult education problem in Azerbaijan are the following:

- the unemployment problem existing in the country are caused not only by the lack of work places, but also by the discrepancy of unemployed and job-seeking citizens' professional-vocational education and work skills with the modern labor market requirements. Firstly because about 60-70% of the country's workable population are those, who studied or worked during the administrative regulation system. So, making a large portion of Azerbaijani workable population competitive in the labor market requires their requalification, which makes the adult education problem in the country a necessity;
- Adaption of approximately one million refugees and IDPs to new conditions (even if temporarily) and creation of new work opportunities for them is necessary, since they have lost both their native lands and work places. In other words, adult education is also topical from the standpoint of refugees and IDPs problem, which is the country's painful problem;
- Most people engaged in the small and medium entrepreneurship activity in Azerbaijan (especially those working in the regions) need entrepreneurship education in order to perform successfully and in accordance with the civil market traditions. 60% of those involved in entrepreneurship are people older than 40 years. This means, they have no substantial knowledge in entrepreneurship, for they received education in the times of USSR. In other words, the problem of

adult education is of vital essence also for the development of entrepreneurship.

- The problem of improving the theoretical knowledge and practical skills of a huge army of officials participating in the management process implemented in the country in compliance with the modern requirements is another important task to be solved. Therefore, adult education is of particular importance also for the democratic management system;
- Expansion of the information technologies application spheres in the country has become a national policy priority. This necessitates organization of trainings for the officials of enterprises and organizations, where the information technologies are newly applied, and for the population to enrich their relevant skills;
- The population's ecological enlightenment is quite low, while the country has grave ecological problems. This, accordingly, necessitates the corresponding adult education;
- In general, the country's population needs a serious enlightenment concerning the democratic civil society building, where the appropriate adult education process may become an effective method;
- There are certain discrepancies between the cadres training and labor market demands owing to the non-completion of reforms in the sphere of traditional education. Thus, there appears a need for a quick and short-term additional training of even the newly-trained cadres;
- Every year, over 82.000 of the youth graduating from the high schools are deprived of the opportunity to continue their education and acquire a profession. Thus, the adult education system must be used to provide them with alternative education opportunities;
- Surprisingly though, the Azerbaijani population has started growing old as the European population. According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, in the last 10 years, the birth index has reduced twice, but the average life of people has doubled. This means the share of older population will gradually grow, which will create a need for the adult education system to ensure their continuous employment;
- European integration sets new demands for every single Azerbaijani citizen. This includes firstly his/her education relevance to the

European and thus, the international standards, understanding and application in daily life of the democratic values, observation of the Life-Long Education conception in order to maintain competitiveness, etc.

Only one factor is missing in Azerbaijan to ensure continuous development in all the fields – competitive and brisk professionals in different fields holding an active civil position. In other words, investments in human resources is a decisive concern for Azerbaijan. It is no coincidence that the speedy growth characteristic of the national GDP cannot be referred to the human development index. This shows that the “black gold” should be transformed into the human gold in a more operative and speedy manner. Continuous development cannot be provided through the creation of mere infrastructures, for the human factor is the decisive element of every development. A human being can only play the role of catalyzer in this development through the education. Otherwise, he will remain aside of these processes and thus, the development will lose its continuous character and become short-term. No perfect infrastructure, new area of production or service can make own contribution to the development without the human factor.

In Europe, the “bigger investment programs in the human resources” already means the assistance in adult education and life-long education system.

The most important organizations in the world supporting the Adult Education are: the European Union, (http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/index_en.html); Council of Europe, (<http://ue.eu.int>); European Training Foundation (ETF, www.etf.eu.int); Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, www.oecd.org by department – Directorate for Education); UNESCO Education Institute (www.unesco.org/education/uie/); the World Bank, (<http://www.worldbank.org/> – Learning); European Adult Education Association (EAEA, www.eaea.org, http://www.nepfoiskola.hu/eaea/EAEA_ru/index_ru.html); Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (IIC/GAEA, www.iiz-dvv.de). The tasks have been divided among the organizations with a simple method. Each organization supports the fields relevant to its profile:

The European Union supports the vocational education, youth education and international exchange programs serving to the development of LLE

system, the Council of Europe – educational issues linked with globalization and harmonization, problems of national minorities and protection of their rights, the European Training Foundation – the projects aimed at development of vocational education and LLE system, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development – repeated education, internship experience, assessment of the AE system and LLE, UNESCO – expansion of literacy, researches in the areas of basic education and vocational education, as well as the AE system development, the World Bank – education-related issues in the context of poverty reduction and ensuring of the continuous development, European Adult Education Association – all the AE- and LLE-related issues as the union representing over 100 AE organizations of 34 European countries, the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association – issues of wide spectrum in the world’s 54 countries grounding on the AE- and LLE-related experience of 1000 German National Universities (AE entities).

At present, only some of these organizations implement the AE and LLE promotion projects in Azerbaijan. The European Union has been carrying out the vocational education and LLE-fields support project in Azerbaijan through its Agency, the European Training Foundation, since 2004. Currently, appropriate researches are ongoing for identification of the problems and prospects of these areas and cooperative relations are established with the relevant structures. The European Adult Education Association has suggested its support to the AE organizations active in Azerbaijan and membership to become a member of the Association. 3 organizations from Azerbaijan are already members of this international entity (<http://www.eaea.org/index.php?k=7197>).

The activity of the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association may be divided into several major parts:

- spreading and propagating the AE and LLE ideas in the society and state;
- creation of the legislative base providing for the development of AE and LLE areas;
- rendering of the methodological, financial and consultancy services to AE organizations;
- creation of the AE scientific-methodological and teacher potentials;

- development and implementation of the AE sample projects ensured with continuity.

The achievements made in Azerbaijan in the area of Adult Education consist firstly of the activity of non-formal Coordination Council for the Adult Education, adoption of the Adult Education concept by the Education Ministry and the approval of the draft law on Adult Education at the first parliamentary reading. Other relevant activities include also the creation of AE chair attached to the Azerbaijan Teachers' Institute, the AE topicality has already been conceived by many representatives of the state, education sphere, NGOs and community and the local AE entities have become members of the international network.

There is also a grave need in Azerbaijan for establishment of a liberal and democratic legislation base to regulate systematically the Adult Education sphere, formation of the inter-ministerial national-public entity to regulate the institutional development of the Adult Education system, creation of an information base to evaluate the current conditions regarding the Adult Education process and improvement of the relevant statistics.

The state's assistance in the establishment of the AE-related social partnership through its relevant mediation, identification of the employers' and labor market representatives' participation mechanism in the cadres training process, realization of the corresponding information-enlightenment campaign, rendering of assistance to trade unions in order to activate them, identification and implementation of the mechanisms stimulating the investments in the cadres training of enterprises and organizations, assumption of the educational services, as well as the cadres training services as activities included in the category of social services, differentiation of such services from the common commercial work, granting of the tax-related and other privileges, creation and development of the marketing service at the level of education institutions in order to study the demands of labor market in the system of such institutions, creation of the Adult Education scientific-methodological and cadres supply (methodological studies, scientific degrees, refresher courses, faculties, researches, scientific works, etc.), are a necessity. Establishment of the Adult Education resource centers (for performance of such functions as information, professional orientation, education, enlightening, propagation, etc.), reinforcement of the existing requalification and refresher education

institutions' logistical and education supply, expansion of the relevant network, the state's ensuring of the poor and disadvantaged people's involvement in the AE, implementation of the measures stimulating the people engaged in professional activities to continuously refresh their specialties (salary growth, privileges, education leaves, etc.), creation of broad opportunities for adult citizens to develop their personal qualities along with their professional knowledge and skills, attraction of municipalities, public organizations and communities to the AE development process (joint projects, orders and other measures), wide application of the ICT opportunities in the AE development process (distance education, e-libraries, labs, databases, web-portals, etc.), creation of the accreditation (official recognition) mechanism of the knowledge and skills acquired in a non-formal way, as well as expansion of the international cooperation in the AE and Life-Long Education (LLE) area also represent crucial demands of the day.

3.11. Human gold

The scope of the progress made by Azerbaijan in the recent years under the President Ilham Aliyev's leadership is covers broader achievements than the country's socioeconomic progress, improvement of the population welfare and leading position of our republic in the world for the development indicators. The grounds ensuring the protection of the country's public-political stability have strengthened even more recently and the environment of national, religious and cultural tolerance in Azerbaijan accepted by the entire world as a due sample has advanced further.

Keeping to the national leader Heydar Aliyev's foreign political course, the President Ilham Aliyev follows justly the inheritor traditions in the foreign policy and has taken several pragmatic steps relevant to the conditions of modern time and contemporary political picture.

The idea of national independence is the foundation on which Ilham Aliyev's foreign political course is built. Clearly, the most important factor conditioning any independent state's abilities to maneuver on the plane of diplomatic relations is the ensuring of social and economic stability inside the country. Yet, the role of the foreign policy balancing factor in the internal political stability should not be excluded, either.

Azerbaijan's foreign political course grounds on the principle of multi-continental world. The pertinent priorities include a balanced foreign policy, maintenance of the regional peace and stability, prevention of the placement of foreign military bases in the region, protection of Azerbaijan's national interests during implementation of global power-communication projects, release of the Azerbaijani territories occupied by the Armenian armed forces and other similar objectives. The official Baku declares its readiness to participate in all kinds of cooperation initiatives that respond respectfully to Azerbaijan's ideal of independent statehood and may contribute in any form to the development of our country and solution of our pending problems irrespective of its spot and position in the global political surface. At the same time, participation in these initiatives is done with such a high diplomatic proficiency that the process is not directed against anybody's interests. On the contrary, Azerbaijan gradually transforms into a place of dialogues and cooperation, where all the geopolitical interests are balanced and geopolitical conflicts are steered to the course of discussions. This is also an opinion of foreign and local political analysts interpreting the achievements made in the recent years that the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has lately achieved assertion of the concept of formation of multi-continental world at least in the scale of a separate region. This achievement is evident in the expanding international relations of Azerbaijani education along with the other important areas of population welfare.

The main directions of Azerbaijan Republic's international relations in the field of education include the student, pupil and post-graduate exchange, joint scientific researches, as well as joining into and close participation in the international and interregional education programs.

As a result of the effective activity of Education Ministry, which is the major center of coordination of the purposeful foreign political course pursued by the Azerbaijani President and of the country's international education relations, the Azerbaijan Republic has joined several international conventions regarding education and efficient cooperation with relevant international organizations has been ensured.

This has also led to active participation of Azerbaijani education institutions in the work of education-related entities of such authoritative international

organizations as UNESCO, UNICEF, UNEVOC, ISESCO, European Training Foundation, Council of Europe and the European Union.

One of the outcomes of effective cooperation maintained with international organizations is active involvement of Azerbaijani higher schools to the TEMPUS/TASIS program funded by the European Union.

In the recent years, 21 projects covering the country's 16 higher schools and costing 4.4 million Euros have been implemented as part of the European Union's TEMPUS program. Different actions have been realized as part of the project in regard of the student exchange, expert training, organization of teachers' internship experience abroad, as well as higher education institutions' supply with modern information technologies. It is intended to allocate funds amounting to 2 million Euros to different projects in 2005–2006.

Using the program's financial and technical assistance, several purposeful contributions have been made to the Baku State University, Azerbaijan State Economic University, the State Administration Academy under the President of Azerbaijan Republic, Azerbaijan State Oil Academy, Azerbaijan Languages University, Azerbaijan Architecture and Construction University, as well as the private higher education institutions, such as West, Khazar and Tefekkur.

UNICEF is one of the international organizations with which the Education Ministry collaborates closely and effectively. Successful work has been completed during 2000-2004 as part of the Cooperation Program signed between the Azerbaijani government and the UNICEF upon the projects including the Early Childhood Development and Better Parenthood Initiative, Active Training and School Administration, Education for Development and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Improvement of the Data and Analyzes in the Education System, Health and Development of the Youth, Creation of the Parents-Teachers Association and the Mine Safety Enlightening. The measures implemented within the cooperation program have recently expended funds amounting to 1.5 mln US dollars in total deriving from the 300,000 US dollars spent per year.

As part of the Cooperation Program signed between the Azerbaijani government and the UNICEF, the Education Ministry and UNICEF's Azerbaijani Representation conducted a 2-day conference in November 2004 titled the Development of National Policy on Application of Active/Interactive

Training in Azerbaijan and worked out the document headed as Courses of Activity in the Application of Active/Interactive Training Technology (AITT) in Azerbaijan.

In addition, the Education Ministry has established direct educational links with the countries like the USA, France, Great Britain, Kazakhstan, Germany, Russia, China, Japan, Israel, South Korea, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran, Egypt, India, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldavia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Uzbekistan and Poland and the cooperation is being continued successfully.

The leadership of Education Ministry has visited France, Turkey, Great Britain, Russia, Iran, USA and Germany as part of the direct cooperation program with those countries in the education area and signed the protocols intending further development of the mutual cooperation.

As we mentioned in the previous chapter, higher schools of the Azerbaijan Republic have rich traditions and experience in the cadres training for foreign countries. Way back since the former USSR, thousands of foreign citizens from different countries of the world have received education at the republic's higher schools possessing strong logistical supply and extensive potential starting from the 70s of the XX century. The tradition is ongoing today as well.

Owing to the purposeful activity in the higher education system, presently over 4 thousand foreign students from around 50 countries receive education at higher schools of Azerbaijan. This result has been achieved through reinforcement of the higher education institutions' logistical supply and improvement of the education quality, and most importantly, due to the stable and healthy environment created inside the country.

Foreign citizens receive either state-paid or private education at the Azerbaijan Republic's higher schools in the grades of Bc, Ms, post-graduate and Doctor's.

Great successes have been achieved in attracting foreign citizens to the education institutions operating in the country, particularly to the higher schools through personal contracts. Such education provided on the ground of agreements signed between the foreign citizens and the education enterprise enables attracting big volumes of investments to the country from abroad, since it is a paid education. All of these must be assessed as an efficient employment of the scientific achievements and experience gained by our higher schools through decades.

Today the Open Society Institute – Assistance Foundation’s Step-By-Step and Development of Critical Mind technologies, UNO’s Continuous Human Development Project, projects suggested by the US Project Harmony Organization, UNESCO’s Associative Schools and Twin Schools projects, as well as the programs of German Academic Exchange Service and Youth Achievements organizations are being successfully applied in the Azerbaijani education system in over 200 education institutions.

A due legal base has been formed for regulation and further development of Azerbaijani education system’s international relations. The Azerbaijan Republic has joined several international instruments related to acknowledgement of the education certificates and scientific degrees in the higher education sphere, including the UNESCO Paris Convention dated 1979 On the acknowledgement of higher education courses, higher education diplomas and scientific degrees in the European region countries, UNESCO Bangkok Regional Convention dated 1983 On the acknowledgement of education courses, higher education diplomas and scientific degrees in the countries of Asia and Pacific Ocean, as well as the Lisbon Convention dated 1997 On the Acknowledgement of specialties in higher education in the European region.

The Education Ministry is presently implementing joint projects and programs with several international organizations and this work will keep on as well in the future. The corresponding activities here include the Twin Schools of CIS and USA Project, joint project of the European Training Foundation and Education Ministry in the development of vocational education in Azerbaijan, joint program of the British Council and Education Ministry for improvement of the English language teaching methodologies at Azerbaijani education institutions, The Tbilisi Initiative joint regional project implemented together with the Council of Europe, joint Regional Project with the Council of Europe titled Education on Democratic Citizenship, joint project with the Council of Europe titled as Policy in the Education of National Minorities and the joint project for training of highly qualified cadres, as well as development of curricula and textbooks for teaching the bases of democracy and citizenship in the Azerbaijani education sphere implemented jointly by the US Montana State University and the Azerbaijani Education Ministry.

At the same time, a joint project together with the US ACCELS organization, program of cooperation with the USA IREX company, the Project Harmony Program funded by the US State Department, a joint program with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), a joint project of the Education Ministry, UNICEF and World Vision organization for integrated training of the children needing a special care, as well as the joint project of UNESCO and Education Ministry for integrated training of the children needing a special care are being successfully carried out.

