



**Permanent Mission
of the Republic of Azerbaijan
to the UN Office and other
International Organizations
GENEVA**

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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and with reference to the request of Ms. Alexandra Xanthaki, the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, has the honour to transmit herewith the replies by the Government of Azerbaijan to the questionnaire on the role of culture in sustainable development.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.



Geneva, 6 May 2022

Enclosure: 4 pages

Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights,
GENEVA

The cultures of development

1. What is your understanding of what “development” should aspire to?

Development should aspire to establishment of just, equitable and inclusive societies for everyone. The economy must cover all the spheres of societies under the one the main principles of 2030 Agenda: Leaving no one behind.

2. How is development defined in your country? If exists, please provide the definition of development used in your Government’s strategies or policies towards (sustainable) development.

Global economic realities, in addition to the goals set for Azerbaijan new stage of development, require definitions of the country's long-term development vector, of Azerbaijan main pathways to socio-economic development, and of corresponding national priorities.

Independent Azerbaijan is experiencing a historic turning point in its economic, social, political, and cultural development. Purposeful socio-economic reforms implemented in the country during this transitional period have ensured a strengthening and modernization of the national economy. Over the past 17 years, our country's economy has more than tripled on the basis of dynamic development, a strong socio-economic infrastructure has been created, and the level of poverty has significantly decreased within the context of positive demographic growth. Existing financial opportunities have reached a historic peak and we have strengthened our position among the upper-middle-income group of countries.

Our growing economic power has allowed Azerbaijan to initiate major projects which can change the economies of the South Caucasus and surrounding regions. As a locomotive of the regional economy, our country has become one of the world's most reliable partners in energy security. All of this has increased the economic role of Azerbaijan in the region, laying a solid foundation for its resistance to external influences and the restoration of its sovereignty as an independent state.

3. Has your country developed and adopted a (sustainable) development strategy. If so, please indicate what the main development model is the aims that are communicated and monitored.

Azerbaijan is entering a strategic phase in this new post-pandemic and post-conflict era which spans from 2021 to 2030. Acknowledging global trends and challenges, the Government of Azerbaijan sets the country's long-term development vector and pathways to socio-economic and environmental development through five corresponding national priorities (approved by Presidential decree) for the subsequent decade. These priorities aligned with Azerbaijan commitments under the 2030 Agenda, are as follows:

- Steadily growing competitive economy;
- Society based on dynamic, inclusive and social justice;
- Competitive human capital and space for modern innovations;
- Great return to the liberated territories;
- Clean environment and green growth country.

4. What are the main stakeholders defining, driving and monitoring the (Sustainable) development process? Please provide information on the various levels or sectors of stakeholders involved.

The main stakeholders defining, driving and monitoring the sustainable development in the country are the four working groups in which are composed of the designated representatives from the government institutions which addresses:

1. Economic growth and decent work
2. Social development
3. Environment
4. Monitoring and evaluation

The next main stakeholders defining, driving and monitoring the sustainable development are the members of Public Council under the Ministry of Economy. Especially, it must be mentioned that the members of Council are academic institutions (universities), private sectors and NGOs.

5. Are there participatory processes influencing and informing the definition and evaluation of sustainable development policies? If so, how?

The acceleration of economic growth, based on high, sustainable, inclusive, and most importantly, private initiatives, constitutes the ideological core of Azerbaijan's new development highway, and ensures both a constant increase in the level of national social welfare and the return of populations to recently liberated territories.

6. Have the development priorities or the assistance provided by international organizations impacted negatively on some aspects of your country's (sustainable) development policies?

This part of the questionnaire aims to gather experiences on how cultural resources and cultural rights have been considered in the strategies and programs aiming to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals generally as well as for specific goals.

7. In designing the strategy to achieve the SDGs, what consideration has been given to their cultural dimensions and to cultural rights? Which aspects have been considered?

The alignment of the SDGs to national priorities in the Republic of Azerbaijan follows the key principles established within the framework of a collective approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

- Universality;
- Leaving No One Behind;
- Commitment to human rights;
- Complexity and integrity.

Formulating a national development strategy that is in line with the 2030 Agenda helps to identify new opportunities for the country's key policy documents. By integrating the SDGs into the national development agenda, the "2030 Agenda" can be amalgamated with national, regional and local plans, as well as relevant budget allocations.

Fulfillment of the commitments undertaken by Azerbaijan in the area of the Sustainable Development Goals is among the most important priorities of the state policy. The main instrument

of implementing SDGs at the government level is the National Coordinating Council for Sustainable Development created in 2016. Over the past period, numerous effective discussions have been arranged and held with the active participation of representatives of the scientific community, NGOs, the Legislative Assembly and the private sectors. The work on adapting the adopted state programs and strategies to the Sustainable Development Goals is underway.

The national priorities for the socio-economic development of Azerbaijan for the next 10 years, approved by the Presidential Decree at the beginning of 2021, can be considered the culmination in nationalizing the Sustainable Development Goals. Currently, active work is underway on developing the Strategy for the Socio-Economic Development of Azerbaijan for 2021-2025, which will be fully adapted to the SDGs.

8. How was the planning implementation and monitoring of the strategy adapted to the cultural values worldviews practices and identities of the concerned persons? How was respect for diversity integrated in (the process)?

Regarding to the monitoring process, it must be highlighted that since 2018, the State Statistical Committee began publishing an annual statistical compendium entitled “Sustainable Development Goals: statistical review”. This publication is available in Azerbaijani and English, and explains the nature of the global goals and targets set out in the “2030 Agenda”, highlighting the global challenges being faced, and providing an analysis of the sustainable development trends in the national context via statistical indicators, describing the various graphs and tables over the past decade (2010-2019). The National Information Portal (NIP) on SDGs, released online by the State Statistical Committee in 2019, plays an important role in raising awareness. The NIP also provides regular access to information on the global goals, targets and indicators, national priorities for the SDGs, applicable legal framework, implementation mechanisms, government programmes, strategies, reports and publications in the social, economic and environmental spheres, along with SDG data through text, graphics and tables.

9. Where cultural resources and creative capacities were leveraged in achieving the SDGs, what were in your experience the results, success, weakness or lessons learned?

Along with the nationalization of the SDGs, and alignment of the existing strategies with prioritized targets and indicators, we work on a new road map on SDGs Financing (INFF).