



**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 has the honour to transmit herewith the information of the relevant authorities of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan regarding the questionnaire of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to drinking water and sanitation.

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.

Enclosure: 8 pages

Geneva, 21 April 2017



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

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1. The main actors involved in the management of water resources in the Republic of Azerbaijan are:

- Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources;
- National Department for Environmental Monitoring;
- National Department for Hydrometeorology;
- National Geological Survey Service;
- Ministry of Emergency Situations, mainly;
- State Water Resources Agency;
- Ministry of Health;
- Republican Center of Hygiene and Epidemiology;
- Open Joint-Stock Company "Azersu";
- Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water management Open Joint Stock Company;

The Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan (CM AR) approves the republican schemes for the allocation and development of water supply and sewage disposal systems, as well as requirements for the installation of water measuring devices and coordinates the volumes of water supplied to consumers in important sectors of the economy,

The Cabinet of Ministers approves by-laws concerning management, regulation, security and protection of water resources, and establishes regulations covering all aspects of water legislation,

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR) is the central executive authority, formulates and implements state policy in the field of environmental protection, develops measures to protect the environment.

MENR implements the state water policy aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of water resources - surface and underground, as well as preventing their pollution. MENR conducts an inventory of water resources and manages a network of monitoring stations for the implementation of continuous hydrometric, hydrogeological and hydrochemical observations. MENR, together with other central executive bodies and interested organizations, develops water balances, estimates groundwater resources and operational reserves, as well as issues related to the rational use and restoration of water resources. The Ministry develops and approves standards for maximum permissible discharges of sewage and controls them through its regional units.

Ministry of Economics (DOE) carries out:

- development of state policy in the sphere of economic and social development of the Republic of Azerbaijan, including on individual sectors and ensuring its implementation with the participation of competent state bodies and other organizations;
- development of structural and innovation policies in the economy of the country and its joint implementation with competent state bodies;
- development and implementation of state policy in the field of entrepreneurship development in the Republic of Azerbaijan and assistance to entrepreneurship;
- preparation of events with the involvement of competent state bodies that ensure social and economic development of the country's regions and ensuring their implementation;
- development of projects of state investment programs with the involvement of relevant state bodies and submitting them on jurisdiction, taking measures for their implementation;
- implementation of the State Program for the Development of the Regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2014-2018, the socio-economic development of Baku and its settlements for 2014-2016, as well as a plan to implement the activities of the Development Concept "Azerbaijan 2020: A VIEW TO THE FUTURE".

The Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES) is the main body on all aspects related to the management of emergency situations in Azerbaijan. The Ministry coordinates activities to protect the population from natural and man-made disasters, including fires; on liquidation of

consequences of disasters and the implementation of state policy in the field of civil defense, security and reconstruction. The State Agency for Water Resources (MHAR) is an executive authority, implements improved measures in the field of water resources management and regulation, carries out constant monitoring of the technical state of reservoirs, and monitors water bodies, surface and groundwater, hydraulic structures and systems Water supply and ensures reliable safety of public water management facilities in the country.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) carries out state sanitary supervision over the quality of drinking water,

The strategic line of the state sanitary and epidemiological supervision bodies operating in Azerbaijan is the systematic provision of monitoring for the quality of domestic and drinking water and the incidence of water-related diseases within the framework of the Decade of Actions proclaimed by the UN General Assembly - "Water for Life", It also monitors sea water in the recreational waters of the Caspian Sea, assesses the vulnerability of water resources and human health, adapting them to climate change.

The structure of the Ministry includes the republican and local units that carry out state sanitary and epidemiological surveillance, water quality monitoring.

Open Joint-Stock Company "Azersu" (JSC "Azersu") is the main body of the country for organization of water supply and sewerage services and carries out control over their activities. Water supply, wastewater treatment, transportation and safe of water, as well as control and regulation of their activities are included in the functions of this agency. Design, construction, repair and technical maintenance of treatment systems, pumping stations and operation of water pipes are also within the competence of this body, 100% of shares are owned by the state.

JSC Azersu is responsible for the construction, operation and maintenance of water intake facilities, pumping stations, water pipes and sewer collectors, JSC Azersu collects financial resources for the delivery of domestic and drinking water and wastewater treatment.

The Open Joint-Stock Company "Land Reclamation and Water Economy of Azerbaijan" (100% of the shares belong to the state) is the main water operator of water supply of the economic sectors through the assessment of water requirements and the development of forecasts and norms for water use. In particular, OJSC MKHA provides water supply to irrigation systems through main channels and controls the development and management of irrigation systems throughout the country.

Legal relations.