As part of the memorandum of understanding signed between the Education Ministry and the USA CISCO SYSTEMS organization, 204 schools in the cities of Baku and Sumgait supplied with computers got the Internet access in 2006.

Azerbaijan is also an active participant of the Asian Development Bank's Subregional Technical Support Project for Information and Communication Technologies in the General Education. The project's major goals include studying of the ICT application opportunities and employment in the member countries' (Azerbaijan, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) education system, development of electronic textbooks, the schools' Internet access and state of the ICT-related education reforms, improvement of all pupils' opportunities to receive education and investigation of the ways for raising the effectiveness of investments in ICT application in education for conforming the education with the labor market's demands, as well as giving the due recommendations to those countries.

The President Ilham Aliyev's attention and care to science also arise from the intention to form the intellectual cadre potential, which is a necessity for the republic's future. эялп. The topicality of strengthening the Azerbaijani statehood dictates not only high professionalism and intelligence, but also the training of cadres distinguishing for their higher spiritual and moral qualities, patriotism and devotion to the Motherland. Considering the integration to the global science and education in the contemporary globalization century important, the head of the state pays a special attention also to the education of Azerbaijani youth abroad.

Cadre training never loses its competitiveness, on the contrary, improves it with time. The practice of the developed countries shows that only the countries having highly qualified cadres win the competition process ongoing

in the world market. At present, organization of education at a high level in the countries like Western Europe, USA and Japan plays the key role in their global leading position. The practice of these countries displays that solution of the global problems existing in the fields of science and education is organically linked with the ensuring of the country's safety. Exactly due to this, the "brain drain" between countries and organizations is gathering speed currently. The developed countries attract the cadres having graduated higher schools with good results using different methods and ways.

The investments laid in the training of highly qualified cadres are considered the investments laid in the human formation. In the other form, it is also called the human capital and such investments create the human capital. In the modern time, such kind of investments are regarded as a decisive factor of superiority in the competition. The human capital is the investment laid in the training of human beings as to become experts. In the world experience, human capital is considered the most gainful investment. The human capital is described as an outcome of the society-specific qualities' influence on human being. The level of such influences is determined by the set of values characterizing it. The higher the society's civility criteria, the more productive are their influence on humans and the more valueable is the human capital. Just like all the other kinds of capital, the human capital also requires permanent investment for its development both from the state and from the entrepreneurs employing the object of human capital.

Highly qualified cadre potential plays a significant role in the scientific-technical and socioeconomic development. It should be taken into account that labor of the qualified cadres is regarded as intellectual labor. Simultaneously, a carrier of intellectual labor is regarded as the most needed and valuable resource of every enterprise or organization, because the intellectual labor or labor of the qualified cadres, their knowledge and ability come out as the major production resource. Therefore, new economic notions have appeared in the modern time – "the knowledge economy" or "economy based on the knowledge". Referring to this, the famous economist-scientist D.Bell marks, **"In the future, the population's division into the parts belonging and not belonging to the higher social strata will be defined not by their financial status, but by their intellectual potential capable to create new knowledge – the carriers of knowledge"**.

In conditions of modern market economy, the protection and development of a state's economic and moral values, as well as the guarantee of full and effective employment of the republic's workable population can be achieved through raising the quality of education. This requires firstly the growth of the general development level, intellectual potential, professional and educational level of the republic's citizens. Because, it is impossible to bring up and form one as an expert and increase his social role in a short period of time. Therefore, everybody must be provided due conditions for receiving higher grades of education in order to achieve higher living conditions.

Taking into account these realities, the President Ilham Aliyev has charged the SOCAR leadership with allocation of funds for sending the post-graduate students having gathered the highest points at the test exams to study abroad. The purpose here is, of course, to achieve training of highly qualified cadres for Azerbaijan, which is developing rapidly in all fields. The Decree of the Azerbaijani President dated October 19, 2006 On the State Program for Education of **Azerbaijani Youth in Foreign Countries** is noteworthy from the standpoint of ensuring the successiveness and regularity of the national policy pursued in this direction. The Decree underlines that in the 70-80s of the XX century, thousands of Azerbaijani youth received education at the authoritative higher schools located aside from the republic in different specialties and made their decent contributions to reinforcement of the country's economic, cultural and scientific potential. After the Azerbaijan Republic achieved its national independence, the policy of sending the Azerbaijani youth to study at different higher schools of the world started to form. At present, Azerbaijani youth receive higher education at the authoritative higher schools of many countries using the funds of the state and different foundations. The Decree also covers an instruction to the Economic Development and Education Ministries together with the relevant entities to work out a State Program on organization of three-month education of Azerbaijani youth in foreign countries to improve effectiveness of the relevant actions carried out in the field and eliminate the dispersion and submit the Program to the Azerbaijani President. The Program's implementation will accelerate further the process of formation of human capital in Azerbaijan. At the conference held in the Cabinet of Ministers regarding the results of 9 months of 2006, the Azerbaijani President Mr. Ilham

Aliyev paid a special attention to this issue: “We have now rare opportunities... We expect a big currency flow. **Which fields we should direct this capital to?! First of all, to education, public health, social field, and the fields bringing profit. Education is the number one direction in this field... I have recently prepared a decree concerning the education of our youth abroad. I am sure that a comprehensive Program will be worked out. This will strengthen the intellectual potential of Azerbaijan even more. This Program, maybe, will yield its fruits in five years, ten years, or fifteen years, but will definitely do so. Because, our youth should receive education at the most famous and authoritative education centers of the world, and increase their knowledge. They must improve the education they receive in Azerbaijan abroad. I am sure that in some years, the number of the people contributing to the the comprehensive development of Azerbaijan will increase”.**

As we see, exactly the human factor is standing in the background of the scale reforms carried out in our republic today under the leadership of the President Ilham Aliyev. The head of the state sees the country’s future not in the abundant financial resources, but exactly in the formation of human capital, which is just and speaks of Mr. Ilham Aliyev’s proper assessment of the world’s modern developmental trends. The measures taken give a ground to say that our republic will ensure its stable economic development rates in the near future not through the oil revenues, but precisely through the knowledge, modern information technologies, dynamic advance of the science-inclusive fields and formation of a strong human capital.

Owing to the President Ilham Aliyev’s attention and care, which is evident also from his signature of appropriate decrees concerning the improvement of conditions for Azerbaijani youth to receive education abroad, every young person born in the country’s most distant corners, in the family of a common peasant and admitted to a higher school with sufficiently high marks has the chance to be honored to carry the name of student in any country of the world and at any authoritative higher education institutions. They will receive lessons from the pedagogs, scientists and experts of the world’s civil countries and return to the motherland as highly qualified experts. Thus, in several years, the country’s experts environment will be fully renewed with professionals working in all fields and activity in the public-political life will grow.

Settlement of the problems existing in the field of science and education naturally and primarily depend on the improvement of social status of the experts operating in this field. Substantial steps have been taken also in this field after Mr. Ilham Aliyev's coming to the power. In accordance with the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic dated 16 April 2004 On Raising the Additions to Positional Salaries for Academic Degrees, the amount of the additions to positional salaries of the academic figures working in the system of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, scientific-research and education institutions, as well as other fields, determined by a common tariff table for the Doctor and Candidate to Doctor academic degrees were raised by 5 times since July 1, 2004.

In 19 April 2004, the President Ilham Aliyev signed another important document serving to the development of science and education. The head of the state's Decree On Raising the Scholarship for post-graduate students, as well as the students and pupils of higher and high vocational schools and vocational lyceums marked a big step towards increasing the intellectual potential of the growing young generation and increasing further their interest in science. Another Decree signed by the President commenced the process of development of a 25-volume National Encyclopedia. Since September 2005, the scholarships of students and post-graduate students was grown almost tenfold with regular growths accompanied in salaries of education workers during these years, social problems of our teachers having dedicated their lives to enlightening of the young generation and men of science have been solved, their salaries have been systematically increased, the scientific-pedagogic contingent has been surrounded by the state's care and the social authority of the name of scientist-teacher, which is considered an honorary public status has been restored.

The annual growth of the funds allocated every year from the national budget for the development of science and education also gives serious grounds to say this field is an integral part of the general development of Azerbaijan and its national policy. If in 2004 up to 19 percent of the budgetary expenditures was allocated for education, in 2005 the figure grew up to 20.5 percent. The educational expenditures in the 2006 national budget grew by 33 percent in comparison to the previous year. Investment funds were intended to raise approximately by 20 percent, the post-graduate and student

scholarships grew by 2.5 times and the salary of over 320 thousand education employees was raised by 50 percent in the average related to the growth of minimal salaries. In 30 May 2005, the head of the state signed the Decree **On establishment of special commission under the President of Azerbaijan Republic** in order to adjust the level of education to modern standards, conduct monitoring of the education quality at education institutions, analyse regularly the existing problems of education area and ensure the implementation of relevant measures.

In regard of the 60th anniversary of a holy center of science, the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, the head of the state signed special decrees, awarded the distinguished figures of science with high state rewards and awarded many scientists with academic titles and Presidential scholarships, all of which reflect in practice Mr. Ilham Aliyev's extensive care to the field. Delivering a speech at the ceremony dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the National Academy of Sciences, the President once again stated he will keep on adhering to the progressive traditions founded by our national leader Heydar Aliyev: "Additional steps will be taken toward strengthening of the **Academy of Sciences logistical supply. We should reinforce this logistical supply. We should help the people working at the Academy more. Certainly, the salaries of the people working in the system of the Academy should be raised and we will do this**".

In his speech at the Academy, Mr. Ilham Aliyev spoke not only about the main tasks of this temple of science, but also highlighted the tightening of scientific-ideological struggle against absurd claims of Armenians as an important factor. The Azerbaijani President also expressed his deep respect and esteem to the men of science in his speech: "I am very glad to be with you in this holiday. **I will try to do my best for the Academy's development from here on, too. I would like to repeat, this is my firm belief that progress of knowledge, expertise and science is a necessity for normal development of every country. There is a very strong scientific potential in Azerbaijan. Members of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences are very valuable persons. They are people, who have gained the national respect both in the field of science and in the public life and we can be proud of these people. I am proud that the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences is at a very high level**

today”, – said Mr. Ilham Aliyev stating he will keep on contributing resolutely to the development of science.

A more sensitive study and worldwide application of our history and national-moral values, as well as intensification of scientific researches for the effective application of information technologies in our country, which have lifted the borders in the contemporary world through their virtual power and other related issues must become the key priorities in the future activity plans of AN Academy of Sciences. As mentioned the head of the state, today there are new opportunities. Using the information and communication technologies, we can now deliver the Azerbaijani truths to any kind of auditorium, publicize our Motherland to the world and join the inter-civilizational dialogue process in a more active way. The head of the state underlined the necessity of doing all these activities in the form of a program. These tasks concern each one of us and we should try more firmly to fulfill the tasks laying on us.

These measures are also a display of the president’s care for enlightening of Azerbaijani citizens. This activity is supported by every single citizen of Azerbaijan, including the men of science, and increase the young generation’s interest in science and education.

Today, favorable conditions are provided for the training of candidates and doctors of sciences in the new specialties that are not available in our republic beyond the country – at the leading higher schools of foreign states. Fundamental and practical scientific research works are ongoing in the directions chosen as preferable in the republic by scientists working at the ANAS scientific research institutes and chairs of higher schools and important results are being achieved. Authoritative scientific gatherings are held in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijani scientists are provided with due conditions for implementation of numerous practical scientific activities regarding different fields of economy and agriculture. The mutual relations between scientists and the private sector are ensured. Scientific practical conferences are held to deliver the new inventions to the society and organize their production.

Our scientists represent the Azerbaijani science at a high level at different international scientific conferences and symposia and their articles are published in the leading international scientific journals of foreign countries.

The Azerbaijani science and education are actually stepping onto a new developmental stage. The science-education strategy of the Azerbaijani President, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, which is grounded on the traditions formed by our national leader, direct the Azerbaijani science and Azerbaijani youth towards a brighter and happier future.

The country's citizens firmly believe in the realization of our national leader's ideals and big wishes under the leadership of Azerbaijani President and Azerbaijan's transformation into a strong and powerful state, and look at the future with great hopes.

The advance of our national science and education in the recent years, the purposeful reforms and targeted programs carried out in this field, as well as effective cooperation with international organizations, and especially, the President's particular care and attention to the science and education field give sufficient grounds to be sure that the contemporary Azerbaijani science and education relying on its rich progressive traditions, national-moral and global values, as well as the international practice, will keep on advancing in the strategic course defined by our national leader Heydar Aliyev and successfully continued by our respectful President, Mr. Ilham Aliyev.

We would like to speak also about one personality, a distinguished public figure, who has reinforced these believes by her contributions to the development of Azerbaijani education and science, as well as protection and worldwide propagation of our national-moral values. She is the President of Heydar Aliyev Foundation, the Good Will Ambassador of UNESCO and ISESCO, deputy of the National Assembly, Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva.

CHAPTER IV

THE HIGHEST DIRECTION OF PATRIOTISM AND CHARITY

Still today, in the epoch of Heydar Aliyev, my generation is learning a new lesson. The subject of the lesson is the faith in the power of the spirit, will and character of man and the invincibility of Human being, that are so intrinsic to him.

Mehriban ALIYEVA

We would like to talk about a prominent public figure, person, who protects education of the Azerbaijan, science development and preservation of national cultural values, strengthening the assurance of the contribution to the world the Propagation. This person is the president of the Heydar Aliyev's Fund goodwill ambassador of the YUNESKO and ISESKO, deputy of the National Assembly Mrs Mehriban Aliyeva.

Mehriban Aliyeva

LIFE EXPERIENCE

There is one significant period in the history of Azerbaijan of the 20th century: it started at the end of the 60ths and continued into the beginning of the 21th century. At first a big, controversial picture with its ups and downs, with dry statistical data and facts appears in our minds. However, it takes only two words for the pages of history to come alive. The picture of successes and losses, progress and development get brighter and clearer than even if it was shown in tables and graphs. The two words are Heydar Aliyev. A participant and creator of the most important pages of our history of the 20th century. A Citizen, who has been responsible for Azerbaijan for more than 30 years, a great Person and mighty Leader. For my generation of people born in the 60th, he is like a family member, close and dear. And this kinship is quite natural. Besides being a great example for us, who were entering our independent lives in the 60ths, he was part of our every day life due to his strong character, his unique leadership and state skills, his erudition, capacity for work, love for art and full support of people of culture. In the society living by the laws of that time, the leader of the republic, a man of deep national convictions, in the best meaning of the word, had to face many difficulties, get over numerous hidden obstacles and overcome internal worries. It could not have been different. Heydar Aliyev has always been a strong shield and foundation for Azerbaijan. Our generation felt it the most at the end of the 90ths, when dark clouds covered the sky of our Motherland-during the Karabag war and the tragedy of January 20th when, we faced injustice and indifference. Then we realized that his life for Azerbaijan is a true gift of God. We understood that the phrase “Azerbaijan and Heydar Aliyev are indissoluble” is not empty words.

He has always worked for the development of his Motherland, he has always been proud of the culture and history of his country and he has always cared for his future. It is no wonder that the life of his motherland, Azerbaijan, has interwoven with his human life.

Bringing the remains of Huseyn Javid from Siberia to the place of his birth, implementing the most significant historical and cultural projects on

immortalization of the memory of his outstanding fellowmen, sending hundreds of young Azeri citizens to the high institutions, of the former USSR, constantly considering matters of preservation and promotions of Azerbaijan's spiritual heritage, he has been teaching us a lesson of life, explaining to us the true meaning of the phrase – «This Motherland is yours, mine, ours». We born in the 60ths, were among millions of people who came to the central square to support Heydar Aliyev who, beginning from 1993, has been writing the history of Azerbaijan again.

Still today, in the epoch of Heydar Aliyev, my generation is learning a new life lesson. The subject of the lesson is faith in the power of the spirit, will and character of man and the invincibility of Human being, that are so intrinsic to him.

