

ANA LINNAS

**United Schools International  
UPR Azerbaijan – HRC 24<sup>th</sup> Session**

Mr. President,

Azerbaijan is endowed with some of the key ingredients that enable it to continue building a strong democratic society: indigenous democratic traditions; a high educational level; devotion to secularism, moderation and mutual respect; remarkable economic development; and a pivotal position in East-West trade

Azerbaijan has posted an average 12.6 percent in GDP growth, according to the International Monetary Fund. The IMF estimates 4.5 percent growth in 2013 and, more importantly, 9 percent growth in non-oil sectors. News AZ in its report dated September 9, 2013 refers to the Chief of Department for Political Analysis and Information Support of the Presidential Administration of Azerbaijan, Elnur Aslanov, mentioning that the country figures on the list of 40 most effective economies in the world. Azerbaijan has significantly improved its economic position over the years. In the Global Competitiveness Reports of 2010-2011 Azerbaijan was 57th, in 2011-2012-55th, in 2012-2013-46th, while in the report for 2013-2014 it rose to the 39th position. This is an indication of the smooth level of economic progress taking place in the country.

In a news report in Trend dated 10 September 2013, Azerbaijani Economic Development Minister Shahin Mustafayev is quoted as mentioning that The Azerbaijani economy would be effectively able to surpass the targets set out in the 'Azerbaijan 2020: A Look into the Future' concept. The concept envisages an annual growth of non-oil GDP by seven per cent bringing the GDP per capita to \$13,000, non-oil exports per capita - up to \$1000. According to the Minister, the current rate of growth shows that the country would not only achieve, but also improve the targets. As of the first seven months the GDP growth in Azerbaijan amounted to five per cent and non-oil GDP growth 10.5 per cent. The amount of investments into the economy of the country for the seven months exceeded 27.2 per cent for the same period of last year and non-oil exports increased by 10 per cent.

As a consequence of the impressive growth rate, Azerbaijan has implemented social welfare policies with considerable success. The country boasts of a highly successful educational policy. Azerbaijan boasts of an impressive 99.8 percent literacy rate. During the past decade, spending on education has increased five-fold. The country recognizes the value of exposing its most promising young people to formal education abroad. Recently, the State Oil Fund, a sovereign wealth fund founded by the late President Heydar Aliyev, allocated \$78 million to fund such scholarships. The newspaper Trend in its report dated September 18 2013 reports that as per the objectives of the proposed budget for 2014, government of Azerbaijan intends to pursue social policy, which is considered one of the priorities of budget expenditures. The budget draft envisages financial support to improve the welfare and living standards, improve the defense capabilities of the state, strengthen the country's energy potential, build-to-date systems of water and gas supply, drainage and irrigation, rural roads, development of agriculture and food security, social and investment programs.

Azerbaijan has also registered significant advances in environment protection. . In the 2000 Environmental Protection Index, Azerbaijan scored 33.7, 128th in the world—near the bottom. Since then, Azerbaijan's score has improved by 28 percent, lifting the country to a score of 43. This shows the commitment of Azerbaijan in maintaining healthy environmental norms.

For the development of the agricultural sector, Azerbaijan government has formulated a number of state-sponsored programs. Azernews in a report dated September 11 2013 reported that Azerbaijan's Ministry of Agriculture and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have signed an agreement under the project on the development of seed-growing in the member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization and an agreement on improving the management of the situation with locusts in the Caucasus and Central Asia. With the help of international organisations, joint projects have been successfully implemented in the agricultural sector. Currently, FAO is implementing four national and eight regional projects.

Thank You all.