In Azerbaijan, legal relations related to the use and protection of water bodies are regulated by the Water Code (1997), as well as the laws of water resources management:

- "On the sanitary and epidemiological welfare of the population" 1992;
- "On Amelioration and Irrigation", 1996;
- "On water supply and sanitation", 1999;
- "On hydrometeorological activities", 1998;
- "On Environmental Protection", 1999;
- "On Environmental Safety", 1999;
- "On the water management of municipalities", 2001;
- "On the Safety of Hydraulic Structures", 2002 and other by-laws).

To successfully solve problems in the field of water relations, more than 30 legal acts have been adopted.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has legislative and regulatory acts aimed at ensuring access to water and sanitation of the country's population.

The basic documents include:

- Convention of the Republic of Azerbaijan;

- the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Water Supply and Wastewater", 1999;
- the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Ensuring Sanitary and Epidemiological Well-Being" 1992;
- "On Amelioration and Irrigation", 1996;
- "On hydrometeorological activities", 1998;
- "On Environmental Protection", 1999;
- "On Environmental Safety", 1999;
- "On the water management of municipalities", 2001;
- "On the Safety of Hydraulic Structures", 2002 and other by-laws)

To successfully solve problems in the field of water relations, more than 30 legal acts have been adopted.

Relevant decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as by-laws, state sanitary norms and regulations, resolutions of the Chief State Sanitary Doctor of Azerbaijan, etc. concerning access to water in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The issues of equal access to drinking water are given attention and measures are envisaged in the existing State programs:

- State program "Social and economic development of the regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2014-2018.";
- The State Program "Poverty Reduction and Socio-Economic Development 2008- 2015";
- State program "Social and economic development of Baku and its settlements for 2014-2018."

The State programs implemented in Azerbaijan envisage an increase in the coverage of the population by centralized water supply and sanitation services.

State programs provide for improved access to safe drinking water for vulnerable groups; for educational and medical institutions, for special physical needs, for consumers in nursing homes, in prisons, for refugees living in refugee camps and centers, for travelers.

Basic laws are in force in the Republic of Azerbaijan, mechanisms have been developed guaranteeing the right of free access to information of the population.

Legislative basis in this area are:

- Convention of the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- Laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Information", "On Access to Public Information", "On Water Supply and Wastewater", "On Sanitary and Epidemiological Well- Being".

In 2016, the work on establishing National targets to the Protocol on Water and Health was completed in the republic. Target indicators for ensuring equal access of the population of cities, towns and villages, children of preschool institutions, students of general educational institutions with quality drinking water and basic sanitation have been established,

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a party to the Aarhus Convention and information materials on water supply issues are published on the websites of relevant state bodies. Among the mechanisms for informing, discussing and coordinating the solution of the problems of the water supply and sanitation sector, which are applied in practice in Azerbaijan, it should be noted:

- media coverage of events, meetings and meetings of various state bodies responsible for water supply and sanitation, meetings of the Public Councils at ministries and departments with the participation of public organizations;
- publications on the websites of various state bodies of draft laws in the field of water supply and sanitation;
- results of monitoring on selected issues in the field of water supply and sanitation, assessing the quality of drinking water, reservoirs, etc.

An example is the implementation of the State Programs for the improvement of socio- economic development of regions in a time frame in accordance with the commitments undertaken;

- The State Program "Social and Economic Development of the Regions of Azerbaijan

Republic for 2014-2018."

- The State Program "Poverty Reduction and Socio-Economic Development 2008-2015";

- The State Program "Social and Economic Development of Baku and its settlements for 2014-2018. "

As well as data from the UNICEF / WHO joint monitoring program, improved water supply indicators were achieved in 2013: 88% in urban areas, 71% in rural areas, 80% in general and 92% in improved urban sanitation; For rural - 87%; The overall figure was 89%.

2. A special attention is paid in the country for creation of safe drinking water resources and increasing of facilities for provision of population with ecologically clean water, implementation of measures to prevent dangerous diseases, which may spread through water in people living in poverty. Achieving positive results in water and sanitation fields plays a crucial role in poverty eradication and achieving the other development objectives.

According to research, only 10 per cent of the water resources of the South Caucasus accounted for Azerbaijan.

The country's water resources by an average make 38 billion m³, of which 8 billion m³ is underground waters. There are 38 water reservoirs (total volume of 21.4 billion m³) with capacity of more than 1 million m³ each and 450 freshwater lakes (total volume of 0.90 billion m³). There are not enough water reserves to meet the needs of population in drinking water and the needs of agriculture in Azerbaijan.

Approximately 70% of the country's water resources are formed in the territory of neighboring states.