CONTINUER OF THE ENLIGHTENING TRADITIONS

Azerbaijan may be considered as an example for many countries of the world for the public life activity of women. The role of Azerbaijani women in the formation and development of enlightening traditions is exceptional in our society. In the first years of the XXI century, which will probably be studied as the century of enlightening, knowledge and information in the history of humanity, exactly the Azerbaijani woman turned the advance of education into a national movement in the country.

In the history of Azerbaijani national statehood, this tradition was formed by such a person, Who may be regarded the symbol of true Azerbaijani women referring to the family, where she was born and mentored, to the environment she was surrounded with throughout her entire life and the values, to which she adhered.

Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva was born in the family of academician Arif Pashayev and the famous Orientalist, deceased professor Mrs. Aida Imanguliyeva and was brought up in the surrounding of one of the most distinguished figures of the XX century Azerbaijani literature, Mir Jelal Pashayev and the patriarch of our national press, teacher of thousands of Azerbaijani journalists, the famous journalist Nasir Imanguliyev. Her life teachers, as she herself also notes in her writings, were the national leader of Azerbaijani people Heydar Aliyev and Mrs. Zarifa Aliyeva.

Mehriban khanum's mother, Aida khanum Imanguliyeva is considered a founder of the Arabian literary studies in Azerbaijan. She was born in Baku in 1939 in the family of creator and editor of the *Baku* newspaper for 32 years, Nasir Imanguliyev, studied at the Arabian department of the ASU (present BSU) Oriental Studies Faculty, and started activity as a junior academic worker at the Oriental Studies Institute of the Academy of Sciences

after defending the Candidate's Thesis at the University's chair of Near East Nations in 1966.

Soon shining in the scientific atmosphere, Aida khanum was appointed the head of the Arabian Philology Department created in 1976 at the Oriental Studies Institute and continued leading the department till the end of her days. However, Aida khanum's academic activity is not limited by these achievements. She was appointed the Institute's deputy director for academic affairs in 1988 and successfully defended the Doctor's Thesis in the city of Tbilisi in 1989.

Aida khanum was the first woman orientalist in Azerbaijani history, which marks one of the most interesting facts in her biography. Along with academic activity, the famous scientist was also closely engaged in the training of orientalist experts at the Baku State University's Oriental Studies Faculty. The students, who were once destined to participate in her lessons and listen to her lectures, remember today Aida khanum – the experienced pedagogist with great respect.

With her scientific researches Aida khanum gained big fame not only in Azerbaijan, but beyond the country's boundaries. At that time, Azerbaijan was known as one of the key research centers for Arabian philology in the former Union territory. Aida khanum's researches were linked with the creative activity of Amin ar-Reyhani, Jubran Khelil Jubran and Michael Nueayme, who had immense merits in the progress of Arabian literature into a new stage. She was a scientist conducting the first researches in the former Union environment regarding the creative activity of the mentioned philosophers. The professor's 3 monographs, as well as over 70 scientific articles provide a comprehensive analysis of the synthesis of Western and Eastern cultural traditions, development of the creative style and progress of the new literary trends. Aida Imanguliyeva authored an effective activity not only in the field of oriental studies, but also in the discovery of academic and cultural relations between the East and the West, as well as their common moral values. Her colleagues appreciate particularly the originality characteristic to her researches. The leading line of her scientific activity covered the synthesis of Western and Eastern cultural traditions and translation of many oriental writers' works into our language, which speaks of her wide outlook as a public figure and an academic organizer.

Aida khanum's scientific activity was completed by her beautiful and unmatched qualities, which God can bestow upon his beloved creatures only. Vasif Mammadaliyev, who worked together with the distinguished scientist for many years, remembers that as if God did not begrudge anything to Aida khanum. Outer and inner beauty, kindness and sensitiveness. She had combined all the features characteristic to higher humanity: "I regard this as a natural fact. Because, Aida khanum was born in the family of such an elder, patriarch of our national journalism and intellectual as Nasir Imaguliyev".

With her nobleness, modesty, kindness and care and attention to others, Aida khanum taught her young students not only the details of the Arabian Studies science. As a personality, Aida khanum was a true embodiment of humanity for the people surrounding her and a living sample for learning the true humane values. The people highly assessing her inner and outer beauty accepted Aida khanum as an image of an ideal woman and always respected her. She was characterized as the symbol of pride and dignity. This never violated the personal moderateness of Aida khanum, who was a very modest person.

The scientists paid a special regard to the new generation, its development and formation of its character. Her colleagues cite the following Arabian proverb when speaking about her: "Three merits will always bring love to one: courtesy, modesty and mildness". Aida khanum combined all three of these features in her own personality and maybe, the secret of the love to the Aida Imanguliyeva personality should be searched in this very moment. She herself would always say that a human being sees the superiority in God and God regards a human being as his mirror, and would add that a human being and God complete each other. When transforming this philosophical code into life pictures, we can see a perfect portrait of Aida khanum herself and the youth, whom she mentored as a mother. Yes, Aida khanum Imanguliyeva also brought up her two daughters exactly in this spirit.

She dedicated her entire life to the researches of oriental culture and literature, which is deeply related to our national history and national-moral values, and tried to restore the links between our yesterday and today in the person of her own personality and creative activity. The fact that today, the same mission is continued more successfully by Aida khanum's daughter – the First Lady of the country, President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation,

Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO and ISESCO, deputy of the National Assembly, Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva is a historic and traditional logic.

4.1. Bridge to the future

Since the solution of global and humanity-related concerns depends not on the activity of one or several separate states, but on the adequate joint efforts of world states, there is no need to specially underline the daily growth of the role of interstate organizations in the modern time. The main objectives of the biggest and most authoritative of such organizations, the UNO, cover such important issues as protection of international peace and safety, develop the friendly relations among the nations adhering to the principle of equality of nations and their right to self-determination, as well as advance the international cooperation in the settlement of economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems. The activity of UNO and all the other organizations included in its system serve exactly to these objectives. For active integration into the processes ongoing in the international arena and not standing aside the settlement of global and humanity-related problems, membership to UNO appears as a major factor. The UN tribune is one of the highest tribunes a state can use for declaring own purposes and intentions to the world and calling the other countries to cooperation for the settlement of both the internal and external problems.

Azerbaijan was accepted to the UN membership in 2 March 1992. in his speech at the UN General Assembly, our national leader Heydar Aliyev stated: **“In general, the Azerbaijan Republic assesses optimistically the UNO prospects for the future and is willing to henceforth defend the higher principles of the United Nations Organization and strive for raising the organization’s authority and effectiveness”**.

The key ways of collaborating with the UNO include the intensification of relations with the organization’s dedicated entities and a decent representation in them. A dedicated UN entity famous all over the world, UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) was established in 1946. Its major goals include assistance in the ensuring of peace and safety through encouragement of cooperation in

the fields of education, science and culture, and achievement of all the human rights and freedoms without any kind of discrimination for race, sex, language and religion in compliance with the UN Regulation. To implement these goals, UNESCO encourages the national education, serves to the growth, maintenance and spread of the knowledge and assists in the spreading and propagation of a culture. It also provides mutual understanding among nations with the help of mass media.

The Azerbaijan Republic was accepted to UNESCO membership in 3 June 1992, and in 1996, the memorandum on cooperation was signed between UNESCO and Azerbaijan. {22.}

The President of Azerbaijan Republic, Mr. Heydar Aliyev visited the UNESCO Headquarters during his visit to France in December 1993 and met with the organisation's Director General. During the period past, Azerbaijan has joined the following UNESCO Conventions:

1. Convention On Protection of Cultural Values at Occurrence of Armed Conflicts dated 14 May 1954 (1993) and the Second Protocol to it (2000);
2. Convention On Protection of Global Cultural and Natural Heritage dated 16 November 1972 (1993);
3. Convention On the Recognition of Studies, Higher Education Diplomas and Academic Degrees in the States belonging to the European Region dated 21 December 1979 (1994);
4. Convention On the Recognition of Studies, Higher Education Diplomas and Academic Degrees in the States belonging to the Asian and Pacific Ocean Region dated 16 December 1983 (1995);
5. Global Convention On the Rights of Authorship dated 6 September 1952 (1997);
6. Convention On the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region (1998);
7. Convention On the Measures for Prohibition and Prevention of Illegal Delivery of Cultural Values To a Country, From a Country and Illegal Transfer of Property Rights To Other People dated 14 November 1970 (1997);
8. Convention On the Wetlands of international importance especially as wildlife habitat dated 2 February 1971 (2001);
9. Convention On Protection of Phonogram Producers Interests in the Illegal Production of Their Phonograms dated 29 October 1971 (2001);

10. Convention of the International Institute for Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) On the Stolen or Illegally Extracted Cultural Values dated 1995 (2003).

Azerbaijan is a member of three specialized UNESCO entities:

1. Law Committee
2. Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee (IBC)
3. Intergovernment Committee Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation.

Scientific-education centers have been created in the Baku, Sumgait and Nakhchivan cities within framework of the cooperation with UNDPUNESCO and a radio-TV training studio has been created at the Baku State University's Journalism Faculty.

15 conferences and seminars have been held in Baku with the help of UNESCO:

1. 1996 – in regard of the 500th anniversary of Fizuli;
2. 1997 – in regard of the technical-vocational education problems;
3. 1999 – in regard of the translation/interpretation problems;
4. 2000 – in regard of the 1300th anniversary of Kitabi Dede Gorgud;
5. 2001 – second regional conference of the Caucasian states higher pedagogical schools;
6. 2001 – in regard of the 800th anniversary of N.Tusi;
7. 2001 – international seminar dedicated to the normative acts concerning the protection of cultural heritage;
8. 2001 – Regional seminar titled the Digital Silk Road;
9. 2002 – in regard of the most important events of the XX century;
10. 2003 – in regard of the 200th anniversary of Mirza Kazimbey;
11. 2003 – in regard of the cultural corridor between the GUAM countries;
12. 2003 – UNESCO Turkic States Space Generation Forum;
13. 2003 – Seminar on Expanding the Professional Experience in Application of Information and Communication Technologies in the Professional Activity;
14. 2004 – in regard of the 50th anniversary of the Convention on the Protection of Cultural Values at Occurrence of Armed Conflicts;

15. 2004 – regional seminar for the UNESCO (ASPnet) National Coordinator and teachers of the schools in this network titled as Quality Education In Practice.

UNESCO chairs are the following:

1. Human Rights, Democracy and Peace; and
2. Translation, Interpretation and Terminology.

National Committees for the following fields have been created:

1. The International Council of Museums (ICOM);
2. Management of Social Transformations (MOST);
3. International Hydrological Programme (IHP);
4. Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB);
5. International Bioethics Committee (IBC);
6. International Music Council (IMC);
7. International Theatre Institute (ITH).

As we can see, seeking its input onto the main directions like mentoring, science, culture, communications, special sciences and development, as well as peace and human rights, UNESCO strives toward implementation of different programs with this end. General information, development of communication, elimination of illiteracy, translations, oceanographic surveys and control over the littoral areas and other international programs may also be cited here.

Culture and education-related issues hold an exceptional place in UNESCO's sphere of activities. Along with studying and spreading the culture of world nations, the organization attaches a particular importance to cooperation with personalities of high authority well-known all over the world and settlement of global problems with the help of such authoritative personalities.

The title of the Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO was also instituted to bring together the world's respected personalities having had great merits in realization of humanistic ideals and cooperate with them. UNESCO's activity is transfused and propagated by the goodwill ambassadors, who represent a prominent group of the persons having agreed to use their talents and statuses to assist in involving the world in the organization's affairs. These special people – the goodwill ambassadors of UNESCO represent all parts of the world and have the most different personal and professional

qualities. There is yet another liability connecting these persons – each of them carry the responsibility of solidarity and is entitled to take measures aimed at improvement of the world. They are united by the general task of delivering the UNESCO mission to the hearts and minds of people in all parts of the world for the sake of protecting such criteria as peace, justice, solidarity and mutual understanding.

The goodwill ambassadors of UNESCO is an eminent group consisting of the famous advocates and propagating the ideals of this respectable global entity with their names and authorities. These special people are engaged in spreading and agitating the UNESCO work and mission. They have agreed to employ their talents and statuses in helping to attract the world's attention to the UNESCO mission.

It has been a while since the list of cultural and political notions used by the Azerbaijani society has been enlarged by a word completely new for its sense, which we never confronted before: Goodwill Ambassador of Unesco. We suppose, citing the names of some other goodwill ambassadors of UNESCO is enough to identify the weight of honor and authority this status carries, which was awarded to the first lady of Azerbaijan, Mehriban Aliyeva, due to international evaluation of the public activity she has been engaged in our country: world-known musicians Montserrat Caballe, Mstislav Rostropovich, French astronaut Patrick Bodri, Princess Firyal of Jordan, famous African scientist Modibo Diarra, deputy of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, famous musician and composer Omer Zulfi Livanelli, renowned French composer Jean Michel Jarre, Spanish traveler-explorer Kitin Munos, wife of the grand L'Oreal company of France director general Christina Owen-Jones, businessman Sheikh Ghassan Shaker, famous Russian artist Zurab Sereteli and representative of the Latin America, Mrs. Maria de Lourdes Excidio Villela.

A member of the Azerbaijan Culture Friends Foundation, Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor Nargiz khanum Pashayeva writes about the essence of the Goodwill Ambassador status: “This word sounding as “goodwill” in English has extensive sense of shades. Namely, the word is used in economy, politics, culture and science, as well as public life adequately to the content of each area. Yet, it carries one unchanging meaning: good will, good intention creating trust and belief in people with

its existence. The word has the intention of improving the morale disposition of the people of this anxious and controversial world and beautifying them, as well as keeping alive the moral and cultural wealth inherited from the centuries standing behind it. Maybe, the essence of activities Mehriban khanum Aliyeva is doing now for our Motherland, having already taken her position in the family of Goodwill Ambassadors of UNESCO, is not fully conceived yet. However, history has some cases, the value of which is not addressed to future generations, but on the contrary, it is determined from the first day. The multibranch and long-term activity of the first Goodwill Ambassador in the history of Azerbaijan, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva, as the president of Azerbaijan Culture Friends Foundation has got particularly this historic value”.

The activity has started a while ago – since 1995 and made huge contributions to the national development: founding the Azerbaijan Culture Friends Charity Foundation, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva came as an outstanding protector of our national culture, which was suffering severe crisis during the passage from one public-economic formation to another; the advance of musical education, enlightening of the next generation, as well as protection and transfer to future generations of the pearls of national culture took the central place in the Foundation’s work throughout the recent years; regular charity concerts and other events of this kind enabled maintaining our national music rich in traditions. Since then on, the Foundation has been engaged in many activities, including overhaul of the musical gymnasium and school, as well as providing thousands of adults and youth, especially the youth from unprivileged families with higher education in music.

The *Azerbaijan-Irs* (Azerbaijan–Heritage – *trans.*) journal published since 1996 in Azerbaijani, English and Russian languages by Mehriban khanum Aliyeva’s initiative also has essential merits in this context. The journal draws attention to the importance of protecting our music, culture and historic-national heritage, as well as the national gene pool as the principal line. The journal is of exceptional value also from the standpoint of delivering the country’s realities to international community and agitating them.

The fact that UNESCO leadership took into account the scale and importance of the mission carried out by Mehriban khanum Aliyeva as the head

of the Azerbaijan Culture Friends Foundation for many years and dignified the first lady of Azerbaijan with the status of Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO has marked an outstanding event of Azerbaijani history in 2004.

In 9 September 2004, a ceremony dedicated to awarding Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva with the honorary title of Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO, a specialized UNO organization, was held at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, where the UNESCO director general Koitsiro Matsuura stated the contributions made by Mehriban Aliyeva are of unique importance not only for Azerbaijan, but for the world in general, thus giving an objective evaluation of the achievements made by the first lady of Azerbaijan.

The ceremony delivered a big hope for Mehriban Aliyeva's future successes and assistance in the mobilization of society towards a fairer world through her personal interest in the UNESCO-supported key issues, popularity in the media sphere, career and reputation. It was stated that Mrs. Mehriban's mission is to provide more comprehensive information to people about the importance of the role UNESCO may play in the protection of endangered values and creation of a peace-inclusive culture. In her speech at the ceremony, Mehriban khanum underlined that a key UNESCO principle is to maintain the unique character of the world culture for future generations: **"I uphold this principle as the major attribute of my activity. Therefore, this high title means both a big honor and a big responsibility to me. This is the responsibility of creating connections between cultures and civilizations, between the past and today"**.

