

Capacity Building Program for Secretaries-General and Representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO in African countries

Audience: Secretaries-General and Representatives of
National Commissions for UNESCO in African countries

September 24 – October 8, 2022
Baku, Azerbaijan

PROGRAM BROCHURE

Preface by **Dr. Fariz Ismailzade**

Dear Participants,

I am delighted to welcome you to the inaugural “Capacity Building Program for Secretaries-General and Representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO in African countries,” co-organized by the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO and the Institute of Development and Diplomacy of ADA University and implemented by the Executive Education of the Institute.

The Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy was established in 2006 and started delivering an Advanced Foreign Service Program to diplomats and government employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2014, the academy became a state-run institution of higher education, and ADA University was founded by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev. ADA University’s key principles include academic excellence, accountability, and shared governance, honor, honesty, transparency, diversity, cooperation and communication, and social responsibility. We have around 2000 alumni in 48 countries.

Beginning in 2007, ADA University Executive Education has earned a reputation as the nation’s most prestigious and comprehensive training program vehicle for developing junior, mid-career, and senior leadership skills. Executive Education has trained over 1,500 diplomats and other civil servants from various government agencies within the ‘Advanced Foreign Service Program’ and 684 foreign civil servants and diplomats from 104 countries within the ‘Caspian Basin Studies Program’ and other International Programs over the past fifteen years. Since 2012, 130 custom and open enrollment programs have been designed and delivered for 3,021 managers and leaders in both government and business. Executive Education became a part of the Institute for Development and Diplomacy, a research institution founded by the University in March 2022, to deepen engagement and outreach with the expert, research, and policymaking communities, not only in Azerbaijan and other Silk Road regions but globally.

Designed for the Secretaries-General and Mid-Level Staff of the National Commissions of African countries for UNESCO, this capacity-building program aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of participants, thereby contributing to the efforts and activities of UNESCO in promoting sustainable development and management, as well as a culture of peace and nonviolence in the African region.

I am hopeful that this initiative will enhance collaboration and bilateral contacts between the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the National Commissions of African countries for UNESCO. We regard each participant as a member of our family and look forward to helping your career and personal growth.

At ADA University, we are driven by the need to establish an exceptional education for our own citizens in Azerbaijan, but we also recognize that our growing nation has a responsibility to provide first-rate international education, management, and leadership development training to others in the region and the world, all the while fostering intellectual inquiry on a variety of subjects.

I hope you enjoy your time in Azerbaijan and find the program to be beneficial.

Dr. Fariz Ismailzade,

Vice Rector of ADA University / Director of the Institute for Development and Diplomacy

Preface by **Dr. Seymur Fataliyev**

I welcome all of you at the “Capacity building program for Secretaries-General and Representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO in African Countries” program.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the membership of the Republic of Azerbaijan in UNESCO. Under the leadership of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E. Ilham Aliyev, Azerbaijan contributed to the efforts and activities of UNESCO. In this regard, cooperation between Azerbaijan and UNESCO has developed steadily, and today our country has become a reliable partner of the organization. Adhering to the goals and principles of UNESCO, Azerbaijan continues to operate in all priority areas of the organization.

The invaluable role of the First Vice-President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO Ms. Mehriban Aliyeva in the development of our country's cooperation with UNESCO, promotion of the organization's ideas and goals at the international level and within the country should be emphasized. With the attention and support of the First Vice President, Azerbaijan made great contribution to the promotion of UNESCO values in education, protection of cultural heritage, restoration, and protection of historical monuments in Azerbaijan and around the World. During the last 30 years, 3 tangible and 15 intangible heritage samples of Azerbaijan have been inscribed on the relevant lists of UNESCO.

The protection of the rich heritage of Azerbaijan, including the monuments in the recently liberated territories is one of the state priorities, which aligns with the goals and priorities of UNESCO. At the highest-level Azerbaijan declared its determination that all cultural and religious monuments in the liberated territories regardless of their origin will be duly preserved and restored.

Over the past 30 years, the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO has actively participated in the programs and events organized by UNESCO and improved its relations with the National Commissions of member countries of this organization.

With the purpose of contributing UNESCO priority areas, National Commission of Azerbaijan for UNESCO collaborate with the ADA University to organize capacity-building program with the participation of the Secretaries-General / Representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO in African countries. This program is expected to contribute to the efforts and activities of UNESCO in regard with promoting culture of peace and non-violence, as well as sustainable development and management in the African region. Besides, the program targets to further improve cooperation and bilateral relations between the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan and National Commissions of African countries for UNESCO.

I wish you success in this program.

Dr. Seymur Fataliyev

*Secretary-General, National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO
Ambassador at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan*

Preface by **Ms. Nargiz Ismayilova**

ADA University Executive Education is the major training vehicle for both civil servants and businesspeople in the country as well as for international audiences. Executive Education has been an important tool for government agencies and businesses to nurture junior, midcareer and top leadership talent for more than ten years.

Our mission is to provide high-quality and needs-based professional development and training programs for government and business based on our distinguished academic resources. Our Executive Education Programs foster dialogue between government and business and provide excellent networking opportunities among all participants. Our alumni network consists of over 5,000 professionals.

Our rich portfolio of certificate programs includes the Advanced Foreign Service Program offered to diplomats and the Caspian Basin Studies Program for foreign civil servants and representatives of academic institutions and international organizations. We provide tailored capacity-building programs to junior, mid-career, and senior professionals working in the following industries: banking, IT and engineering, oil and gas, media and communications, health and insurance. From 2007 to 2021, more than 2000 diplomats and other civil servants from Azerbaijan, Europe, Asia, Africa, United States, Latin America, and Caribbean Countries graduated from Advanced Foreign Service Program, Caspian Basin Studies Program, and other short and long-term training programs of ADA University Executive Education. However as of 2022, we started to operate under the Institute for development and Diplomacy.

We are happy that you are now among participants of our programs. No doubts, you will enjoy the benefits of this program which we prepared for you. It is rich with sessions, presentations, study trips and cultural programs. I am sure these two weeks will be unforgettable.

Wishing you success with this course!

To learn more about ADA University Executive Education please visit:

https://idd.az/en/executive_education

Ms. Nargiz Ismayilova

Head of Executive Education

Institute for Development and Diplomacy, ADA University

Background

The African continent was one of UNESCO's two worldwide priorities in 1984, with gender equality. Consequently, the Organization formulated its Operational Strategy for Priority Africa, which comprised six flagship initiatives designed to promote and encourage the development of the African continent. The related programme addressed the difficulties that the African continent faces, including population increase, sustainable development, economic growth, social change, and democratic government. The Priority Africa Operational Strategy is aligned with the goals of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and consists of six strategic impact areas: natural resource governance, youth and women's empowerment, economic transformation, climate change migration and adaptation, affordable and sustainable energy, and peace and security.

