

Azerbaijan

Misir Djumail oglu Mardanov

Minister of Education



Born in 1946, Mr. Misir Djumail oglu Mardanov holds a Doctor's degree on Physics and Mathematics from the Baku State University. He became subsequently professor at the Baku State University. He was deputy Dean (1978-1989), Prorector (1992-1996), and Rector of the Baku State University (1997). From 1989 to 1992, he was Deputy Minister of Education. Since 1998 he is Minister of Education. He is the Chairman of Specialized Council for Doctoral Dissertations on mathematics, opponent for more than 10 dissertations, member of "Baku University News" scientific journal's Chief Editorial Board, editor of a number of fundamental scientific works. He has a large pedagogical and scientific experience. In particular, he is involved in improvement of education system. His scientific researches deal with mathematical methods of management. He investigated

systems with delayed arguments, and proved theorems on necessary and sufficient conditions in such systems.

Quality education for all: living together, democracy and social cohesion

Azerbaijan Republic is situated on the crossroads of Europe and Asia and borders on five states (Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Iran, and Turkey). The total length of its borders is 2849km, territory being 86,600sq.km. Population of Azerbaijan is 8mln people. In spite of the fact that education in Azerbaijan has deep roots, its real development began from 20-s of XX century.. For a short period of time illiteracy was completely eliminated and a broad network of educational institutions were established in once backward country. At present, in accordance with the Law on Education of Azerbaijan Republic the following structure of education system is adopted: 1. General Education; 2. Specialized professional education; 3. Vocational education; 4. Secondary specialized education; 5. Higher professional education (higher professional education includes: Bachelor degree course Master degree course); 6. Post-diploma training Studies for Doctoral degree; In-service training retraining of staff.

Within this structure, a broad network of educational institutions functions in the Republic, including 1814 pre-school institutions, 4610 secondary schools, 110 vocational schools and lyceums, 71 secondary specialized educational institutions (technical schools, colleges), 48 higher educational institutions (universities, institutes, academies)

According to the Constitution of Azerbaijan Republic, every citizen has the right to free Education. All necessary conditions are created in the Republic to provide constitutional right of the citizens to get free education. Citizen of Azerbaijan has the right to education irrespective of his/her race, nationality, social position, language or age. The state guarantees equal rights of citizens to education. At present, radical reformation of the education system is being implemented in the Republic. Priority trends in the process of reformation are improvement of the quality of education and development of international relations in the sphere of education, in order to ensure compliance with international standards. One of the most important achievements in the field of international cooperation is the development of the 'Reformation Program in the sphere of education' together with the World Bank experts.

The Program was adopted by the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan. System of education of Azerbaijan Republic is officially represented in a number of major international organizations: UNESCO, Council of Europe, ISESCO, and European Training Foundation. Two Azerbaijani experts participate in activities of the Commission on TACIS Program as international experts in higher schools. One of the most significant fields in the cooperation with international organizations is involvement of our higher educational institutions for participation in TEMPUS Program, which is funded by European Commission.

Major trends in cooperation with the above mentioned organizations are participation in international conferences, symposiums and meetings; organization of in-service teacher training courses for pedagogical

staff of secondary and higher educational institutions; implementation of joint projects aimed at development of our higher educational institutions within the framework of TACIS/TEMPUS Programs; involvement of leading European experts for conducting lectures and discussions; implementation of initial expertise of new textbooks planned for publication (on foreign languages and humanities); organization of joint scientific conferences; participation of teachers from higher and secondary schools in long-term and short-term in-service teacher training courses abroad; joint preparation of textbooks and curricula for higher and secondary schools.

In 2000, international cooperation with international organizations, non-government organizations and foreign countries expanded. For the latest years, useful cooperation is being developed between the Ministry of Education and Academic Exchange Service of Germany (DAAD). Scholarships offered by DAAD stipulate not only study of German language, but other specialities (especially technical) as well. Fruitful cooperation in the field of education is going on with France. Beginning from 1993, 289 secondary school students got one-year-long education in the USA, within the framework of the Project implemented jointly by 'World Learning' organization and ACCELS.

At present, Azerbaijani citizens get education in Turkey, France, Russia, Egypt, Iran, China, Romania, USA, Slovakia, Mexico and others. Students from 20 foreign countries, including Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Jordan, Syria, Yemen, Ethiopia, Russia, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Algeria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Sudan, Somalia and others, study in higher educational institutions of Azerbaijan Today, our national system of education faces many problems and we need experience and assistance of international organizations in order to cope with them as well as implementation of international and regional programs on such issues as underprivileged children, education for refugees and issues related to humanization of education and human focused education. *✍*