Remembering that Azerbaijan is often called a bridge connecting the West and the East, the Goodwill Ambassador said this is related to the favorable geographic-political position of our country way back since the times of historic Great Silk Road: **"Throughout its centuries-long history, Azerbaijan is known as country capable of saying its word not only as a transportation corridor, but also in the context of intercultural dialogues. I am proud that a completely unmatched cultural environment has been created in our country. We have managed to protect the unique pearls of our culture, customs and traditions and historic heritage, and accept the samples of the world culture. Today we witness a similarity between the cultural elements of different national cultures and our own national culture. This is by no way a coincidence. That is, these processes have**

countless generations of Azerbaijan standing behind them, who distinguished for their tolerance, kindness and ability to learn and teach and spanned cultures”.

In her first speech as a Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva stressed the fact that Azerbaijan is the motherland of Uzeyir Hajibeyov, Gara Garayev, Settar Bahlulzadeh, Mstislav Rostropovich and tens of such world-known figures of culture and underlines that Azerbaijani nation creating positive environment for emergence of such personalities is, in fact, a great nation: **“Having managed to maintain our national consciousness and culture, we have also made contributions to the treasury of world culture, including the Kitabi Dede Gorgud epos, the 1300th anniversary of which was celebrated by UNESCO and Azerbaijani mougham, which is a pearl of oral and non-material heritage. Today, at the time of advanced technologies, globalization and informational integration, the protection of non-material heritage assumes a particular importance. The entire humanity is interested in the maintenance of the non-material heritage. UNESCO’s role in the issue is, certainly, overwhelming. Mougham, ashug creative activity and unmatched melodies of our national musical instruments represent only a part of the heritage Azerbaijani nation has managed to protect so far and is bound to protect for the sake of tomorrow. The activity of Azerbaijan Culture Friends Foundation serves exactly to this goal. As a Goodwill Ambassador, my entire future activity will also serve to this very goal”.**

Mehriban khanum stated that Azerbaijani nation has kept its memory, language, music and ability of creating eposes alive through many generations. Today, valuable samples of Azerbaijani culture and art are considered a wealth of the entire humanity: **“I accept the honorary title awarded to me, first of all, as an expression of my adherence to UNESCO principles. I want to assure you that this high reward will encourage me and the Azerbaijan Culture Friends Foundation I head to work more diligently toward maintenance of our cultural heritage”.**

The President of Azerbaijan Republic, Ilham Aliyev assessed the awarding of an Azerbaijani representative with the title of Goodwill Ambassador as a significant event in the life of our culture and an expression of further progress of our relations with UNESCO and the world community in general.

Pointing out that Azerbaijan and UNESCO have established very successful cooperative relations and the process of joint projects and programs are ongoing also today, the President underlined that Azerbaijan has a rich cultural heritage and this mutual cooperation will pave the way for closer relationships between our country and UNESCO in the future.

The highest trust displayed by the world's most authoritative culture entity to Mehriban Aliyeva is, certainly, a success of not only one person, but each of us, and an expression of the world's attention to the entire Azerbaijani nation, our national culture, folklore, history, language and art in the person of Mehriban khanum Aliyeva. The appointment may also be considered as another practical proof of that Azerbaijani woman has confirmed her selflessness and abilities in international scale in the person of Mehriban Aliyeva. Finally, this title is a pleasant yield of the labor Mehriban khanum Aliyeva has set forth for protection and development of verbal and musical heritage.

However progressive the entry of entire world to the information century, as well as any kind of transforming achievements brought almost every day into our lives in the improvement of information technologies may be considered, this development does not exclude certain dangerous inclinations in the national historic-cultural heritage. At such a time, Azerbaijani and South Caucasian culture in general have found a reliable protector and savior in the person of the Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva, which is an overwhelmingly joyous event. **“Now, in the environment governed by the stereotypes of public culture, maintenance of national traditions, careful and thought out attitude to them is of exceptional importance. One of the many missions of UNESCO is protection of a human being's moral world. Therefore, protection of the non-material pearls of heritage reflecting more brightly the national “Me” of each nation inhabiting our planet becomes the most topical issue”** – says Mehriban Aliyeva decently fulfilling the mission trusted to her.

In scientific literature, all the definitions given to the notion of culture finally center around a common content irrespective of their form-inclusive diversities: a the sum of all material and moral achievements made by human beings. These achievements were not gained only yesterday and are not gained only today. These moral values assuming only tiny elements from the

destiny of big masses of human beings have the labor and sufferings of thousands of years standing behind them. The more difficult the making of these achievements was for human beings yesterday, the more responsible and honorary mission is today to select their most brilliant samples and cherish them as the apple of our eyes and deliver to the future generations for the sake of ensuring the successiveness of human culture. The Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO Mehriban Aliyeva is better than anybody else aware of the responsibility the mission intending connection of cultures and civilizations, past and today carries. She has a precise activity conception to realize the goals she has put forward. During her meeting with UNESCO leadership, Mehriban Aliyeva suggested creating the **House of Caucasian Nations Traditions** in Baku. Establishment of such an entity may become an exceptionally important step toward protection and propagation of the cultural heritage belonging to the Caucasian nations. The initiative of creating the House of Caucasian Nations Traditions suggested by Mehriban Aliyeva, as well as her invitation of UNESCO fulfilling the task of maintaining the material and non-material cultural heritage in the world to take part in this project is noteworthy for several aspects. Hereby, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva has primarily undertaken the mission of culture protector of not only Azerbaijan, but also the entire Caucasian nationalities. On the other hand, creation of the House of Caucasian Nations Traditions may bring to naught the opportunities of Armenians and their Armenian-soul supporters every now and then claiming kindred with the cultural samples of Azerbaijani nation, as well as other Caucasian nations, impudently stealing and striving toward appropriating our pearls of culture all over the world, which would save the Caucasian nations in general from the “Armenian pick-pocketing”. The initiative also carries a political burden. Creation of the House of Caucasian Nations Traditions is of exceptional importance for effectiveness of the New Neighborhood Policy implemented in the South Caucasian region by initiative of the European Union.

After Mehriban khanum Aliyeva was appointed a Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO, the relationships between this authoritative international organization and Azerbaijan entered into a new stage. Her activity as a goodwill ambassador stuck in memory with several noteworthy moments identifying the development of Azerbaijani–UNESCO relations. International celebration

of the jubilees of distinguished Azerbaijani scientists, writers and composers, as well as the 1300th anniversary of the Kitabi Dede Gorgud epos, inscription of Icheri Sheher (The Inner City – *trans.*) together with the Shirvanshah's Palace to the UNESCO World Heritage List and ongoing development of primary documents for inclusion of also the Gobustan Preserve Museum and Ateshgah (Temple of Fire – *trans.*) to the List may be cited as samples of it.

It is no coincidence that due to Mehriban khanum Aliyeva's big efforts, Azerbaijani moughams were added to the list of human values at the General Conference of UNESCO held way back in October 2003. Generally, Mehriban Aliyeva's activity related to the study and agitation of moughams, which are gems of Azerbaijani music, is a subject of extensive investigations. Taking proper measures in the field, Mehriban Aliyeva's relevant activity after her appointment as a Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO summed a more successive and effective character. Several projects were carried out for development of the mougham art. Mehriban Aliyeva took a firm hold of the Azerbaijani nation's art treasury rooting back to the ancient times and our great mougham in the true sense of the word. She bound herself by protecting our moughams, which she regards as the genetic code of Azerbaijani nation. As one of the first achievements in the field, an album titled Singers of Garabagh with a delicate design was produced and presented to listeners. It is worth noting that the album Singer of Garabagh represents the first album of the Mougham-Heritage Project implemented by the Azerbaijani Culture Friends and Heydar Aliyev Foundations. At the album's presentation, Mehriban khanum stated: **“I believe, while getting acquainted with the album, you have felt what sense of responsibility and on the other hand, love we have used to prepare it. It is no coincidence at all that our first project is dedicated to the singers of Garabagh. We deliver the sorrow of Garabagh land and truthful voice of Azerbaijan to the whole world through mougham”**. The album was firstly presented at the annual meeting of goodwill ambassador at the UNESCO Headquarters and attracted quite big attention and interest. According to Mehriban khanum Aliyeva, mougham is already a wealth of not only Azerbaijan, but of the entire world. **“Our aim is to protect and develop mougham, and deliver its beauty and deep philosophy to the future generations... Mougham is the genetic code of**

every Azerbaijani. It is the genetic code of even the youngest Azerbaijani, who does not understand, nor listen to mougham for certain reasons yet, but will certainly and definitely come to this”.

The album titled Singers of Garabagh is a collection of 24 singers' mougham performance. Samples of the unmatched art of mougham sounding in the performance of unique singers of the East – Jabbar Garyaghdioghlu, Kechechi oghlu Mahammad, Mashadi Mahammad Farzaliyev, Mejid Behbudov, Seyid Shushinski, Khan Shushinski, Islam Abdullayev, Bulbul, Zulfu Adigozalov, Abulfet Aliyev and others pleases the ears of all listeners. The soul-piercing performance by the masters of mougham is accompanied by demonstration of cadres from a documentary shot as part of the project at the Salname studio under the director Khamis Muradov's leadership. The matchless beauties of Azerbaijani land, the motherland of such rare masters, once again come to the sight. They call us to the fight for releasing our native lands occupied and trampled by the enemy feet.

In fact, one cannot help seizing a delicate political point standing behind the choosing of exactly the name of Singers of Garabagh for the album bringing together all of Azerbaijani moughams. The naming of this album prepared by the UNESCO support as the Singers of Garabagh demonstrated to the entire world that Garabagh is an original and eternal Azerbaijani land and mougham is a rare sample of art this land has bestowed upon the world. Preparations for the publishing of a book titled Garabagh under Mehriban Aliyeva's guidance is of exceptional importance for the study and propagation of historic past of Azerbaijan and Garabagh. Pointing out the activity of several mougham schools in Azerbaijan, including the Garabagh mougham school, which is regarded as a leading school in the field, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva says the school is currently facing a grave danger with the number of young performers in the genre extensively decreasing. In this sense, the Singers of Garabagh project is in fact, also a political project: **“Younger mougham performers are usually called as Nightingales of Garabagh. Today the children growing in the IDP camps of original Garabagh residents do not sing mougham any more, the number of such Garabagh nightingales among them is quite insufficient. They need the mountains of Garabagh, the nature of Garabagh and the land of Garabagh to sing. It is enough to cite that such coryphaei**

of Azerbaijani culture as Uzeyir Hajibeyov and Bulbul were born in Shusha. Thus, a political project formed out of a purely musical project”.

We know that as the world’s biggest international cultural-humanitarian organization, is not engaged in discussion of political problems. It is a kind of away from the political plane and political chair. Yet, this is also an irrefutable truth that in the modern globalizing world, everything is linked with political realities and often painted in their color. However, the steps and initiatives not related to politics from the first sight are capable of making at least a slight amendment to this policy. Despite of that UNESCO goals and work principles are declared as having a purely humanitarian character and politically neutral, it would be naive to think that being a structural division of the United Nations Organization, it is isolated from the actual international politics. The world exists objectively and it is free of wars, confrontations, as well as economic, political and moral crises.

Among the countries suffering from wars and facing obstacles on the way to development and progress owing to wars, there is also Azerbaijan. These make the number one problem of a small country with 20 percent of its territories occupied and around one million of its refugees and IDPs undergoing moral and material oppression. The leadership of our country is working intensively at all levels towards ending the Armenian invasion.

Naturally, Mehriban khanum should bypass political problems in her speeches at the events held within UNESCO owing to the traditions, activity range and character of this organization. However, the first lady of Azerbaijan raises these concerns once again at authoritative events as part of the cultural projects using the means of expression and propagation in accordance with the intentions of this international organization. Traditional annual meetings of the Goodwill Ambassadors of UNESCO are of huge importance as an information space for providing information about Azerbaijan, its culture and traditions of global character.

During discussions of different problems within framework of the organization’s gatherings, we have repeatedly witnessed Mehriban khanum Aliyeva bringing the Nagorno Garabagh problem to agenda and delivering Azerbaijani truths to the entire world. She was saying at the UNESCO

conference in Paris: **“We do not mention the problem of occupation, we do not mention political problems, but one million of refugees and IDPs are living in the tent camps, children do not receive any education. The state is incapable of solving all of these problems. Is education a UNESCO branch of activity? Yes, it is. Then, what should we do with the children? After all, they are growing. The time for them has been lost, they do not get a due education”.**

At the UNESCO regional seminar held in Kazan dedicated to protection of non-material cultural heritage, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva drew the participants' attention to the fact that Shusha, the motherland of Azerbaijani mougham, other cities and regions of our country -totally, 20 percent of Azerbaijani territory is under Armenian occupation as a result of Armenian–Azerbaijan, Nagorno Garabagh conflict. She stressed that the cities, where the best mougham performers usually called the Nightingales of Garabagh were born and brought up, are now completely destroyed. They have been razed to the ground. Ancient architecture and culture monuments belonging to Azerbaijani nation have been demolished. The speaker underlined the necessity of a more serious involvement of relevant international organizations and generally the world community in the destiny of cultural and historic monuments in the conflict areas and added that sooner settlement of these conflicts would be a big help in preventing the destruction of cultural heritage.

In the modern world, exactly the putting of information is sometimes as influential as the actual economic and financial abilities of states, and maybe even more effective. It is no coincidence that often the interests of different states “meet” in the informational space and the results of this “meeting” echo as well in the politics.

While reading these lines, many may think how can a global problem like occupation be solved through such simple means, or such simple ways, which, maybe, do not have sufficiently “influential political power” at first sight, cannot solve anything. Yet, our contemporary history is full of events sufficing to state that sometimes the means seeming simple at first sight also play a vital role in the political plane. Sometimes exactly culture even is one step ahead of politicians and create a positive and favorable background of the heavy tasks they fulfill.

Political aura of every country reminds a complex construction. Sometimes, tiny, indistinguishable at first glance and invisible details in the general plan of the construction ensure its integrity and strength. However pragmatic and materialized the modern world is, moral values do not lose their topicality and the human factor, personal relations and cultural-moral traditions have quite influential power. History always has big tests for small states. The primary goal and objective in this path of tests is civic solidarity, faithfulness to national and global moral values, as well as cultural traditions, keeping up with the modern world and conceive yourself as a unique part of the globalizing world. History proves that a country paying due regard to its citizens, feeling proud of them and independently identifying its position in the world through own national policy, economy and culture has a future.

Implementation of the project intending republication of all plays by the great Azerbaijani composer Uzeyir Hajibeyov and production of their CD and DVD versions under Mehriban Aliyeva's leadership, continuation of the work on new mougham projects after the Singers of Garabagh album, increased attention to another branch of Azerbaijani, and generally, the all-Turkish musical art – the ashig art, which does not lag behind mougham for its importance, the efforts set forth for adding this type of art to the UNESCO list of non-material heritage may also be considered as a part of the activities done within framework of cooperation with UNESCO.

In 24 August 2005, as we know, the foundation of International Mougham Center in Baku was laid with participation of the UNESCO Secretary General. The idea of creating such a musical center has the primary purpose of bringing not only the musicians, but also music fans to the Center and listen to music, conduct disputes concerning our traditional music and enabling the older-generation masters to share their experience, knowledge and skills with the new generation. The Center will also become a place of meeting for the people from different countries and mark a next step toward protection of the global cultural heritage.

The Azerbaijani Culture Friends Foundation headed by Mehriban khanum Aliyeva takes an active part also in the events held for protection of historic monuments in our country as part of the cooperation with this

authoritative cultural entity of the world. Repair of the Javadkhan Sepulcher and Jomerd Gassab Tomb in Ganja city, Prihasan sanctuary located in the Shuvelan settlement of Baku, Hazrati Zeynab tomb and Abdulla Shaig's home-museum may be regarded as bright samples to this. Mehriban khanum substantiates the goal of these activities: "We watch attentively the events occurring within the country's range of interests and make all the efforts for solving the emerging problems. *I assess the restoration of historic monuments related to the famous sons and daughters of Azerbaijan not only as restoration of the respect for the past and historic truths, but also as the key element of mentoring the young generation in the spirit of national patriotism and development of the Heydar Aliyev's "Azerbaijanism" ideology*".