Prioritizing the African continent is central to UNESCO's mandate to promote and support better governance, more equitable growth, and sustainable development. The capacity-building courses are used to produce and disseminate knowledge in Africa and strengthen the capacities of government officials throughout the respective region in the areas of science, technology, and innovation to manage natural resources, economies, and communities sustainably. In this context, Azerbaijan plays an important role as a result of its support for UNESCO's goals and objectives on the African continent. The UNESCO/Azerbaijan Trust Fund was founded in July 2013 in accordance with the Framework Agreement on Collaboration between UNESCO and the Republic of Azerbaijan. Its purpose is to expand cooperation between UNESCO and Azerbaijan via new projects and activities. In fact, the UNESCO-Azerbaijan Trust Fund has supported a number of programs in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania pertaining to the education of girls. Moreover, this Capacity Building program targeted to enhancing the knowledge and skills of members of National Commissions for UNESCO in African nations would provide Azerbaijan with the chance to increase its contributions to UNESCO's Priority Africa initiatives.

About

National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO

The National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO was established under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1994. By the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on September 15, 2005, the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO was positioned under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The principal objective of the National Commission is to carry out the day-to-day operational work on the cooperation between Azerbaijan and UNESCO. Furthermore, the National Commission operates on permanent basis with the aim of associating the governmental and non-governmental institutions of the Republic of Azerbaijan in education, sciences, culture and communication with the work and efforts of UNESCO. For more information, please visit www.unesco.az.

ADA University

ADA University started as a training institute to meet the urgent needs of the expanding diplomatic service of Azerbaijan. It has developed into a university with many schools, providing graduate and undergraduate degree programs as well as Executive for professionals in government and the business sector. Presently, ADA University is committed to fostering collaborative research on diplomacy, public and international affairs, business, the humanities and sciences, information technologies, and systems engineering, as well as producing creative global leaders. ADA University now enrolls 2,560 students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. For more information, please visit www.ada.edu.az.

Institute for Development and Diplomacy

Being truly mission-driven, ADA University founded the Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD) in 2022 to deepen engagement and outreach with expert, research, and policymaking communities, not only in Azerbaijan and other parts of the Silk Road region, but across the globe.

Modeled on the best practices of leading world-class research institution abroad, IDD will serve as the university's hub of policy-oriented, interdisciplinary research and analysis outputs as well as be the focal point of high-level, policy-oriented conferences, briefings, and workshops.



Curriculum

Multiculturalism: examining characteristics of multiculturalism, describing diverse ways to understanding multiculturalism and cultural diversity, and emphasizing the significance of multiculturalism in the community. In this session, attendees will also learn about the multiculturalism model of Azerbaijan.

Intercultural discussion: illustrating the significance of an open and courteous exchange of ideas and viewpoints between individuals of various cultures and underlining the role of the Baku Process in establishing an appropriate platform for global intercultural dialogue.

Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power: defining cultural diplomacy, cultural cooperation, and the role of nations in promoting cultural variety, values, and interests, as well as the function of international organizations in cultural diplomacy. In addition, the course will give a chance to evaluate soft power as a state's conduct in international relations and to define its instruments and significance.

Preparation of the Nomination File for the World Heritage Convention: improving knowledge of the application of the World Heritage Convention in African nations, particularly the World Heritage nomination procedure.

UNESCO Conventions: Explaining the role, objective, and guiding principles of UNESCO Conventions in the context of the African continent, including the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the 1972 Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, among others.

Gender Equality: a description of the effective and efficient policies and actions designed and executed to promote and preserve gender equality. Gender equality, one of the two global goals of UNESCO, will be discussed as an effective strategy of avoiding violence against women and girls on the African continent.

Inclusive Education: emphasizing the beneficial policies and actions conducted in the area of education to increase its accessibility for all members of a community, such as boosting female student involvement in elementary and higher education.

Information and Communication Technologies Transforming Education: showcasing the application of ICTs in education to facilitate social and human growth.

Electronic Governance: defining and detailing the operations and advantages of E-governance, as E-governance makes government services more accessible, efficient, and transparent for people.

Sustainable Development and Management: a course that emphasizes the social circumstances that influence sustainability concerns and the methods for controlling these social variables. The course will also discuss the role of international organizations in leading and directing nations to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's objectives.

Man, and Biosphere: social, cultural, and ecological appropriateness of novel ways to economic growth. This course will convey the experiences and lessons learnt on enhancing people's standard of living by preserving natural ecosystems and contributing to economic progress.

In addition to the training classes, participants will have the chance to tour Azerbaijan's World Heritage Sites, including the Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape, the Historic Centre of Sheki with the Khan's Palace, and the Walled City of Baku with the Shirvanshah's Palace and Maiden Tower. The participants will also visit institutions in Azerbaijan, such as the Museum of Modern Art and the Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum, in addition to the excursions listed above.

PROGRAM AGENDA

Saturday-Sunday, September 24-25, 2022

Arrivals to Baku

WEEK 1

Monday, September 26, 2022

Venue: ADA University B building, 3rd floor, B 310

09:00-09:10	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure to ADA University Campus
09:25-10:00	Registration
10:00-11:15	Opening Ceremony <i>Welcome Remarks by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Fariz Ismailzade, Vice Rector, ADA University and Director of Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD)• Ms. Hedva Ser, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Cultural Diplomacy (in video format)• Mr. Fuad Naghiyev, Chairman of the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan• Dr. Seymur Fataliyev, Secretary-General, National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO
11:15-11:30	Presentation on Institute for Development and Diplomacy Ms. Aygun Hajiyeva, Advisor to Vice Rector for Government, External and Student Affairs of ADA University & Deputy Director of the IDD
11:30-11:45	Group photo
11:45-12:00	Tea break
12:00-13:45	Presenting Executive Education Ms. Nargiz Ismayilova, Head of Executive Education, IDD, ADA University Introductions and Country Presentations by Program Participants
13:45-14:45	Lunch at ADA University <i>Note: After lunch, program venue changes to building A, A302</i>
14:45-16:00	History of Azerbaijan Dr. Gulana Aliyeva, Associate Professor of Humanities, School of Education, ADA University
16:00-16:15	Tea break
16:15-17:30	History of Azerbaijan (cont.) Dr. Gulana Aliyeva, Associate Professor of Humanities, School of Education, ADA University
17:30-18:00	<i>ADA Campus Tour</i>
18:00-20:00	Welcome Reception at ADA University with live music