After Mehriban khanum Aliyeva was appointed a Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO, the educational cooperation between Azerbaijan and this entity has further expanded. Several projects aiming at development of Azerbaijani education have been started jointly with UNESCO. Azerbaijani Education Ministry has held an international conference dedicated to the educational concerns by the initiative of the Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva. The international conference organized in 24 August 2005 at the Gulistan Palace in Baku with the motto of UNESCO – Azerbaijan: Bridge to the Future with personal participation of the UNESCO Secretary General was the first such event dedicated to a separate country in the history of UNESCO. It is also worthy of marking that this was the second conference held jointly by the Education Ministry and UNESCO at the initiative of the Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva. The first event was organized in Paris.

Along with the Azerbaijani state and government officials, the UN Resident-Coordinator for Azerbaijan Marco Borsotti also took part in the conference held in Baku and stressed the existence of an evident contact between education and poverty reduction. Because, unemployment decreases as the level of education grows. Azerbaijan has very good and positive historic traditions both in the science and in the education. For ex., the State Oil Academy and the Baku State University are educational centers famous in the world scale. Education has always enjoyed a particular attention in the Azerbaijani society and a quite big cultural environment has been created here.

Marco Borsotti stated that Azerbaijan is the world's most rapidly developing country and marked that establishment of the education commission by the President of Azerbaijan Republic, certainly, creates an extremely favorable ground for future activities in the field. Improving the quality of education is a serious issue. Azerbaijan has quite promising quantitative indicators. Yet, the quality has to be paid more attention now. From this aspect, improvement of management is a major principle. Paying attention to educational management and the system's orientation at achievement of more effective and higher results is of big importance.

The UN Baku Resident-Coordinator has underlined the reconstruction of educational system in accordance with requirements of the economic system. According to him, consideration of different factors relevant to the economic demands will be an input to the country's welfare. Some issues are not priorities for Azerbaijan. For ex., Azerbaijan does not have the problem of insufficient applications to primary schools. However, there are some problems in the field of education. Maintenance of the girls number among the high school pupils is a necessity.

At the same time, improvement of the education curricula ranks among important issues. It represent an extremely essential factor of integration to the global economy. Besides, application of information technologies in all branches of education and at all levels is very important for meeting the country's and economy's future demands. Cooperation between universities and research centers should be encouraged. The number of students sent abroad from Azerbaijan should be raised. This will affect positively the country's future advance.

Underlining the fact that as a country having beautiful traditions, Azerbaijan has all opportunities for further improvement of its educational and cultural level, Mr. Borsotti said, this enables looking optimistically to the future. In addition, other countries' experience in the area also should be considered. Because, education is a key area aiming at creation of the future generations.

Memorandum in the field of education was signed with UNESCO at the conference attended also by the organization's Director General. Thus, a new stage in the Azerbaijan-UNESCO cooperation was launched. According to

the memorandum, a joint commission of the Education Ministry and UNESCO is engaged in effective cooperation on priority directions. The Azerbaijan-UNESCO educational cooperation is also remarkable for another feature: this cooperation provides extensive opportunities for delivering to the world community the Armenian military aggression against Azerbaijan, as well as the grave problems the occupation of our native lands by Armenian armed unions has caused in the Azerbaijani education. In the present days characterized by notable spread of the education and enlightening movement all over the world, this moment is of particular agitational importance for creating an objective image of the essence and scale of Nagorno Garabagh conflict in the international arena.

At present, precisely 5 percent of more than 19 million refugees and IDPs worldwide is the share of Azerbaijan. The harm caused by Armenia to the occupied Azerbaijani territories amount to estimated 60 billion US dollars. The education field has also undergone a grave damage. Over 1000 education institutions have been left in the occupied areas and destroyed. Today, 687 high schools, 61 primary and 31 kindergarten education institutions operate in the regions with occupied territories. 93 thousand pupils receive education at those education centers with 17 thousand teachers engaged in their education and mentoring. All of the pupils receiving education at these schools are provided with free textbooks. 18 high schools containing 3200 pupils and 18 kindergartens containing 600 children have been built and put into operation at the new settlements for IDPs. In accordance with the appropriate decree of the Azerbaijani President Mr. Ilham Aliyev, 15 schools accommodating 2000 pupils and 5 kindergartens accommodating 175 kids have also been built in 13 settlements for IDP families.

The US and Japan embassies to Azerbaijan, UN Supreme Commissariat for Refugees, UNICEF, the US International Development Agency and Azerbaijani representations of other international humanitarian organizations are also closely involved in the improvement of IDP schools logistical supply. Besides all of these, there are grave problems at general education schools of the regions with occupied territories. Most of them operate in intolerable conditions attached to the local schools, as well as in the buildings unfitting for education. Their logistical supply is quite low. There is a lack of school equipment and classrooms.

UNESCO representatives visiting our country in May 2005 to draft a report in regard of the refugee and IDP kids education-related problems by the initiative of the Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO Mehriban khanum Aliyeva witnessed personally all of these problems during acquaintance with the activity of IDP schools in the Sabirabad, Saatli and Imishli regions. They also observed that despite of the intolerable conditions, the IDP pupils' will for education remains high. Exactly due to this, the number of IDP school graduates admitted to the higher and high vocational schools is not low in comparison to other schools.

At that conference, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva also drew the participants' attention to the most painful problem of Azerbaijan – Nagorno Garabagh conflict: **“Azerbaijan is a country with over 1 million refugees and IDPs. 20 percent of our territories is under invasion. Our country has gained a unique experience in regard of organization of IDP education progress. We have managed to maintain the educational infrastructure that existed before in the occupied territories. These schools are located in the camps of refugees and IDPs. We have also managed to keep the teachers staff and they are engaged in education and mentoring of the children at the camps. This is a truly rare experience. I believe, this experience may be used in all the conflict areas. The biggest desire of all of us is that these schools are returned to their native places after our lands are released and continue their activity already in normal conditions. I hope that new programs worked out together with UNESCO will render a positive influence on the education of IDP and refugee children”**.

Cooperation with UNESCO, certainly, has a special role in the development of international relations of Azerbaijani education. Cooperation in this area covers 5 directions. The relations of collaboration with this organization carry an exceptional importance in the integration of Azerbaijani education to the European higher school system and successful implementation of the Bologna Process in our country.

The Goodwill Ambassador Mehriban Aliyeva has achieved development of the cooperation with UNESCO not only in the cultural, but also in other fields. Azerbaijan has demonstrated a high activeness in several international conferences of this authoritative entity and hosted a seminar-conference dedicated

to the organization's international, legal and normative acts in regard of Protection of the Cultural Heritage via UNESCO channels and support, round table devoted to the 50th anniversary of adoption of the Hague Convention (1954) On Protection of Cultural Wealth at Armed Conflicts and other events. Today, the Azerbaijan-UNESCO relations develop on an advancing line. The one most benefiting from these relations and the activities done within cooperation with UNESCO is the Azerbaijani nation.

This activity of Mehriban khanum is attentively observed not only in Azerbaijan, but all over the world and receives its due assessment. The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) connecting 57 countries of the world and performing a noble function for 24 years has accepted the programs and projects carried out in Azerbaijan exactly the way they are and given its fair decision and the president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO and deputy of the National Assembly Mehriban Aliyeva has also been declared a Goodwill Ambassador of ISESCO. This event causes pride in every single Azerbaijani, because so far ISESCO has elected its 3 Goodwill Ambassadors all of them being statesmen. Mehriban khanum Aliyeva is the first woman having been honored with this high title.

The international organization's representatives expressed an objective opinion while characterizing the new goodwill ambassador's services before the society: "The president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO and deputy of the National Assembly Mehriban khanum Aliyeva is awarded with the name of Goodwill Ambassador of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) for her merits in the prevention of conflicts and organization of intercivilizational dialogues, activities in the Islamic world, attention to the children in need of care and big support in improvement of their living conditions and education".

Bringing together 57 countries of the world, ISESCO is fulfilling a very noble mission. The organization's primary goal is creation of the contacts in the scientific, educational and cultural areas of the world countries and organization of international dialogues. This, in turn, passes through the ensuring of peace, safety and tranquility. During 24 years of activity, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

has done a great deal of work and achieved big successes. Large-scale projects and programs have been implemented in Moslem countries through the organization's channels for development of science, education and culture.

It is also worth noting that ISESCO does not restrict its activity with purely Moslem countries only. There are such countries and states in the world, where the general Moslem population makes not more than 30, 20 and even 10 percent. Yet, ISESCO closely cooperates also with these countries, develops programs aimed at advance of science, culture and education, and allocates credits and grants.

Another very important direction of the ISESCO activity is maintenance and transfer to future generations of the rich historic heritage of Islamic world. The existence of Moslem countries facing wars today attaches a particular value to this activity. The statement issued by the organization in regard of destruction of the religious monuments in Iraq during the war was highly assessed in Azerbaijan, too. Because, today Azerbaijan is suffering the same problem in its life.

927 libraries, 464 historic monuments and museums, over 100 archeological monuments, 6 national theatres and concert studios have been destroyed in the Azerbaijani territories occupied during the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan. Over 40 thousand precious items and rare exponents have been stolen from the plundered museums. After razing to the ground the Kelbejer historic ethnographic museum, the unique gold and silver jewelries and carpets woven in the XIX century, which were the museum's exponent, have been carried to Armenia.

The Shusha History Museum, Aghdam Bread Museum and Zengilan Stone Monuments Museum have also suffered the same destiny. Violating rudely the Hague Convention On Protection of Cultural Wealth at Military Conflicts and the Paris Convention On the Illegal Turnover of Cultural Heritage, the Armenian Republic has plundered the Azerbaijani cultural treasure. We highly assess the support of ISESCO and generally, the Islamic Conference Organization in delivery of such facts and realities to the world community and international organizations.

In general, being an integral part of the Islamic world with its historic past, religion and cultural and moral values, Azerbaijan's relations with the

Islamic world do not carry only a religious character. Azerbaijan became a member of the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) in December 1991 and gained the regular support of ICT and its member-states. While at first, the ICT General Secretariat gave statements supporting our republic's position in regard of the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno Garabagh conflict, at the later stage, the ICT conferences put forward effectual resolutions concerning the conflict. The resolutions assess the Armenia–Azerbaijan, Nagorno Garabagh conflict unambiguously as aggression of the Armenian Republic against the Azerbaijan Republic.

The XXI conference of ICO Foreign Ministers held in Karachi in 1993, XXII conference held in Casablanca in 1994 and the XXIII conference in Konakri in 1995 adopted resolutions concerning the conflict between the Armenian Republic and the Azerbaijan Republic. At the XXIV conference of ICO Foreign Ministers held in Jakarta in 1996, the appropriate resolution was renamed into the Resolution On Aggression of the Armenian Republic against the Azerbaijan Republic. Since then on, the names of resolutions of this sort remained unchanged at all conferences of the Foreign Ministers.

Unlike the previous resolutions, the last ones has been largely improved with new provisions added: “Calls all the states to refuse from supplying weapons and armoury, which encourages the aggressor to deepening the conflict and enables continuing the occupation of Azerbaijani territories; the territory of an ICO member-state should not be used for transiting military supplies; invites the ICO member-states and other countries of the world community to use effective political and economic pressures to put an end to the Armenian aggression and occupation of Azerbaijani territories; considers that Azerbaijan has the right to receive compensation for the harms caused to it and imposes the responsibility for full payment of the damage onto Armenia; requires the ICO Secretary General to report to the present OSCE Chairman about the position of ICO member-states concerning the issue”, etc.

Adoption of all draft resolutions concerning our republic without any amendments or inspections once again confirms that the Islamic world is quite familiar with our problems owing to the Azerbaijani President Mr. Ilham Aliyev's pragmatic foreign political course based on scientific grounds and gives a permanent support to the truthful position of our state.

One point should be underlined that the ICO Resolutions are not of purely political importance for Azerbaijan, but also a significant share of the humanitarian, technical and other aid rendered to our republic by Moslem countries is done based on similar important documents adopted by the ICO conferences. It is no coincidence that the Islamic Development Bank sends to our country thousands of sacrificial sheep every year since 1994 and covers also the expenditure related to the delivery of this aid to our republic. In addition, the IDB has allocated 500 thousand dollars of funds for humanitarian assistance to refugees and 1 million dollars for purchase of machinery and equipment to create work places for them.

The IDB has expended 142 million dollars of funds disinterestedly for the development of feasibility reports of the republic's socioeconomic projects and the total amount of privileged loans allocated by IDB for our republic has passed 74 million dollars. Aids rendered by humanitarian institutions of Saudi Arabia, the King Fahd Assistance Program, as well as several humanitarian organizations and foundations of the gulf countries also rank among the contributions of our growing and ongoing relationships with the Islamic Conference Organization. The independent Azerbaijan Republic is working actively toward development of bilateral cooperation with the Islamic Conference Organization and its individual member-countries and using the opportunities of these states for assistance in the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno Garabagh conflict.

Another meeting of the Islamic Conference Organization has been held in Baku, a youth forum of the Islamic Conference Organization has been created by Azerbaijan's initiative, all of which have again proven that our country pays a special attention to strengthening of the cooperation with the Islamic world and Moslem states.

The links of cooperation between the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and the Heydar Aliyev Foundation also arise from Azerbaijan's faithfulness to its historic roots and active support to formation of the multi-continental world, along with its European integration path.

Referring to ISESCO and UNESCO principles, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation supposes that assistance also to other states and nations having faced difficulties is very important. Exactly due to this, a general education

school is being constructed by initiative of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in the Muzefferabad city of Pakistan, which suffered damages after the earthquake.

At the awarding ceremony, ISESCO Director General Abduleziz bin Osmanel-Tuvejri stated: “It is the first time in the ISESCO history that a lady is awarded with the title. Mehriban khanum fully deserves the name for the scale activities she has done as part of the intercivilizational dialogues and other bold steps, for her attention to the children needing care and support to the improvement of their living conditions and education. Only 4 persons have received this title. We award the highest title of ISESCO to Mehriban khanum for her merits in the prevention of conflicts, organization of intercivilizational dialogues and big support to the activities conducted in the Islamic world. This will bring honor both to ISESCO and to the Islamic world”.

As an integral part of the strategy relying on the efficient cooperation relations, an international conference titled Islam and Youth: Education, Science and Enlightening has been held in Baku with joint organizational efforts of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Education Ministry, International Islam Charity Organization and Kuwait Ministry of Religious Endowments and Islamic Affairs, and conducted discussions on the role of youth in Islam, education- and science-related issues in Moslem countries, as well as prevention of the youth engagement in discrimination, violence, terrorism and other negative deeds. Presentation of the book titled New Arabic Literature Coryphaei translated into Arabic by ISESCO initiative, published with a highly advanced design and authored by the distinguished orientalist and tireless investigator of the Arabic literature, Aida khanum Imanguliyeva, in Baku may also be cited as a demonstration of this cooperation.

4.2. New schools of the renewing country

The magnificent building housing this entity connected with the name of the national leader Heydar Aliyev has become a true temple of morality and culture for Azerbaijani citizens for several years by now. The key factor identifying such an extensive public authority of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation

is, undoubtedly, the entity's faithfulness to the eminent leader's goals and the disinterested service it renders to Azerbaijani nation in the light of these goals.

The main purposes of this public institution created under Mehriban khanum Aliyeva's leadership cover firstly promotion of large-scale programmes serving to learning of the national leader of Azerbaijani nation, Heydar Aliyev's heritage, supporting the implementation of projects aiming at increasing the welfare of Azerbaijani nation, assisting the projects ensuring the development of science, education, culture, public health and sport in the country, strengthen the country's economic potential, bring up the youth loyal to national-moral values, raise the international authority of Azerbaijan, and so on.