Tuesday, September 27, 2022

09:45-10:00	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure to Heydar Aliyev Center
10:30-12:30	<i>Visit to Heydar Aliyev Center</i>
13:00-14:00	Lunch at ADA University
14:00-15:30	Diversity Inclusion and Intercultural Dialogue Ms. Shamsiyya Mustafayeva, Coordination Analyst, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator
15:30-16:00	Tea break
16:00-17:15	Gender Equality Ms. Shamsiyya Mustafayeva, Coordination Analyst, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator
18:00-19:00	Dinner

Wednesday, September 28, 2022

09:15-09:25	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure to ADA University Campus
09:50-10:00	Registration
10:00-11:30	Political System of Azerbaijan Dr. Lala Jumayeva, Assistant Professor of International Affairs, ADA University
11:30-12:00	Tea break
12:00-13:00	National Identity of Azerbaijan Dr. Fariz Ismailzade, Vice Rector, ADA University
13:00-14:00	Lunch at ADA University
14:00-14:15	Departure to Gobustan
15:00-17:45	<i>Visit to Gobustan and Mud Volcanoes</i>
18:45-19:45	Dinner

Thursday, September 29, 2022

09:15-09:25	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure to ADA University Campus
09:50-10:00	Registration
10:00-11:15	Models and Trends of Public Diplomacy Dr. Fariz Ismailzade, Vice Rector, ADA University
11:15-11:30	Tea break

11:30-12:45	ICOMOS and Preparation of the Nomination File for the World Heritage Convention Ms. Sadagat Davudova, President of National Committee Azerbaijan at International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
12:45-13:45	Lunch at ADA University
13:45-14:00	Departure to the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan
14:45-16:00	Visit to Parliament and Meeting with the Members of Parliament: The Role of Parliamentary Diplomacy in Foreign Policy Dr. Samad Seyidov, Dr. Ganira Pashayeva, Dr. Sevinj Fataliyeva, Dr. Asim Mollazada
18:00-19:00	Dinner

Friday, September 30, 2022

09:15-09:25	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure to ADA University Campus
09:50-10:00	Registration
10:00-11:30	Peace Building Process in the Region Amb. Elchin Amirbayov, Assistant to the First Vice-President of Azerbaijan
11:30-12:00	Tea Break
12:00-13:15	Creative Industries of Azerbaijan: recent developments Mr. Vasif Eyvazzade, Chairman of the Board at Azerbaijan Creative Industries Federation & President of the Culture Commission of the 41st General Conference of UNESCO
13:15-14:15	Lunch at ADA University
14:15-15:30	1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict Amb. Farid Shafiyev, Chairman of Center of Analysis of International Relations
15:30-15:35	Departure to the Carpet Museum
16:15-18:00	Visit to Carpet Museum Multicultural Dialogue: Diverse Azerbaijan Dr. Shirin Melikova, Chairman of ICOM Azerbaijan National Committee & Director of the Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum (Venue: Carpet Museum)
18:30-19:30	Dinner

Saturday, October 1, 2022

Trip to Shusha, Karabakh (Cultural Capital of Azerbaijan)

Sunday, October 2, 2022

13:00-14:30	Lunch in Paul Café downtown
15:00-16:00	Fire temple (Ateshgah) Tour
18:00-20:00	<i>Dinner organized by National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO</i>

WEEK 2

Monday, October 3, 2022

08:30-08:45	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure to ADA University Campus
09:20-09:30	Registration
09:30-10:45	Azerbaijan's Experience in the Protection and Restoration of Cultural Heritage Mr. Aghajavid Ramazanov, Deputy Chief of the State Service for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture
10:45-11:15	Presentation by Office of Admissions and Student Records, ADA University
11:15-11:45	Tea break
11:45-13:00	The Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties Mr. Akhmed Gumbatov, Head of the Energy and Sustainable Development Program, IDD, ADA University
13:00-14:00	Lunch at ADA University
14:00-15:15	Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy Mr. Ramil Abbakirov, Head of Creative Industries and Digital Development Department of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan
15:15-16:00	Free time
16:00-16.15	Departure to the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan
17:00-18:00	Visit to the Ministry of Science and Education and meeting with Mr. Emin Amrullayev, Minister of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan
19:00-20:00	Dinner

Tuesday, October 4, 2022

09:15-09:25	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure to ADA University Campus
09:50-10:00	Registration
10:00-11:15	The Model of Azerbaijani Multiculturalism Dr. Irina Kunina, Head of the Department of Education of Baku International Multiculturalism Center
11:15-11:30	Tea break
11:30-12:45	New Public Administration Technology for Achieving SD Goals and Creating Inclusive Society (Azerbaijan's Experience) Dr. Urkhan Alakbarov, Rector of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan & Chairman of the Man & Biosphere (MaB) UNESCO National Committee
12:45-13:45	Lunch at ADA University
13:45-14:00	Departure to the International Mugham Center of Azerbaijan
15:00-16:00	Visit to the International Mugham Center of Azerbaijan and meeting with Mr. Anar Karimov, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan
16:30-18:00	Visit to Mosque and Church in Baku
19:00-20:00	Dinner

Wednesday, October 5, 2022

09:15-09:25	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure to ADA University Campus
09:50-10:00	Registration
10:00-11:15	Inclusive Education: case of Azerbaijan Dr. Ulviyya Mikayilova, Assistant Professor, School of Education, ADA University
11:15-11:30	Tea break
11:30-12:45	Tourism of Azerbaijan Mr. Florian Sengstschnid, Chief Executive Officer, Azerbaijan Tourism Board
12:45-13:45	Lunch at ADA University
13:45-15:00	Information and Communication Technologies Transforming Education and E-Governance Mr. Rashad Bayramov, Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Digital Development and Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan

15:30-17:00	Visit to Azerbaijan National Museum of Art
18:00-19:00	Dinner

Thursday, October 6, 2022

09:00-09:15	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure to ADA University Campus
09:50-10:00	Registration
10:00-11:15	Sustainable Development and Management Dr. Ali Saqer, Assistant Professor, School of Public and International Affairs, ADA University
11:15-11:30	Tea break
11:30-12:45	Youth Policy of Azerbaijan Mr. Farid Jafarov, Executive Director, Youth Foundation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
12:45-13:45	Lunch at ADA University
13:45-14:00	Departure to Icherisheher
14:45-15:45	Meeting with Mr. Shahin Seyidzade, Chairman of the Board, Administration of State Historical-Architectural Reserve Icherisheher
15:45-17:45	Visit to Walled City of Baku with Mr. Fuad Akhundov
18:00-19:00	Dinner