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation headed by Mehriban khanum Aliyeva keeps in the permanent focus the topical issues related to the social sphere – problems of refugees and IDPs, orphanages, boarding schools and people suffering from different serious illnesses.

The Program of Development for Orphanages and Boarding Schools carried out by the Foundation have been worked out with direct initiative and guidance of the president of Heydar Aliyev Foundation and represents one of the first programmes implemented by the Foundation. The organization's collaborators have visited all the orphanages and boarding schools located in Baku and Absheron within framework of the program, analyzed deeply the existing problems and identified measures for their elimination.

As part of the programme, 4 major courses have been defined for solution of the problems confronted at orphanages and boarding schools: technical support, education, public health and public activeness. The working group formed under the programme has monitored the current state of the orphanages and boarding schools active in the republic and reported the normatives regarding the number of children and food, dress and technical supply for monthly and yearly national support, as well as the general conditions (education, public health, living standards and resting). It has appeared that a big majority of such children enterprises need mostly an overhaul and technical supply at the first stage, the head of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation visited personally the orphanages and boarding schools in Baku

and most regions of our country and gave her instructions for commencing the activities in the program's technical supply wing.

The final report of Heydar Aliyev Foundation regarding the activities done in 2005 provide a complete picture of the actions performed under the Program of Development for Orphanages and Boarding Schools. The measures taken as part of the program are not restricted with a pure technical support to education and mentoring institutions of this category. Libraries have been established at orphanages and supplied with appropriate teaching manuals and literature. Computer equipment has been installed at most orphanages and boarding schools. Classrooms have been supplied with necessary facilities for interactive education. Doctor and Psychologist Rooms have been created in many boarding schools and orphanages. A pack of proposals has been prepared for changing the food normatives at these education enterprises. In this context, the picture exhibition titled *I Love Azerbaijan* held in September 2004 among the kids of this category is also a remarkable fact.

As a pilot project for effective arrangement of children's free time and leisure with personal initiative of Mehriban khanum Aliyeva, summer camp organization in the Shuvelan settlement for kids of Orphanage #1 in the Nizami District, organization of trainings for teachers and governesses of orphanages and boarding schools on application of the modern education and mentoring methods to assist the project intending creation of a Resource Center in the capital city, as well as implementation of more systematic measures aimed at elimination of the child trafficking, use of child labor, cruelty to children, etc. have all gained larger opportunities.

“There are such problems, which may be solved instantly and with a comparative ease”, – says the goodwill ambassador. “Certainly, this covers the repair, supply and equipment concerns. However, when solving specific problems, one should not forget the global ones. For ex., it is extremely important to consider that the entire system of orphanages and boarding schools were created within framework of the Soviet pedagogics and Soviet system of education management. Therefore, the door should be opened to benefit from other countries' experience and apply it”.

At her initiative, education employees, representatives of different public organizations represented in Azerbaijan and ladies of different countries'

ambassadors to Azerbaijan have repeatedly gathered to discuss the problems. There are numerous suggestions – from eliminating the current system and passing to the “family orphanages” up to aids in specific teaching manuals. The important thing is that nobody neglects the problems. At present, many entities and people establish links of cooperation with the Foundation in this direction. Yet, more global tasks are solved quite hard.

Mehriban khanum believes that no state institution, or a school supplied with the top modern and beautiful overhaul and equipment can ever replace a family environment. Therefore, one of the most important and biggest goals of the Foundation is to provide the children in these education institutions with a family.

Exactly for this purpose, Heydar Aliyev Foundation is successfully implementing the “program of deinstitutionalization” together with UNICEF. A special position of education in Mehriban khanum Aliyeva’s both charity and public activity priorities rests upon the unshakable belief of the great leader Heydar Aliyev, who was propagating to society the reality declaring **“Azerbaijan’s future will be built on the shoulders of educated people”**. Apparently, there is no need to repeatedly mark the value of attention and care rendered to the field for the country’s future. Development of education, high-level arrangement of the new generation’s education and mentoring, as well as specific and purposeful measures taken toward shaping today’s children as tomorrow’s decent citizens come out firstly as true samples of patriotism. Only the sense of patriotism and supreme feelings arising from the love to one’s motherland may encourage one to performing extremely difficult, but strategically important tasks for the nation’s and state’s future.

Creation of equal educational opportunities in the Azerbaijani society holding the way of economic progress and renewing, providing the young generation with knowledge and supporting the integration to the global education system comprise priority branches of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. Among the steps taken recently by Mehriban Aliyeva as the president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, her big attention to the education area may be regarded an indisputable proof of her adherence to the true citizenship position and exemplary patriotism. Considering the significance of education

in the country's development, Heydar Aliyev Foundation has prepared and implemented several scale projects in the area in 2005.

The most essential of them is, undoubtedly, the New School to Renewing Azerbaijan program, which has caused quite a big echo in our country. When the Foundation brought experts together and presented to society this program, which was developed by Mehriban khanum Aliyeva's initiative, we must confess that only a few people believed that 132 schools will be built in Azerbaijan within three-to-four months most of them in distant settlements and mountainous regions. Yet, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva proved that there is no problem, which may be considered impossible to solve, if there is a belief, will, determination and ability to systematize activities properly.

The New School to Renewing Azerbaijan program commenced by the Foundation since 2005 and already finished its two stages is targeted precisely to the solution of problems existing in the area. To assess the real situation in the field, monitoring of the republican high schools had been arranged by the Foundation president's initiative, which found out that 132 school buildings in the most different regions are fully useless.

At the round table held with participation of relevant entities and international organizations active in our country aiming at drawing the attention of different social strata to the issue, drafts of school buildings accommodating 100, 200 and 240 pupils were presented. The call of cooperation to society sounded by the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador in regard of the project caused huge echo, schools construction in Azerbaijani regions – mountain villages and the most distant settlements expanded vastly and shortly new buildings meeting the modern demands were put into use based on the projects.

The schools were supplied with modern equipment, heating system, rich libraries, teaching tools and computers, and thousands of pupils met the new academic year in beautiful and splendid education centers due to the tense labor and tireless efforts of all the project participants.

In 2005, 328 new schools and additional corpses accommodating totally 49 thousand 732 pupils, including 194 new schools disposing 36016 pupils, additional corpses disposing 13 thousand 716 pupils in 134 schools were built using funds of different sources, 20 schools housing 3 thousand 836 pupils

out of the 194 newly employed schools were built under the State program, 42 schools housing 10 thousand 120 pupils – by different ministries, international and local organizations, municipalities and businessmen, 132 schools accommodating 22060 pupils out of the new schools, i.e., 70 percent of the new schools, were built directly by the initiative of Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

This is an event having no analogue in our education history and is welcomed by the entire society, including the education collaborators. New buildings meeting the modern standards have been built to replace the schools having missed a repair for decades, fully unfit and hazardous, suggesting no conditions for a due education and mentoring; they were supplied with quality equipment and put into use of children.

In accordance with the program, new buildings have been constructed for 6 schools in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, 14 schools in the Guba region, 6 – in the Yardimli district, 5 – in Aghjabedi, 4 in each of the Jelilabad, Shemkir, Shamakhi, Gusar and Oghuz regions, 3 in each of the Goranboy, Khachmaz, Sheki, Tovuz, Aghstafa, Ismayilli, Kurdemir, Khanlar, Devechi, Samukh, Bilesuvar, Berde, Siyezen and Astara regions, 2 in each of the Gebele, Gazakh, Sabirabad, Hajigabul, Beylegan, Terter, Lenkeran, Imishli, Yevlakh, Salyan, Masalli, Aghsu, Lerik and Gobustan regions, and 1 in each of the Gedebe, Neftchala, Saatli, Dashkesen, Goychay, Aghdash, Zerdab, Zagatala, Gakh, Balaken and Ujar regions.

At the same time, Heydar Aliyev Foundation carried out an overhaul of the Shahtakhti village school located in the Kengerli region of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic in 2005 and built an additional corpse with 350 seats for the school #112 in the Sabunchu district.

The experts involved in the construction activities also underline employment of most quality materials in the construction process and the meeting of the highest standards during the work. Mehriban khanum Aliyeva has charged the builders with a special instruction of installing the heating system in all schools and using only metal and ceramics – that is, ecologically harmless materials in the schools' roof cover. Gyms and other additional rooms have also been built in full majority of the schools.

Quality logistical supply of Azerbaijani schools caused certain problems way back in the Soviet times. At that time, the desks delivered from the Baltic

countries did not meet the standards, though were considered the best equipment. However, the equipment purchased by the Foundation especially for this purpose meets the top modern requirements.

The measures implemented for strengthening the schools' logistical and education supply, particularly the construction of new school buildings by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation's initiative have affected positively also the poverty reduction and economic advance in our country and caused creation of equal educational opportunities for the children from poor families in different regions of the country.

Heydar Aliyev Foundation has also performed expedient activities covering the organization of education of the children needing special care, homeless, deprived of the parental care and left aside the society's attention in a certain sense, as well as the reinforcement of the logistical and educational base of their education institutions.

During 2004–2005, capital repair, renovation and reconstruction activities meeting the modern standards have been implemented by the initiative and leadership of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in 23 institutions for the children needing special care (3 special schools, 16 special and general education boarding schools and 4 orphanages). The institutions have been supplied with equipment, 6759 children studying here were surrounded with high attention and care, and were provided with equal opportunities.

The Foundation has also started implementing the second stage of the New Schools for Renewing Azerbaijan program. At the event held in April 2006 at the Heydar Aliyev Foundation dedicated to the presentation of second stage of the New Schools for Renewing Azerbaijan program and attended by representatives of the republican government, embassies of foreign countries, international humanitarian organizations and non-governmental organizations, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva stated: ***“In the modern world, education plays an irreplaceable role in the development of every country and its integration to the world community. Exactly for this reason, Heydar Aliyev Foundation has declared the education assistance as a priority course of its activity since the first day of its establishment. If you remember, last June, we participated the ceremony of presentation of the New Schools for Renewing Azerbaijan program, which is the biggest project developed by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in the field of education.*”**

Our purpose was to assist the renewing education system, create modern educational complexes and create normal and comfortable conditions for every pupil attending school in all parts of our country, even in the most distant village. Besides, we drew the entire society's attention to the education-related concerns and invited to active participation in solution of these concerns. At that meeting, we sounded this proposal and turned to the businessmen, entrepreneurs, local and foreign companies, non-governmental organizations and diplomatic corps operating in our country and invited them to active cooperation in the project. In a quite short time, the suggestion caused a big echo and resonance in the country. Thanks to the joint efforts of the people supporting us and joining our initiative and the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, the initial stage of the New Schools for Renewing Azerbaijan program was successfully completed. 132 new schools were built and put into operation and supplied with the most modern equipment in 52 regions of our country during the last year. Over 22 thousand new places were provided for pupils”.

The President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation pointed out her personal acquaintance with the process of construction ongoing in different regions of our country and assessed the construction of 132 new schools during 2005 as a success and benefit of entire Azerbaijan and society. “Along with such a big accomplishment, we also gained a big experience during the project's implementation. I believe that the experience will be efficiently applied also in other programs and projects to be prepared and realized by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in the future”.

Mehriban khanum Aliyeva underlined the existence of hundreds of schools in our country needing new academic buildings and modern equipment, and stated that the level of education at schools with no heating system, roof permanently flowing, closed in winter season and unfit for education can definitely suffice nobody. Therefore, Heydar Aliyev Foundation has decided to continue activities in this direction and commenced the second stage of New Schools for Renewing Azerbaijan program. The working group prepared by the Foundation has worked out a new list consisting of 100 schools covering those located in Baku, Absheron and different regions of our republic, which are intended to put into operation before the beginning of the new academic year.

The Foundation president particularly marked that most of the schools included in the list are located in the Baku-suburb settlements and accommodating 500 and more pupils, and expressed confidence for successful implementation of the program's second stage as well. A UNICEF representative to Azerbaijan Hana Singer and ambassadors of foreign countries in Azerbaijan also expressed their high assessment of that school construction in Azerbaijan has become a national movement.

The second stage of the New Schools for Renewing Azerbaijan program has also completed successfully again covering all the regions of the country.

In accordance with the program, 4 schools have been built in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, 3 in the Sheki region, 2 in each of the Salyan, Bilesuvar, Yardimli, Masalli, Dashkesen, Guba, Gobustan, Gusar, Khizi, Ismayilli, Shamakhi, Gazakh, Terter, Goranboy, Tovuz, Oghuz, Zerdab, Goychay, Aghsu, Aghstafa, Gakh and Absheron regions, and 1 in each of the Yevlakh, Berde, Beylegan, Imishli, Sabirabad, Saatli, Hajigabul, Neftchala, Aghjabedi, Kurdemir, Aghdash, Astara, Jelilabad, Lerik, Lenkeran, Khanlar, Samukh, Khachmaz, Devechi, Siyezen, Gedebe, Ujar, Shemkir, Zagatala, Balaken and Gebele regions as well as the Azizbeyov district of the Baku city.

At the same time, additional corpses have been built near 12 schools in total in the Absheron region and Binegedi, Sabunchu, Azizbeyov, Surakhani and Garadagh districts of the Baku city as part of the program and 12 schools have undergone a capital repair.

The major purpose set before in regard of education and the key objective followed is raising this area in Azerbaijan to the level demanded by the modern world. Construction of so many school buildings in our country for a short period of time may be regarded an extraordinary result for any country that has achieved its national independence for only several years, suffers a war and has a newly developing economy. The Heydar Aliyev Foundation headed by Mehriban Aliyeva has shortly turned such a specific project into reality and materialization of this project having so far no analogue in the near and far abroad has caused an extensive response not only in Azerbaijan, but in the whole world.

Along with numerous projects implemented independently by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation for improving the education level in our country,

the Foundation is also involved in joint programs with some private entities. One of such programs is the Education Support Program launched together with the *Pedagogika* Publishing House. Carrying a huge political, legal and moral substance, the instrument intends providing the pupils studying in the languages of minority nations living in our country with relevant textbooks. In the academic year of 2005–2006, pupils of the 1st class studying at the Georgian-language schools were provided with the national textbooks under the Education Support Program for the first time in our education history.

The textbooks include:

Dedaena (ABC);

Mathematics (Math) – 4-volume;

Garesamghoro (Life Knowledge).

This work accomplished at a high level will both eliminate our Georgian-language schools' textbook dependence on the neighboring Georgian Republic and assist in bringing up our pupils of Georgian nationality as true Azerbaijani citizens and their normal integration to our society.

The textbooks titled Native Language, Mathematics and Life Knowledge prepared for publishing under governance of the republic's distinguished scientists and published at the *Pedagogika* Publishing House largely differ from the previous textbooks from the standpoint of teaching and propagating our national-moral values, customs and traditions, as well as national history and culture.

As part of the Education Support project, representatives of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation have visited the school #157 of ethnic-cultural trend located in the Russian capital and presented 10 computers, color printer and 2 xerographic copiers to the education institution.

This education institution located in Moscow is of particular importance for providing opportunities to the new generations living away from their historic motherland to learn their native language and culture. Thanks to the assistance of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, which attaches a special importance to education, every child attending the school will be able to receive also comprehensive information concerning the Azerbaijani culture, literature, history, nature and the military aggression of Armenia against

Azerbaijan. The Foundation has also presented different publications, as well as a big photo-exposition to the school library reflecting the nature of our land. The school may be said to already have a small remembrance of Azerbaijan. Members of the school's amateur collective will henceforth perform their scenes dressing in the national clothes endowed by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and using the national musical instruments.

The activity of Heydar Aliyev Foundation is multi-branched. Education, public health, science and technology, culture, ecology, sport and social problems – in all of these spheres, the Foundation develops and implements different programs. In general, the public entity tries to build own activity in a way meeting the modern demands – reveal the concerns existing and worrying the people, prepare and perform the due measures for solution of these concerns and achieve successful results.

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation is also a decent sample for all other entities in rendering care to the children homeless, deprived of parental care and with restricted physical abilities, as well as those living a life of refugee or IDP owing to the Armenian military aggression against Azerbaijan.