Friday, October 7, 2022

Final Day

Venue: B building, 3rd floor, B 310

09:00-09:15	Meeting in the hotel lobby Departure ADA University Campus
10:00-11:30	Program Evaluation and Graduation Ceremony <i>Closing Remarks by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Seymur Fataliyev, Secretary-General, National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO • Ms. Aygun Hajiyeve, Advisor to Vice Rector for Government, External and Student Affairs of ADA University & Deputy Director of the IDD <i>Program evaluation by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Nargiz Ismaylova, Head of Executive Education, IDD, ADA University Group photo

11:30-12:00	Lunch
12:00-17:00	Free time
18:00-21:00	Farewell Dinner at Shirvanshah Museum Restaurant

Saturday, October 8-9, 2022

Departures

Notes:

- *Bus transportation will be arranged by ADA University from airport to accommodation site, as well as for each day from accommodation site to the campus as well as tours;*
- *Venue of the program: ADA University, A building, 3rd floor, room A302 (except First Day and Final Day);*
- *Venue of Lunches at ADA University: C building, 1st floor, Divan cafeteria;*
- *This Program Agenda is subject to minor changes;*
- ***Please respect Campus Regulations during COVID-19 Pandemic***

Participants



Mr. Abdoul-Aziz Yaouba

Secretary-General, Cameroon Commission for UNESCO

Mr. Abdoul-Aziz Yaouba holds a doctoral degree in History.

Main areas of interest are international organizations, public diplomacy, culture in international relations, peace, and development.

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Ms. Ama Serwah Nerquaye-Tetteh

Secretary-General, Ghana Commission for UNESCO

Ms Ama Serwah Nerquaye-Tetteh co-ordinates Ghana's presence and contributions to dialogue and action at UNESCO as a member state.

She is an experienced educationist, policy analyst and communications professional. Ama Serwah holds master's degree in International Communications, Education, Educational Leadership and Management from the Universities of Leeds, Bedfordshire, and Ghana respectively. She holds a bachelor's degree from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana. Ama is keen on human capital development especially for youth and women.

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Mr. Dominique Mvunabandi

**Director of Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) Unit,
Rwanda National Commission for UNESCO**

Mr. Dominique Mvunabandi holds bachelor's degree in Conservation Biology and master's degree in Geo-information Science and Earth Observation for Natural Resources (NRM). His main areas of interest are: sustainability sciences, STI policy, green digital technology, STEM, and climate science.

E-mail: dominique.mvunabandi@unesco.rw



Mr. David Mulera

**Acting Deputy Executive Secretary,
Malawi Commission for UNESCO**

Mr. David Mulera holds a master's degree in Educational Policy, Planning and Leadership. Mr. Mulera's main areas of interest are learning achievement assessment, inclusion, nonformal and informal education, and resource distribution.

E-mail: dmulera@unesconatcom.mw



Ms. Élia dos Anjos Vaz Bila

**Secretary-General, Mozambic National
Commission for UNESCO**

She holds a master's degree in Linguistics in Education. Her main area of interest is focused on working with students (girls' empowerment) - coaching them and natural sciences (medicinal plants).

E-mail: lianebila@gmail.com



Ms. Heather Munachonga

**Adviser of the Civil Service Supervisory Division, Zambia
National Commission for UNESCO**

Ms. Heather Munachonga is an educator. She holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Psychology from the University of Zambia and Master of International Education and Development from Oslo University College. She is interested in girls' education, networking, and capacity building.

E-mail: hmunacho@gmail.com



Mr. James Gichiah Njogu

**Acting Secretary-General, Kenya
National Commission for UNESCO**

Dr. James Gichiah Njogu holds bachelor's degree in wildlife management, master's degree in environmental studies specializing in Biological Sciences and a PhD in Social Geography in behavioral studies in natural resource management.

Dr. Njogu received Head of State Commendation for his role in Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) and for spearheading World Heritage Listing of the Kenya Rift Valley Lakes.

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Ms. Margaret Julia Chirapa

**Secretary-General, Zimbabwe National
Commission for UNESCO**

Ms. Margaret Julia Chirapa holds master's degree in Public Sector Management (MPSM) from Africa University, Zimbabwe and Post Graduate Diploma in Education Planning and Management, UNESCO IIEP. Main spheres of interest are Education and Culture – the whole spectrum, and Sustainable Development.

E-mail: zimnatcom3@gmail.com



Mr. Berhanu Moreda Birbirssa

General Secretary of Ethiopian National Office to UNESCO

Mr. Berhanu have served in the education sector for more than 20 years During past 8 years, he has served as the Director General for TSLDP as well as an Advisor to the State Minister of General Education. He played an advisory role on the identification & prioritization of key education and training challenges for policy formulation; coordinating the preparation & implementation of strategic and operational plans of directorates /work units under the office and leadership of the state minister for General Education Sub-Sector were to mention a few from among my roles and responsibilities.

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Mr. Olawale Lateef Olagunju Idowu

**Secretary-General, Nigeria National
Commission for UNESCO**

Mr. Olagunju Idowu Lateef Olawale holds master's degree in Educational Management and PhD in Educational Administration and Planning. Main areas of interest are Administration & Policy.

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Ms. Reabetswe Ngwane

National Commissioner

Ms. Reabetswe Ngwane is currently serving as National Commissioner for UNESCO South Africa. Apart from that, she is the managing director at Kreamfields (Pty) Ltd. Ms. Ngwane holds a BCom in Marketing Management.

With a passion for social entrepreneurship, innovation, and continuous creation, Ms. Reabetswe made it her sole purpose to establish a business in the waste management and sustainable manufacturing industry that would be tailored to identifying social and environmental challenges and providing solutions for them.

E-mail: rea@kreamfields.co.za



Ms. Rosie Agoi

Secretary-General

Ms. Rosie Agoi is Secretary General (SG) of Uganda National Commission for UNESCO (UNATCOM).

She holds a master's degree in MMS (Human Resource)-UMI, Post graduate Diploma Human Resource -UMI, Master of Arts in Arts -MAK, BED-MAK, Dip. Sec. MAK. For her community work she is a long serving member of Rotary club having served as Secretary and President of Entebbe Club and is now a member of Seeta Club.

Ms. Agoi also has a passion for the Girl child education and has made a significant impact in her work by mentoring the girl child to stay in school and achieve their dreams.

E-mail: rosieagoi@yahoo.com



Ms. Sidibeh Maimuna

Acting Secretary General, Gambia National Commission for UNESCO

Ms. Sidibeh Maimuna has been working for the Gambia National Commission for UNESCO since 2005 where she started as an Assistant Programme Officer. She graduated from the University of the Gambia with a Bachelor's in development Studies and Sociology. In 2013 Ms. Sidibeh completed an advanced programme from UNESCO IIEP in Paris and was awarded with a master's degree in Educational Planning and Management.

Ms. Sidibeh is currently working as an Acting Secretary General since December 2021 following the departure of the former Secretary General to the Foreign Mission in Paris. Main areas of interest lie in providing quality education to underprivileged and marginalized groups and women empowerment programmes.

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Mr. Winston Jalloh

Program Officer, Sierra Leone National Commission for UNESCO

Mr. Winston Mella Jalloh is a Social Scientist, Programs and Policy Leader and Communicator. He holds a B.A (specialized honors) in Political Science from York University in Toronto Canada, and an M.A. in International Relations and Global Politics from the University of Windsor in Canada, where he served as a research and teaching assistant. Mr. Jalloh also did graduate studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto, Canada. Also, he holds a Diploma in Cultural Studies from Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone.

He has worked in the not-for-profit sector for over a decade, and his experiences include program management and community engagement. He has been a leader especially in matters relating to program design, content, delivery, and public education. Mr. Jalloh has served at both the national and international level.

E-mail: wmellajalloh@gmail.com

Program Speakers



Ms. Hedva Ser

UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Cultural Diplomacy

The artist Hedva Ser was designated UNESCO Special Envoy for Cultural Diplomacy in 2017, in light of her commitment to dialogue of cultures and social inclusion as a vehicle for a culture of peace.

Since her first term as a UNESCO Artist for Peace in 2011, Hedva Ser has participated in the Organization's mission with her work as an artist and as a godmother to various artistic projects. Her sculpture "the Tree of Peace" symbolizes peace between peoples and understanding between nations. She has inaugurated many of these monumental pieces around the world, including in Paris, New York City, Tel-Aviv, Philadelphia and Malta.

As the godmother of the Art Camp project, she promotes the creative and artistic work of young artists from conflict regions while supporting UNESCO's values such as peace promotion and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Through this project launched in 2012, Hedva Ser organizes numerous exhibitions around the world to promote the work of these young artists and highlight the power of artistic expression. In March 2018, in partnership with UNESCO, an Art Camp Andorra exhibition was organized at United Nations Headquarters during the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women. In addition, Ms. Ser is the creator of the UNESCO World Book Capital Trophy.



Mr. Akhmed Humbatov

Head of Energy and Sustainable Development, Institute for Development and Diplomacy, ADA University

Ahmad Humbatov is Head of the Energy and Sustainable Development Program at the Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD) of ADA University. Previously, Mr. Humbatov worked at the World Bank office in Singapore, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) office in New York, and British Embassy in Baku. He holds a BA degree in International Relations from St. Petersburg State University in Russia, MA degree in International Affairs from ADA University, and MPP degree with honors in Development Economics from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) of the National University of Singapore and the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University in Washington, D.C., United States.

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Ms. Aygun Hajiyeva

Advisor to the Vice Rector for Government, External and Student Affairs and Deputy Director of “Institute for Development and Diplomacy” (IDD) at ADA University

Ms. Hajiyeva supervises the research and publications projects, executive education, and international outreach programs at IDD. As Advisor, she advises in the formulation and implementation of external communications, advocacy and outreach strategies of ADA University and identifies opportunities for university in its relationship with other government agencies, international organizations, and diplomatic missions.

Ms. Aygun Hajiyeva is also qualified educator/trainer with 25 years' experience in high education and professional development of the civil servants, including diplomats and business managers in Azerbaijan. Her teaching experience cover Public Diplomacy, Business Protocol, Leadership Skills, Running Effective Meetings, Communication and Networking Skills, Presentation and Public Speaking Skills. Ms. Hajiyeva holds a master's degree in History of International Relations from Baku State University (Azerbaijan).

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Dr. Ali Saqer

Assistant Professor, ADA University

Ali Saqer is an Assistant Professor at the School of Public and International Affairs at ADA University, Baku. His broader interests lie in the global governance of sustainable development. He is currently writing a research monograph entitled Making the Competitiveness Agenda of the State (contracted with Routledge RIPE series) which aims to provide a comparative analysis of the domestic politics of benchmarking and the making of public policy in the United Kingdom, Ireland and the Netherlands.

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Mr. Farid Jafarov

Executive Director of the Youth Foundation

Mr Jafarov was appointed as the Executive Director of the Youth Foundation of the Republic of Azerbaijan on March 13, 2018 by Presidential Decree. Before that Mr. Jafarov was serving in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in different positions: Reference Officer at the Department of International Law and Treaties, Attaché of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations (New York), the Second Secretary of the Department of International Law and Treaties. He was also working in the Heydar Aliyev Center and the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and High Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

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Dr. Farid Shafiyev

Ambassador, Chairman of the Board, Center of Analysis of International Relations (AIR Center)

Dr. Shafiyev earned his BA degree in School of History (1994) and in School of Law (2005) from Baku State University. He also holds his MA degree in Kennedy School of Government from Harvard University and PhD in History from Carleton University.

He was an Ambassador of the Republic of the Azerbaijan to the Czech Republic (2014-2019) and to Canada (2009-2014).

Moreover, he is an author of numerous articles, op-eds and research papers. His recent publications include “Resettling the Borderlands: State Relocations and Ethnic Conflict in the South Caucasus”, McGill-Queen’s University Press, Montreal (2018).

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Dr. Fariz Ismailzade

Vice rector, ADA University / Director, Institute for Development and Diplomacy

Fariz Ismailzade is Vice Rector for Government, External and Student Affairs at ADA University, Director of the Institute for Development and Diplomacy, Board member of State Examination Center (since 2016) and visiting research fellow at Princeton University (2021). Mr. Ismailzade has Doctoral Degree at the Maastricht School of Management. He holds an Executive MBA from IE Business School (Spain), and a master's degree in Social and Economic Development from Washington University in St. Louis, and a BA in Political Science from Western University in Baku with one-year interim studies at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Mr. Ismailzade has done research at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C and Embassy of Azerbaijan in the US. His research interests include political affairs in the Caucasus and Central Asia, energy security, and development. He has presented papers at the symposiums at Heritage Foundation, MGIMO, Columbia University, Stanford University, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, UCLA, Vienna Diplomatic Academy as well as at international conferences such as Association for Study of Nationalities (ASN), Wilton Park Conferences, Middle East Studies Association (MESA), German Marshall Fund and NATO Advanced Research Workshop.