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation has also authored a pleasant tradition in its activity intending the organization of New Year celebrations at the Gulistan Palace for the children studying in different high schools of Baku and particularly distinguishing for their academic abilities, studying at orphanages and boarding schools, coming from the families of martyrs, refugees and internally displaced families, orphans and kids deprived of parental care. Such ceremonies attended personally by Mehriban khanum Aliyeva turn into indelible memories in the mind of every child having participated in such holiday celebrations. In her appeal to the children, President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation stated:

“Dear children, you are the future, tomorrow of our native Azerbaijan. The future of Azerbaijan is connected with science, education and advanced technologies. Therefore, you should study hard and get comprehensive knowledge. Seeing you as educated, healthy and decent persons is the biggest happiness for us, parents”.

Among the projects implemented by the Foundation, those dedicated to thalassemia are also of particular essence. The number of such diseased persons in our country and their state is regularly and circumstantially

analyzed. National programs are being developed for treatment and prevention of thalassemia.

The aid rendered to over 500 of our compatriots by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation only in 2005 is a result of Mehriban Aliyeva's charity activity. Azerbaijan holds a leading place in the world for the number of thalassemia patients. Over 2 thousand people having caught the disease have been registered in our country. The professional-technical opportunities of our medical institutions did not let fighting down this dangerous enemy until the recent years. Other countries have achieved positive results in the fight against the disease. Carrying out extensive preventional measures, Heydar Aliyev Foundation has brought the experience of foreign countries to Azerbaijan. Construction of the Center for Thalassemia and settlement of problems of the persons having caught this grave disease by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation is a proof of assessment given to a human life. Mehriban khanum Aliyeva says: "As a medical officer, I understand it very well that children with psychiatric and physical deviations are only results and represent the last link in the process of extremely complex public processes. This has poverty, harmful habits and sometimes, absence of certain necessary medical knowledge standing behind it. All of these require enforcement of long-term programs. We are not afraid of the projects that will take years, but simultaneously realize it quite well that we are expected to provide instant assistance and benefit. Combining all of these into a common task is difficult, but, as they say, walk, and you shall reach".

Among the programs carried out by the Foundation, the Highest Care for Diabetic Children Project is also noteworthy. As a part of this project, a conference dedicated to solution of the diabetic kids problems has been held and 310 kids under 14 having caught diabetes have been extended patronage to. They are permanently provided with insulin. Construction of the relevant Diagnostical Center is also contemplated by the initiative of the Foundation's president.

Commencement of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation's international activity and signature of the draft instrument and cooperation agreement on ensuring the blind and weak-sighted people's access to information and communication technologies between the Foundation and the UN Development Program in December 2005 is also an important step taken toward solution of this

quite topical social concern. According to the data of 2005, 320 thousand handicapped people live in our country. Of them, 40 thousand are blind and weak-sighted people. The project serves to connecting these people to life, expanding their opportunities to receive knowledge and information through the information and communication applications, increasing their useful engagement, generally, improving the living conditions of the people belonging to this category.

At the first stage of the project's execution, ICT demands of the eye afflicted persons in Azerbaijan must be primarily revealed to develop and implement the national strategy for elimination of the digital differences. At the next stage, installation of the special computer equipment with the help of technical experts group, localization of the software system, ensuring of the Internet access for people of this category and planning of the class of model information and communication technologies for using the experience of local and foreign experts in the education area aiming at development of training-education programs are all directed to comprehensive meeting of the demands. At the third stage, the blind and weak-sighted people are provided with opportunities to use the library created for them, as well as the audio materials and Braille-script-books at the training center. All the invalid people are benefiting from the project's opportunities.

By the initiative of Heydar Aliyev Foundation, essential steps are also being taken in Azerbaijan for the development of modern technologies. Creation of the Azerbaijan information portal that has no volume and quality analogue in the country may be considered the biggest contribution to Azerbaijani culture in the present days, when the Internet reality has become an integral part of our lives. The leading experts of Azerbaijan have been involved in the project with valuable materials and documentary data gathered from numerous archives, libraries and state-owned enterprises reflected in the process.

Before starting working on the portal, the Foundation experts conducted a research titled Azerbaijan and Internet. They interested in integration of Azerbaijan to the global information space and Internet resources in Azerbaijani language. According to some sources, the number of Internet users in Azerbaijan reaches 300 thousand, while the other sources claim to be around 400-450 thousand men. The number of Internet users in the Earth

is approximately 1 billion men, which counts for about 14 percent of the world population. We know that Internet post system in Azerbaijan commenced its activity since 1991. Today, one can already speak about existence of Internet Resources in Azerbaijan. Referring to the data of the late 2005, there are 3145 Azerbaijani-language, 830 – Turkish language, 1300 English-language and 1600 Russian-language sites available in our country. Analyzing the sites content, we can find out that 150 of them belong to state-owned institutions, ministries, political parties and public organizations. There are totally 15 sites providing general information about the Azerbaijani regions. The number of sites dedicated to the Garabagh war, Khojali genocide and Armenian atrocities is 17. 26 sites cover the issues related to diaspora activities.

It is an extremely progressive fact that information and communication technologies rated as a driving force of the globalization process ongoing all over the world have already gained a place also in Azerbaijan. Internet is rapidly advancing in our country. The number of organizations engaged in the new technologies raises with every day. Currently, we have sufficient number of Internet resources. However, several serious faults also come out when studying the matter to the depth. There are certain problems linked with network abbreviations, absence of advanced search systems, site nonrenewal and existence of too formal unfit for the modern standards along with those dedicated to a specific problem. There is a huge number of sites in different languages, which injure the country's international image, spread slander and lie, stick to false positions and reflect Armenian position concerning the gravest concern of our nation, the Nagorno garabagh conflict. Proceeding from these very assumptions, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation has set down as indispensable the creation of Azerbaijan portal and the country's society has assessed this as a timely taken step. Reflecting all the periods from the country's most ancient history up to its present realities, the portal plays a significant role in settlement of many concerns.

The portal has been worked out in Azerbaijani, English and Russian languages and its German, French and Arabic versions are being currently developed. The Azerbaijan Internet portal's presentation ceremony took place in 2005 and the portal won the Electronic Attraction nomination of the national competition titled the Azerbaijan Electronic Content–2005.

The Foundation's agreement on cooperation with the UN Development Program on ensuring information and communication technologies access to people having lost their sight abilities and/or have weak sight abilities, as well as the activities done by it as part of the draft document are of extremely huge importance.

These draft agreements have been developed in compliance with the liability undertaken by the heads of state and government in the UN Declaration of Millennium on ensuring the new technologies, especially the information and communication technologies (ICT) for everybody and the National ICT Strategy of Azerbaijani government.

The project has been implemented in three stages. The first stage consisted of identification of the blind and weak-sighted people's ICT demands and development of a separate draft program intending elimination of the digital differences for them, which covered relevant inquiries, discussions and exchanges of experience and types of the equipment to be purchased have were defined.

At the second stage, activities were directed towards creating a model ICT class at the boarding school for the blind and weak-sighted children with the main tasks covering purchase and installation of computer equipment, localization of software, ensuring of the Internet connection and development of special education-training programs.

Preparation of audio-libraries, creation of the training centers, setting of the recording studio to transform the library stock into audio format, restoration of the Braille-script and audio books available in the libraries with assistance of the studio, access to Internet, training courses based on information technologies, creation of the computer center rendering services as finding and acquiring information in the Internet, as well as the training of teachers and trainers delivering the training courses have all been implemented at the first stage and this project was also commended by Azerbaijani society and international community like the other activities performed by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

The Foundation is engaged in several projects for delivering the truths about Azerbaijan to the world community. In 2005, two Internet portals were created in Azerbaijani, English and Russian languages related to the national leader Heydar Aliyev's life and activity. The portal combines the eminent leader's different speeches and interviews to the mass media.

Heydar Aliyev Foundation has also published a set titled Garabag Truths in English. The edition represents a collection of booklets prepared in French, German, Arabic and Russian languages and published with under the names of Information about History of Garabagh, Beginning of the Garabagh Conflict, The Khojali Genocide, Consequences of the Armenian Aggression against Azerbaijan and Armenian Terrorist Organizations anti-Azerbaijani Activity.

The faithfulness of Heydar Aliyev Foundation to the credo of operating in the name of successful future of Azerbaijan, today and happy tomorrow of Azerbaijani nation and keeping the most topical and important concerns of our society in the permanent focus of attention, which was declared by the entity since the first day of its establishment appears also in its attitude to the Nagorno Garabagh problem. Today, the biggest and most painful concern of Azerbaijan is the settlement of Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno Garabagh conflict. This is the most important issue standing before our country. Today, just like a thousand year ago, the biggest injustice and tragedy a nation can ever face is aggression and occupation of its lands. It has been already 17 years since Azerbaijani nation faced such an injustice. 20 percent of our territories have been occupied owing to the Armenian military aggression. Over 20 thousand people died in the First Garabagh War. More than 50 thousand people have been wounded and handicapped. Over 1 million people have been pushed from their native lands and live the life of refugees and IDPs. Azerbaijanis have undergone the genocide committed by Armenians and their policy of ethnic clearance. Human rights of our compatriots counting for over 1 million have been trampled. The Khojali Genocide, which was a historic crime against humanity in general, is the hardest tragedy of not only Azerbaijan, but the entire world in the history of XX century.

All of these realities and truths are our most painful concern and we have already entered into the XXI century with these realities and truths. Delivery of all these truths, all these events and facts, the true reasons and results of the Nagorno Garabagh conflict to the international community, destruction of the information blockade and prevention of the lies and fables spreaded by Armenian diaspora for decades was an integral part of the Heydar Aliyev policy. Heydar Aliyev would take the map of Azerbaijan to every foreign visit of his. During the meetings he held, he would deliver the real truths

and facts to the people he met and recommended the same to every Azerbaijanian.

In his speech at the meeting dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the National Academy of Sciences, Azerbaijani President Mr. Ilham Aliyev said that many scientific researches must be conducted and books must be written on the Garabagh subject and translated into different languages and spread all over the world. Adhering to the eminent leader's ideas, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation has assumed the moral debt of continuing this job and implemented the project of Garabagh Truths as an important step in this direction.

Maybe, there is no need to underline that ideological work requires regular and intense activity meeting the contemporary demands. Considering the modern world's falling interest in outsize books, the Foundation preferred a shorter format and presented the mentioned set in the form of five booklets. They contain precise information concerning the Garabagh history, beginning of the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno Garabagh conflict, the damage inflicted to our country as a result of it, the Khojali genocide and acts of terror committed by Armenians. Everybody receiving the booklets can acquire fair data based on accurate facts by spending very little time. The chronicle of Garabagh Truths became an effective tool for delivering the just word of Azerbaijan to the entire world community at public events organized in the most different countries of the world on the eve of Khojali Genocide anniversaries.

The book titled Sanctuaries and The War prepared by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation together with the experts of Human Rights Institute of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences also contains comprehensive information about the sanctuaries left under the enemy's tramp in the Armenian-occupied regions of Azerbaijan – Shusha, Lachin, Kalbajar, Aghdam, Fuzuli and others, destroyed historic monuments of architecture and holy places.

Since 2005, the Foundation worked also on translation of several foreign publications into Azerbaijani language. As a contribution to military training and enlightening of the youth serving in the national army, the Serviceman's Book of Remarks and the newspaper titled Military Oath started publishing.

Another large-scale project commenced lately is creation of the Azerbaijani Regional Museum at the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. A working

group consisting of local experts has been set together with the SMA Design company of Great Britain in regard of the project. The goal is to reflect the properties of different regions of Azerbaijan – their historic past, socioeconomic state, flora and fauna, cultural-religious monuments, industrial life, local customs and traditions, ethnic groups, as well as the activities done for development of these regions during the years of power of our national leader Heydar Aliyev in Azerbaijan and to propagate the rich heritage left to generations. Every guest visiting the Foundation during his visit to our country can receive proper information about the history, culture, wealths and economy of different Azerbaijani regions by visiting the museum.

Along with all of these projects, Heydar Aliyev Foundation also implements extensive actions aimed at improvement of social infrastructure in the country. New motor roads have been laid by the Foundation's initiative. Electricity supply in different settlements has been improved. Sewing system has been restructured. Water pipes have been renewed.

The Foundation keeps the social problems of refugees and internally displaced persons in its permanent focus of attention. Mehriban khanum Aliyeva feels sensitively their problems and tries to console them through material and moral aids as much as possible. In one of her interviews to foreign media, the Goodwill Ambassador spoke about the heavy conditions of our refugees and IDPs and stressed their biggest need for a help and respond: "If you could see how hopefully they greet every delegation. They think, maybe these people will somehow help them to return to their native lands. Often they feel simply a need for talking about the problems worrying them to somebody and unbosom themselves. This is a kind of a problem, which will be hard to forget even after everything is solved. I believe that truth will triumph and Azerbaijan will restore its territorial integrity. The Nagorno Garabagh conflict is first of all, an unseen humanitarian tragedy. Each one of the one million refugees and IDPs has his own personal tragedy... Yes, today we are doing everything the Azerbaijani state and Azerbaijani society is able to do. The first revenues from the Oil Foundation has been expended exactly on construction of towns for refugees and IDPs and their movement from the tent camps. During communication with them, one feels astonished before the endless tolerance and the same amount of infinite belief

these people have. They believe in the victory of justice, release of their occupied lands and that they will again have their own houses and families”.

Adhering to the national leader Heydar Aliyev’s particular attention and care to the veterans of war and labor, a frank meeting has been held at the Foundation with the veterans of war. Also, the 120th anniversary of our great composer Uzeyir Hajibeyov and 100th anniversary of the academician Yusif Mammadaliyev were celebrated, albums and discs dedicated to the fifty-year lifetime spent together and activity of the world-known men of art Mstislav Rostropovich and his wife Galina Vishnevskaya were released and a festival dedicated to the 100th anniversary of distinguished composer D. Shestakovich was arranged.

The ceremony of books presentation to the Heydar Aliyev Foundation from the Russian Foundation of Pushkin Library also marked an important event of culture in the country’s life. At the ceremony, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva touched upon an issue, which has recently become topical for Azerbaijan, as well as several other countries, that brought to agenda the problem of lack of books that has appeared in the post-soviet area after collapse of the Soviet Union. **“Revival of the book publishing was accompanied by extensively rising costs of books on the one hand, and on the other, by the anxiety suggesting that we are cursed to read only detectives, love romances, culinary books and horoscopes from now on”** – said Mehriban khanum and added that happily, the forces capable of eliminating this quite deep crises have appeared in the society and the exhibition held at the Heydar Aliyev Foundation is a practical proof of this.

She believes that a real literature is a true literary and scientific literature, without which it is impossible to imagine either education and science, or a society in general. In this context, textbooks have a special place. Clearly, in the new socio-political environment of independent states, creation of an ultimately new types of textbooks has emerged as a necessity. The Pushkin Library in Russia is one of several entities actively supporting the development of such a program and taking part in it. Over 800 of the books gifted by the Pushkin Library are textbooks.

Mehriban khanum underlined that Azerbaijan is the only country in the entire post-soviet space, where the education in Russian language is

maintained so extensively both in the high and higher education systems and added that unlike some boundary republics, this education is funded from the budget of Azerbaijan Republic. The Slavonic University operating in our country for many years actually prepares experts in all Slavic languages. Today, we are all proud to have succeeded to maintain the cultural environment of the great Russian literature. Certainly, this is a cultural bridge between Azerbaijan and Russia.

Heydar Aliyev Foundation has gifted over 4 thousand books published in Russia at a high polygraphic level to higher education institutions of our republic in various fields of science, which is a proof of the great respect to the eternal memory of our national leader Heydar Aliyev.

In the globalization period and modern Internet century, which is forming the information-inclusive society, scientific-cultural cooperation with other countries and investigation of the global achievements enjoys a special position. In this aspect, delivery of scientific-theoretical works and textbooks by the famous Russian scientists to Azerbaijan and their free distribution is of extremely big importance.