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Mr. Florian Sengstschnid

CEO, Azerbaijan Tourism Board

Mr. Sengstschnid started his professional career within the private sector. In 1999 he joined the Austrian National Tourist Board as their regional director for Russia and CIS countries. Whilst in Moscow he also worked as a Commercial Attaché at the Austrian Embassy. In 2003 he joined the headquarters of the Austrian National Tourist Board to oversee the international markets and partner management system. In 2006, he founded his own consultancy, providing tourism promotion and destination management to public bodies, including several government institutions, the European Union and the United Nations. Following the conclusion of that project, he established the Azerbaijan Convention Bureau under the former Ministry of Culture & Tourism. After serving as the CEO of Pasha Travel, he became the CEO of the Azerbaijan Tourism Board in April 2018.

Mr Florian Sengtschmid holds a degree in tourism and sociology and has worked in almost every field within the tourism sector over the past 20 years.

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Dr. Gulana Aliyeva

Research Scientist of National Academy of Sciences, Archaeologist and Assistant Professor of Humanities at ADA University

Dr. Aliyeva Gulana, Research Scientist of National Academy of Sciences, archaeologist, and Assistant Professor of Humanities at ADA University.

She is an author of the 46 scientific articles and book “Nargiztepe complex”. Was the winner of the “Shusha-2” Grant. Certified MYP, DP instructor, Extension Cambridge IGCSE History, TEFL, Blackboard Academy, Microsoft Innovative Educator. Secretary of the Young Scientists and Specialists of ANAS, Member of Azerbaijan Enlighteners Association (AMA), Archaeological Legislation and Organization community (ALO), European Association of Archaeologists.

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Amb. Elchin Amirbayov

Assistant to the First Vice-President of Azerbaijan

Ambassador Elchin Amirbayov Assistant to the First Vice-President of Azerbaijan Elchin Amirbayov is an Azerbaijani diplomat, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and Assistant to the First Vice President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. He received his diplomatic knowledge at the International Institute for Public Administration in Paris, France, attended special trainings at the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, and NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy and completed a special course on international and national security at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in the United States. He served as a Second Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations in New York, as a Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations in New York (USA), as Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the UN and

other international organizations in Geneva, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in the Swiss Confederation in different years. In 2005 he was accredited as the first Ambassador of Azerbaijan to the Holy See. He also served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Principality of Liechtenstein in 2006-2010 and as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the French Republic in 2010-2017. In 2017, he was appointed Assistant to the First Vice-President of Azerbaijan.



Dr. Irina Kunina

Head of the Department of Education of Baku International Multiculturalism Center

Dr. Irina Kunina holds a PhD in Political Science. Associate Professor of the Department of International Relations of the Azerbaijan University of Languages. Head of the Department of Education of Baku International Multiculturalism Center. She is an expert of International Relations, Multiculturalism. Her area of interests focused on multilateral diplomacy, network diplomacy, cultural diversity, ethnic minorities, interethnic relations. She has conducted research at the University of Leiden, the University of Genoa, Matej Bel University. Visiting professor of La Sapienza University, the Federal University of Brasilia. She lectured at the University of Buenos Aires, the Catholic University of Uruguay.

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Dr. Lala Jumayeva

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Dr. Jumayeva is an Assistant Professor of International Affairs at ADA University and a director of BAPA and MPA Programs in the School of Public and International Affairs.

She has taught a variety of different graduate and undergraduate courses on Conflict Resolution, International Relations, Organizations, and Development. Her research area focuses on ethnic conflicts, conflict resolution, and mediation.

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Ms. Nargiz Ismayilova

Head, Executive Education, Institute for Development and Diplomacy, ADA University

Nargiz Ismayilova joined ADA University firstly as a Director of the Centre of Excellence in EU Studies at ADA University (January 2014), and then as Head of Executive Education, Institute of Development and Diplomacy (March 2022).

N. Ismayilova holds MA in Law from Baku State University (Baku), and master's degree in Oriental Studies from same university.

Nargiz Ismayilova has extensive experience of work in public administration and private sector. Her area of expertise includes working experience in EU funded project management; experience in implementing public administrative reforms, civil service reforms and institutional capacity building in Azerbaijan; participation in EU CIB and IRP implementation; proven experience in formulation, development and drafting of, reviewing, and preparing comments to various laws, etc.

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Mr. Rashad Bayramov

Advisor to the Minister of Digital Development and Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Mr. Bayramov is an international business trainer and coach. He has delivered his training programs and personal coaching sessions on effective communication in Azerbaijan, Turkey, the United States, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Qatar, Jordan, India, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka. He is the author of "Trust Your Words: 10 Ways to Conquer Your Audience" (2016), the first book on the topic of public speaking published in Azerbaijan.

In his career spanning more than 20 years he was press officer, business journalist, chief editor, government relations manager, and regional transformation leader. For many years, he was the energy giant BP's spokesperson for audiences ranging from new recruits to heads of government.

He has a master's degree in communication and marketing from Rochester Institute of Technology, US, and a master's degree in philology from Azerbaijan University of Languages.

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Ms. Sadagat Davudova

Deputy Chairman, Reserves Management Center under the State Tourism Agency of Azerbaijan

Sadagat Davudova has been involved in the management of heritage sites of Azerbaijan for several years and currently holds the Deputy Chairman position at the Reserves Management Center under the State Tourism Agency of Azerbaijan. She is responsible for the research, development and overall management of cultural heritage projects and the development of cultural tourism. She is also coordinating many international projects by UNESCO, European Union, Council of Europe and etc. Currently, Ms. Davudova is the President of ICOMOS Azerbaijan National Committee. She holds an Executive MBA degree from the Maastricht University, Netherlands.

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Dr. Seymur Fataliyev

Ambassador at-large, Secretary-General of the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO

Dr. Fataliyev started his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1995. Previously, he worked at several positions as a diplomat at the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in France during 1999-2005 and afterwards, at the Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan to UNESCO, Deputy Head of the State Protocol Department of the MFA of the Republic of Azerbaijan, held the position of the Deputy Head of the Department on Humanitarian Policy Issues of the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and served as the Head of the Azerbaijan International Development Agency (AIDA). In August 2021, Dr. Fataliyev was appointed as Ambassador at-large, Secretary-General of the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO.

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Ms. Shamsiyya Mustafayeva

Partnerships and Development Finance Officer at the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Azerbaijan.

Ms. Mustafayeva provides substantive support for strategic planning for and coordination of UN Country Team partnerships. Shams has been in the development field for about twenty years now, started her career in 2002 with the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) in provincial Azerbaijan helping to build the computer and online instruction skills of local teachers. She continued with the US Peace Corps as the first national Pre-service Training Director (2004–2008) leading the design and implementation of large-scale training programs for Americans serving as Peace Corps Volunteers in Azerbaijan. From 2010 to 2018 she held senior leadership positions at the ADA University as an Associate Vice Rector and the State Academy of Physical Education and Sport as an Advisor to the Rector.

Shams has conducted numerous leadership development trainings for mid and senior managers from public and private sectors, students and young entrepreneurs, IDPs and refugees, and rural women and girls. She is a gender awareness and sanitization expert and a co-creator of several women's empowerment projects in the country, including the "Code for Future," and the "Women and the Future in Azerbaijan" initiatives. Shams received the "Iconic Women Creating a Better World for All" award from the Women's Economic Forum for her work on gender equality and women's empowerment.

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Dr. Shirin Melikova

Director of Azerbaijan Carpet Museum, President of ICOM Azerbaijan National Committee

Assoc. Prof. Melikova has given rise to many innovative museum projects, including reviving ancient weaving techniques, designed the strategy for the development of museum sector in the country: educational programs, attracting an audience, educating personnel, volunteering. Dr. Melikova developed and curated the first inclusive programs in the country and built new strategies for maintaining the museum's development in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shirin Melikova is an art expert and curator of many major art exhibitions and festivals. She regularly gives lectures in leading textile museums around the world, universities, international symposiums, and conferences. Dr. Melikova is the author of more than 20 books and many scientific publications.

In 2018, Shirin Melikova was awarded the title Honored Worker of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In 2022, Dr Melikova was awarded the Knight of the Order of the Arts and the Letters of France (Ordre Des Arts et Des Lettres).

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Dr. Ulviyya Mikayilova

Assistant Professor at ADA University

Dr Mikayilova is an International Consultant from Azerbaijan, with valuable experience as an Early Childhood and Inclusive Education Training, TOT and Policy Expert with diversified ECE & SNE training design, delivery project experience, curriculum development and policy analysis in Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. She also has extensive Early Childhood Development (ECD), Special Needs Education (SNE) and Child Friendly Schooling (CFS), and other education research project experience. She is a Fulbright scholar (Teacher College, Columbia University, 2006) and has taught university courses: Introduction to Gender and Gender and Politics (Baku State University), Monitoring and Evaluation in Education (Azerbaijan State Economic University) and Evaluation of Educational Projects (Baku State University). She teaches several courses within Leadership and Management in Education Master Program. She also teaches Social Research Methods as a visiting faculty at the Moscow High School of Social and Economic Sciences affiliated to the Academy of State Governance and National Economics under the Administration of RF President.

Ulviyya Mikayilova is a member of Public Council at the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan.

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Dr. Urkhan Alakbarov

Academician, Professor, Rector of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Prof. Alakbarov is a world-renowned scientist and recognized expert in public administration of sustainable environment management using comprehensive approach embracing natural, economic, social, and political determinants of development process. Dr. Alakbarov authored the concept of ecological civilization (1998), based on the «green» mentality and behavior (integrating demographic indicators, and culture of consumption), and a «green» economy.

Prof. Alakbarov served as a Vice-president of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan and led the work of several of its scientific institutions. Since 1985 Dr. Alakbarov closely collaborates in various capacities with the UN System Agencies such as UNESCO, UNDP, and UNICEF, in the years 2000 - 2010 he served as member of Advisory Council on Sustainable Development under the President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), London. Dr. Alakbarov is a member of various international committees, advisory councils, steering committees, and editorial boards of journals that are based in USA, Great Britain, Netherlands, France, Türkiye, and others.

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Aghajavid Ramazanov

Deputy Head of the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan

In 2000 he received his bachelor's degree and in 2002 - master's degree at the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Mr. Ramazanov started his employment at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2003. During his diplomatic career worked at the embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Kingdom of Belgium,

Russian Federation and Republic of Kazakhstan. Since 2021, he has designated a Deputy chief of the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan. During the employment period at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was awarded with the medal “For Distinction in Public Service”, the jubilee medal “100th Anniversary of Diplomatic Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1919-2019)” and other awards. He has the diplomatic rank of First Secretary of the First Class, and he is a junior civil service counselor at the same time.



Ramil Abbakirov

Head of Department of Creative Industries and Digital Development Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Ramil Abbakirov is an experienced professional in the fields of international relations and cultural management.

He has work experience at such organizations as Airbus (Toulouse, France) and Azerfon (Baku, Azerbaijan). Starting from 2013 he was Advisor, then Senior Advisor at the International Department of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan. He was head of International Projects and Innovations Division of the Ministry of Culture from 2018 to 2021. Currently he is heading the Department of Creative Industries and Digital Development of the same Ministry. Mr. Abbakirov holds BA in International Economic Relations and Management from Azerbaijan State Oil Academy and MA in International Management from Toulouse Graduate School of Management.

Between 2016 and 2018 Mr. Abbakirov was the Resident Twinning Advisor's Counterpart for the EU supported Twinning Project named “Support to the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the modernization of its policy and management system in the culture sector”. This project was jointly implemented by the Ministry of Culture of Azerbaijan and Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities of Italy. He has vast experience in the field of cooperation with such organizations as UNESCO, Council of Europe, European Union, British Council, ISESCO, etc.



Mr. Vasif Eyvazzade

Chairman of the Board of Azerbaijan Creative Industries Federation, Co-founder and President of the Global Peace for Human Security Council, London, UK Founder of the Brightminds International Company, Baku, Azerbaijan

Vasif Eyvazzade received his bachelor's and master's degree in International Relations from the Azerbaijan University of Languages and 2nd bachelor's degree in Public and Municipal Administration from the Academy of Public Administration. Mr. Eyvazzade received a 2nd master's degree in "Public Administration in Global Diversity Governance" from the Coventry University, UK. Vasif Eyvazzade was the President of the Culture Commission of the 41st General Conference of UNESCO. Vasif Eyvazzade has been the initiator of the "Creative Azerbaijan" (www.creative.az), "Talents Azerbaijan", "Heritage Azerbaijan", "Masters of Azerbaijan", "CreaTalk", "PeaceTalk" and led the international working group for Global Call of Peace4Culture initiated by Azerbaijan in partnership with the UN Alliance of Civilizations and ISESCO.

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LAND OF FIRES – AZERBAIJAN

Today, we would like to talk about a miraculous country of Azerbaijan with its unlimited natural resources, centuries-old culture, history and ancient people, whose lifestyle presents a unique and harmonious combination of the traditions and ceremonies of different cultures and civilizations.

Azerbaijan is a geographical name. On the one hand this name is linked with the population, which lived in this region for thousands of years before our era, and who were mostly fire-worshippers. Local population considered that fire was their God and so they worshipped the fire. “Azer” means fire.



Azerbaijan is one of the most ancient sites of humankind. The humankind was present here at every stage of their historical development. There were living settlements in Azerbaijan even at the earliest stages of humankind. Azerbaijan made its own contribution into the establishment of the current culture and civilization, progress, and dialectics.