Arrangement of the first international conference titled *Medicine and Pharmaceutics in the Middle Age Manuscripts* together with the Washington Academy and the XIII international conference titled *Cultural Differences in Eurasia: Azerbaijan – The Past and Today of Intercivilizational Dialogue* together with the Latin Culture Academy in Baku is also an element of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation's service to intercivilizational dialogue and objective delivery of Azerbaijani realities to the world through such grandiose events attended by the world-known academicians.

Development of the links of cooperation in the education and culture areas remained as a key issue also during the First Lady of Azerbaijan, President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO and ISESCO and deputy of the National Assembly Mehriban khanum Aliyeva's visit to the USA in December 2006. During the visit, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva met with the First Lady of USA Laura Bush at the White House and the First Ladies of both countries spoke about the role of education, public health and culture sectors in the reinforcement of Azerbaijani-USA relationships in a frank environment. Mehriban khanum Aliyeva and Laura Bush provided each other with information concerning

the programs and projects implemented in their countries in the relevant areas. The projects carried out in Azerbaijan by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation regarding the education area caused special interest of the First Lady of USA. It was stressed at the meeting that investments targeted at the education sector are the most valuable investments for the future of both countries. They also spoke about the importance of joint efforts in the area.

As part of the visit, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva met with the USA senator Kay Bailey Hutchison and Congressmember Shelley Sekula Gibbs and the cooperation on memorandum between the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and Vital Voice non-governmental humanitarian organization cochaired by the senator senator Hutchison.

In this context, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva's meeting with the Azerbaijani students studying in different states of America at the Azerbaijani Embassy to USA during her visit is particularly remarkable. Pointing out that education-related projects have a priority position in the activity of Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva spoke about the Foundation's specific activities in this direction. She stated that the Decree signed by the President Ilham Aliyev will pave extensive opportunities for the talented students of Azerbaijan to receive education abroad. The First Lady of Azerbaijan called the students to come back to the Motherland after finishing their education in the USA and employ their knowledge in the name of development of the native country.

Mehriban khanum Aliyeva met also the head of the George Bush Presidential Library Foundation, former counsilor of USA for national safety affairs, general Brent Scowcroft. During the conversation, they discussed the prospects of cooperation between the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and the George Bush Presidential Library Foundation, as well as the issues linked with implementation of joint projects.

The First Lady of Azerbaijan conducted meetings also with representatives of authoritative research and analytical centers and universities of Washington. The meetings were attended by the famous scientists and public figures of USA, including Susan Eisenhower, Frederic Star, Svante Cornell, Anjela Stand, James Baker, Rob Sobhani, Roald Sagdeyev and Ariel Cohen. Tracking attentively the progress of USA-Azerbaijan relationships, the scientists expressed their opinions regarding the

present stage of Azerbaijan and steps that may attach a new rhythm to the dynamics of these relationships.

During the visit, Mehriban Aliyeva also visited the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Washington Weaving Museum. At the weaving museum, the First Lady of Azerbaijan was reported about the projects successfully implemented in cooperation with the Azerbaijani carpet weaving museum.

The President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation also met with the Azerbaijani and American men of art living in America at the Azerbaijan Trade and Culture Center attached to the USA-Azerbaijan Trade Chamber. Speaking about the high level relationships between Azerbaijan and USA, Mehriban Aliyeva stressed the need for implementation of the projects aiming at recognition of our rich cultural heritage in America. The First Lady of Azerbaijan stated that support of Azerbaijani men of art living in the USA is important in this mission.

At the solemn meeting organized by the USA-Azerbaijan Trade Chamber on the occasion of her visit, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva spoke about the importance attached to education in Azerbaijan: "Today we pay a special attention to the education of our youth. During the last three years, 735 high schools have been built. The President of Azerbaijan has signed a Decree on the State Program regarding the raise of scholarships for the young and gifted Azerbaijanis to receive education abroad. This is a part of the governmental strategy on spending the oil revenues to the non-oil sector. I think that investments in our education, future and new generations is the most appropriate form of investment". Mehriban khanum said she is sure that majority of the students will come to America to study.

She also spoke of the joint values connecting Azerbaijan and America and stated: "Azerbaijan is an ancient land possessing a very rich cultural heritage and traditions. Throughout many centuries, our country has been a bridge between the West and the East. We are happy of our difference. Today we have a multinational and multi-religious community and Moslems, Christians, Jews and representatives of other religions live side-by-side in the environment of mutual understanding in Azerbaijan. We consider our values of tolerance, dignity, respect for other cultures, faithfulness to family and care for children and older people very important. All of these values are

also values of America. Therefore, I consider that a closer cooperation between the United States and Azerbaijan is of extreme importance for our common success. We can do many things together through dialogue and understand each other between, and finally, we can build long-term relationships”.

During the visit, the First Lady of Azerbaijan was presented the Goodwill Ambassador of 2006 award of the USA–Azerbaijan Trade Chamber. Mehriban khanum was rewarded with this award for her merits in the fields of culture, education and charity.

Today the Heydar Aliyev Foundation has become the last hope of Azerbaijani citizens, who fail to get a respond to their appeals from many state structures and solve their problems, as well as the highest address of kindness and grace. The Foundation treats quite attentively every single person turning to this public entity. The number of persons sending letters to the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in regard of the most different matters counts in thousands. Which life credo, which principles dictate the sensitive respond to the problems of these people, assistance rendered to every citizen appealing to the Foundation as far as possible, and this unmatched sample of grace and kindness? We think, the most inclusive answer to this question is reflected in Mehriban khanum Aliyeva’s following thoughts: **“Now we are living in such a world, which has plenty of problems and issues all around us requiring attention and proper comprehension. When speaking of today, we hear quite frequently the words of globalization, integration, scientific-technical progress and advanced technologies, and you would agree with me that these words are sounded more often than the notions of true humanism, grace, kindness and morality. Don’t we place these humane and eternal values to the second place? The mission of charity is more necessary today than ever. There were times, when the charity activity was a national idea and mission of national scale in Azerbaijan. Today i can say with proud that you are witnesses of this tradition’s revival. Our experience and experience of our Foundation showed that there are many people in our country, who are ready to respond to callings, render disinterested aid and extend a helping hand. Kindness brings kindness, i think, this is the major service of our Foundation and our activity”**.

The secret of great respect and reverence the Azerbaijani nation cherishes to the country's first lady lies exactly here. Having transformed the kindness toward others and feelings of grace into the key notions and purest human qualities for herself, Mehriban Aliyeva's supreme humanism and love to people have gained her a big love of nation. Certainly, it would be more desirable for the goodwill ambassador, who has also the principle of disinterestedness standing behind her mission of kindness, not to mention her merits for Azerbaijani nation and humanity in general. Because, the idea of **“you should never mention the kindness you want to do”** is her primary life credo. Yet, Mehriban khanum is deprived of such an opportunity in a positive sense of the word, as she herself also says. In the status of the country's first lady, she cannot arrange a single charity action that would not draw the society's attention: **“Though this factor of publicity presses on me, it also brings some novelties to my life and I accept it the way it is. This costs me big efforts as a person far away from declaring myself”**.

People of Azerbaijan attentively follows the charity actions carried out by the country's first lady and projects of cultural-social character implemented under her guidance and commends her kind mission. The great national reverence for personality of Mehriban khanum Aliyeva finds its reflection in specific rating indicators in many cases.

Mehriban khanum has interpreted her own conception of activity like this: **“Today we are living in a period of modern engineering, advanced technologies and globalization. I think, one of the biggest displays of the time is that though the progress and communication opportunities achieved create conditions for uniting of people and establishment of closer communication among them, negligence and abyss among people is deepening in actual life. Sometimes, we do not only ignore the voice of humanity, even a neighbor does not hear another neighbor, a brother does not want to help his brother. Today, one of the most painful problems confronting the entire world is cheapening of the moral ideals and their replacement with false ideals. Sometimes in the society one finds himself in a situation, when all the doors he knocks on remain closed before him. He becomes left alone with his pain and problem and thinks that nobody and nothing can ever help him. In this case, he turns to our Foundation. I do not want to say that we solve immediately all of his problems. But,**

that person will never face either ignorance, or a cold treatment and all the possible means will definitely be used for solution of his problems. I suppose, charity, benevolence and grace is one of the most beautiful features characteristic to mentality, culture and traditions of Azerbaijani nation formed through long centuries and today, as the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, we are trying to continue these traditions”.

Saying every person has his own life philosophy, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva believes that it is not at all necessary for that person to express his philosophy by words. This life philosophy will definitely appear in his actions and steps. The Heydar Aliyev Foundation also has such a philosophy. This philosophy is grounded on a quite simple idea or goal: to do good deeds to people. Though every person feels a good attitude to himself not only in his hard times, but also in his daily life, this can fill his life with another sense. Mehriban khanum thinks that many things in the world can be changed to a better side with good deeds.

An essential point drawing attention in the Azerbaijani President Mr. Ilham Aliyev’s regular visits to Azerbaijani regions, which he has turned into a style of activity for himself in order to familiarize with the state of implementation of national programs signed for socioeconomic development of the regions of Azerbaijan Republic and build direct relations with local population and receive the information about existing problems from the original source is that at all his visits Mr. President is accompanied by the country’s First Lady.

During her visits to different distant districts, Mehriban khanum Aliyeva visits also schools, hospitals and child education and mentoring institutions. She meets with the local people and listens to their problems. The social-cultural concerns pointed out during the meetings soon become an element of some program carried out by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

The mission of serving to Azerbaijani nation and state is as if predestined for all members of this family. A young representative of this patriotic family, post-graduate student of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and President of the Azerbaijani Youth Club at MSIIR Leyla khanum Aliyeva is also continuing successfully the same mission.

Leyla khanum Aliyeva has great merits in the union of Azerbaijani youth around the interests of motherland, spending their youth energy for national

interests and coming out as the leading force especially in the diaspora building activities.

The event held by Leyla khanum's initiative in the Forum Hall festivities saloon in Moscow in 21 December 2006 on the occasion of the Day of Solidarity of Azerbaijanis Worldwide is a sample to the activities done in this field.

In her opening speech at the event, the leader of the youth movement Leyla Aliyeva spoke about importance of the day of national unity and solidarity for our country and pointed out that presently 50 million of Azerbaijanis live in the world and effective relationships are being established with the Azerbaijani diaspora organizations abroad. Leyla Aliyeva particularly stressed that following the first and second conferences of Azerbaijanians worldwide held in 2001 and 2006 accordingly, the relationships have become stronger and more intensive and Azerbaijanians in the entire world have started a more active cooperation.

Leyla Aliyeva stated: "I think, a dialogue between nations, compatriots, countries and cultures is a very important tool for maintenance of the peace and welfare. Knowing each other more closely, creating communication between ourselves and helping to each other, we will strengthen as a nation on the one hand and on the other hand, we can better acquaint the world with modern Azerbaijan and give more information to it about our country".

She gave information to the participants about achievements of modern Azerbaijan and said that presently our Motherland is country developing rapidly its economy and growing investments in the fields of education, culture and science. The state pays much attention to social problems. Leyla khanum Aliyeva stated that Azerbaijan is a leading state in the entire world, underlined the development of our regions, construction of new industrial facilities, hospitals, diagnostic centers, schools, kindergartens and roads, pointed out the construction of 735 schools in the last three years and their supply with own computer classes and top modern equipment, and added that all of these are a part of the state program on usage of the oil-revenues in the non-oil sector: "I think, the investments made in education are the most profitable ones. Just like any other country, Azerbaijan's future also depends on successful development of education, science and modern technologies. Presently we, the students of MSIIR, represent our Motherland in the capital

of Russia, Moscow. The MSIIR club of Azerbaijanis consists of 60 students. We have received the opportunity to study in one of the world's leading higher schools. I am sure that we will successfully benefit from the huge potential of this academic school and represent decently our Motherland”.

The leader of the youth movement also pointed out the fact that today strong ties of friendship unite Russia and Azerbaijan, AND Azerbaijan is one of the post-soviet states, where the number of Russian-language schools has been kept at its previous level. “Azerbaijanians have a big respect for the unique Russian literature, culture and art. Successful course of the Year of Azerbaijan in Russia and the Year of Russia in Azerbaijan once again confirms these friendly relationships. For many centuries Azerbaijan has been famous for its tolerance and respectful respond to different nations and religions. Today Azerbaijan is a multinational and multi-religious state, where representatives of various nations and religions live as a family in peace and solidarity. I am sure that a nation assessing and respecting own customs and traditions and culture must assess and respect any other world culture as well”.

Leyla khanum Aliyeva stressed regretfully that despite all of these, centers of conflict still remain in the modern world and along with human losses, cultural and historic values of global importance have also been ruined. She drew attention to the fact of Armenian military aggression against Azerbaijan: “As you know, 20 percent of Azerbaijani territories is under occupation owing to the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno Garabagh conflict. The invaders have destroyed thousands of historic and cultural monuments, as well as religious temples in these territories. There is one million of refugess and IDPs in the country. A part of them has been living in tents and refugee camps for over ten years. This is also a huge humanitarian tragedy. Therefore, all Azerbaijanis must deliver these facts and realities to the world community. We all hope for a soon and just settlement of this conflict”.

In 25 February 2007, the MSIIR Azerbaijani Youth Club and Russian Coordination Council for Azerbaijani Youth held a night of memory titled 15 Years Without Khojaly in Moscow by the support of Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

At the beginning of the mourning ceremony, the hymn of Azerbaijan Republic was sounded, then a documentary submitted by the Heydar Aliyev

Foundation on the history of Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and the Khojali tragedy was demonstrated.

In her speech, the President of MSIIR Azerbaijani club Leyla Aliyeva made an excursion to the history of this tragedy and stated that the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict has been ongoing for already 15 years and owing to this, 20 percent of Azerbaijan is under occupation, the country has over one million refugees and IDPs, and tens of thousands of historic and architectural monuments in the country have been destroyed.

“Like in every war, the biggest loss unreplacable and biggest tragedy is human victims. The date of February 26, 1992, the day, when Armenian aggressors murdered cruelly Azerbaijanis in the city of Khojali has entered our history as a most tragic and painful date. The slaughter in Khojali was the hardest test for our nation. It passed through the destiny of every family, it touched everybody” said Leyla khanum Aliyeva and underlined that this tragedy can be considered equal to the hardest crimes committed against the entire humanity for its cruelty and massive character. 15 years have passed, but Azerbaijan will never forget this scary day of February. The martyrs of that day are still alive; there are documents, photo and video materials confirming this world-scale crime. “The goal of the event we hold by support of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation is to provide objective information to the world community of this genocide. Also, our purpose is to make an appeal to the global community not to let a repetition of such tragedy. The events of Khojali showed once again to the entire humanity what the non-observation of international legal norms and policy of double standards may lead to. Along with this, Khojali united the entire Azerbaijani nation all over the world. We believe that the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict will be solved with justice, and the bitter truth about Khojali will receive its legal assessment. In the XXI century, humanity has to finally pass from violence and wars to common values, solidarity, tolerance and a new culture grounding on the rights of every single person” – said the President of the MSIIR Azerbaijani club Leyla Aliyeva.

As we can see, Leyla khanum Aliyeva’s activity and her thoughts expressed at different events reflect the mind of modern Azerbaijani youth, who are the future of our country. The Motherland’s tomorrow will be built by hands of these very youth.

At the end of our remarks, we mentally return to the high school years and remember once again the literary samples reflecting the destiny of first swallows of the Azerbaijani enlighteners generation. Our thoughts erect the moral monuments of Nariman Narimanov's Mahammad agha, Omer, Nejefbey Vezirov's Fakhraddin, Abdurrehimbey Hagverdiyev's Farhad and tens of other such heroes, who turned on the light of enlightening with their images.

Merely a century has passed since then on. It is not too big time. At least, some of the people living in that century share the same time with us today.

Yet, during that one century, the age of progress that occurred in the thinking and living of Azerbaijani men can be measured in millennia only.

This is not about the length of a century, this is about the highness of the personalities having lived in the same century with us and turned the century into millennia with their moral contributions to Azerbaijani nation and humanity in general.

We simply wanted to take a glance at those highnesses in this book.

The extent to which we have achieved this will be determined by the reader...

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