The time kept a range of ancient archaeological and architectural monuments for us. The ancient headstones, manuscripts, and models of carpets, preserved to the present times from the ancient ages, can provide much information to those who can and want to read them. If you wish to understand Azerbaijan and to know everything about it, you need to look at this country and its people with a friend's eyes.

Azerbaijan is a country of ancient culture. The Oghuz tribes which moved here and stayed for ages, have found a deeply rooted culture and in their turn enriched it with Turkic national traditions. The talented and creative powers of our nation are personified in such epic monuments as “Kitabi-Dede Gorgud”, “Oghuzname” “Koroghlu” and many others.

This fertile, generous, and friendly land was the home of many thinkers, philosophers, scientists, poets, architects, musicians and artists. A legend tells that Zardusht was born in this land. Azerbaijan also enriched the humankind with such geniuses as Nizami Ganjavi, Khagani Shirvani, Bahmanyar, Nasimi, Fizuli, Nasraddin Tusi, Shah Ismail Khatai, Molla Penah

Vagif, A. Bakikhanov, M.F. Akhundov, M.A. Sabir, J.Mammadguluzadeh, Huseyn Javid, J.Jabbarli, Samed Vurgun, Aliagha Vahid, Rasul Rza.

The country of Azerbaijan was immortalized by such talented painters as Sattar Bahlulzade, Tahir Salahov, Toghrul Narimanbayov, Mikhayil Abdullayev and many others.

Our national music - mugham - inspired such outstanding composers as Uzeyir Hajibayli, Muslum Magomayev, Gara Garayev, Fikrat Amirov, Niyazi, Arif Malikov and others to create their masterpieces, which are still known today



throughout the world. It also gave the inspiration to such wonderful vocalists as Bulbul and Rashid Behbudov.

It seems that the famous Azerbaijan carpets are the incarnation of all colours of nature and of all signs of history. Today, these carpets magically pass the borders of time and space and travel from Azerbaijan to foreign countries far away.

The models of the decorative art made by Azerbaijan craftsmen from the metal, ceramic, silk, and woods are kept in many museums of the world.

The science and the enlightenment in Azerbaijan have a centuries-old history. The Baku State University was founded in 1919; the institutes of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan play an exceptional role in scientific, educational, and cultural development of Azerbaijan. Local scientists are currently studying such important issues as the depths of the Caspian Sea, space exploration and the secrets of human brain.



The existing educational system of Azerbaijan is made up of dozens of higher educational institutions and technical schools, thousands of high schools, colleges and lyceums.

One of the most important problems which is currently solved by local scientists is environmental protection of the Caspian Sea and different regions of Azerbaijan. Such natural reserves as Gizilaghaj, Shirvan, Zagatala, Aghgol, Hirkan and others, were established due to the efforts of Azerbaijani scientists.

Through the decades, the local industry was successfully represented by oil producing, petrochemical and oil processing enterprises. The agricultural industry is famous for cotton-growing, viticulture, vegetable-growing, and cattle-breeding. If one compares the economy of Azerbaijan with a living body, it becomes evident that oil flows in the veins of Azerbaijan. The oil and gas resources of Azerbaijan have made this place famous in every part of the world from the ancient times.

Azerbaijan has always been famous for its sources of eternal fires - the atashgahs. There is a place called Yanardagh (blazing mountain) in Absheron and thermal springs in some parts of Nakhchivan, Kalbajar, Masalli, Lankaran, Babadagh.

In Surakhani, there is an eternal fireplace. From the ancient times the fire worshippers from remote places and even the Indian priests were coming to Absheron in search of fire and finding it here. They built their main temples here in Surakhani and Ateshgah.



The word Azerbaijan brings its main wealth from oil. Oil is not only the wealth, but the fame as well. People were coming to Azerbaijan from distant places for this specific taste and coloured puddle under the ground. Throughout the centuries, camelcades carried waterskins of oil in both eastern and western directions. The Azerbaijani oil is not used exclusively for the electricity production, but also as a valuable medicine for a variety of diseases. There has been an increasing demand for oil throughout the centuries.

From the beginning of the 20th century, the continuous industrial development around the world caused an unprecedented growth of the demand for oil. It was at this time oil turned from an everyday mean into an industrial product. Oil becomes the most important problem in the world in the 20th century - the century of science and technologies. Oil-producing countries have acquired special oil policies and oil strategies in this connection.

Azerbaijan is currently involved into the implementation of huge energy projects. Oil and gas projects are successfully implemented in the Azeri Caspian sector. Azerbaijan is a country, which plays an extremely important role in the Caspian and Caucasian regions, particularly in the development of transport infrastructure in the Caucasus and the implementation of energy projects. It was the region's first country to explore the huge energy potential, to form a new economic model in the regional development, and to expand political and economic relations between Europe and Asia.



Azerbaijan has membership in the United Nations, Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, Council of Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States, GUAM, Organization of Islamic Conference, Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and Organization of Economic Cooperation.

Most recently, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev declared Shusha the "Cultural Capital" of Azerbaijan. It is historically important city in Karabakh region recently liberated after 30 years from illegal occupation by Armenia. Shusha has historically been one of the important centres

for historical, cultural, socio-political life of Azerbaijan. Shusha was called "Paris of South Caucasus", "Art Temple of the Caucasus", "Cradle of Azerbaijani Music" and "Conservatory of the Transcaucasia". Historically, Shusha was a cultural and commercial centre and maintained trade relations with many countries in the East and Europe.

Shusha - Cultural Capital of Azerbaijan, founded by Karabakh Khan Panahali in 1752, has numerous historical monuments, and many distinguished scientists, intellectuals and cultural icons were born here. It is known as the "cradle of Azerbaijani music" because of its famous composers and musicians such as Jabbar Garyaghdioghlu, Gurban Pirimov, Bulbul (Nightingale), Seyid Shushinski, Khan Shushinski, Uzeyir Hajibayli, Rashid Behbudov, Niyazi, and Fikrat Amirov. Writers and thinkers including Khurshidbanu Natavan, Gasim Bey Zakir, Suleyman Sani Akhundov, Abdurrahim Hagverdiyev, and Najaf



Bey Vazirov were also born here. Late President Heydar Aliyev termed Shusha “a holy city, castle, and monument” not only for the people of Shusha but for all Azerbaijanis. The Jidir Plain in its southern part, surrounded by forests and numerous promenades, hosted horse races, festivals, and other sports events for many years. Shusha has been declared cultural capital of Azerbaijan. It has “mesmerizing” natural beauty and “classic” bungalows. It has great community centres and famous “castles” too. It has been famous for “Spring Healings” and “spontaneous” cultural diversity.