Since 3/4 part of the territory of the Republic is located in the low relief of the country's largest waterway, the Kura River basin, the pollution of the river in neighboring countries creates environmental tension.

The discharge of waste water in to the Kura River from Armenia and Georgia has a negative impact on hydrochemical regime and water quality. Taking into account that the waters of the river severely polluted are used in drinking water supply for 75% of the population and in agriculture, it is possible to imagine what danger it causes to human health.

It was determined at the results of observations by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the transit river streams that most of incoming transit flows is contaminated with numerous ingredients. The water of river contains copper-, molybdenum and others heavy metals, which exceeds the norm for dozens of times. In order to implement operative control on status of pollution in transborder rivers in the country the analytic laboratories equipped with modern equipment had been created in Gazakh and Beylagan regions and put into operation since 2005. The 10-days bulletin is prepared based on monitoring carried out in these laboratories functioning in operative regimes and submitted to relevant state entities.

In order to solve the problems the Republic of Azerbaijan carries out the state policy based on sustainable development objectives. One of the main objectives of this policy is aimed at solving of problems of effective use and protection of water resources.

Institutional strengthening, management, technology exchange, the provision of financial resources, a good practice and sharing of advanced practice are the main directions.

3. In Azerbaijan, there are legislative and regulatory acts that ensure the information of citizens (rights holders and consumers) about their rights and obligations, as well as their access to relevant information.

Legislative basis are:

- Convention of the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- The laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On information", "On access to public information", "On Sanitary and Epidemiological Well-Being of the Population", 1992; "On Amelioration and Irrigation", 1996; "On water supply and sanitation", 1999; "On hydrometeorological activities", 1998; "On environmental Protection", 1999; "On Environmental Safety", 1999; " On the Water Economy of Municipalities", 2001; "On the safety of Hydraulic Structures", 2002 and other by-laws.

In accordance with the basic law of the Republic of Azerbaijan – the Constitution of Article 24. Articles 26. Articles 60. Articles 72. Everyone has access to information through a direct request or on the site of the responsible structures.

In accordance with the regulation of the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, the State Statistics Committee, the Tariff Council, the JSC "Azersu", users of information on the water supply and sanitation sector have the possibility of both electronic and written circulation and information on the list of housing and communal services. The structure of prices (tariffs), changes in prices (tariffs).

Relevant materials are published on the website of these bodies.

www.azersu.az , www.stat.gov.az , www.eco.gov.az , www.tariffcouncil.gov.az

In accordance with the basic law of the Republic of Azerbaijan- the Constitution Article 54, Article 55. Article 96, the legislatively fixed mechanism for the participation of the public and citizens in decision-making in the water supply and sanitation sector, is public control and public discussions, hearing on issues related to the level and quality of services, quality of drinking water. At the legislative level, the rights and duties of consumers, including compensation for damages due to violations of legislation in the field of drinking water and sanitation, are prescribed. The mechanisms for reporting and accountability of the responsible bodies include: departmental reports, which are highlighted on relevant websites and in the media.

Examples of such departmental reports are the annual reports of Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources on the results of surface water monitoring and JSC "Azersu", etc.

4. Azerbaijan introduces a long-term strategy on access to price acceptability for water supply and sanitation services,

The execution of the State Program for the Development of Infrastructures in the Regions of the Republic contributes to solving the main problems in the field of water supply and sanitation.

For example:

Within the framework of the National Water Supply and Sanitation Project, work was carried out in 17 cities and district centers on sustainable provision of water supply and sanitation to the population. Work is under way on the construction of 5 reservoirs for drinking purposes with a volume of 40,500 m³ in various regions of the country.

From the state budget, state programs for the construction and reconstruction of water and sewage systems are being financed. In a short time, concrete results were achieved in this area. In the Aran economic region, as a result of the construction and reconstruction of the Mugan-Shirvan group pipelines, the population of five cities (Bilasuvar, Neftchala, Salyan, Shirvan, Hajigabul) and 121 nearby villages in the amount of 470,000 people are provided with quality uninterrupted water supply. In addition, in 16 district centers of the country, water mains were put into operation. As can be seen, the above stated contributed to the fulfillment of the commitments undertaken to provide high-quality drinking water to the inhabitants of the country. In 2015, to improve the quality and achieve world standards of supplied drinking water for the population of nearby cities of Baku, the construction of a unique ultrafiltration water treatment plant with a capacity of 6.6 m³/sec was completed.

In 2014 in 25 cities of the republic the works on the introduction of centralized water supply have been completed, the work continues in 27 cities and administrative district centers. Thus, 480 thousand people are provided with drinking water, including 175 thousand people for the first time received water from centralized water supply systems.

To date, the access to drinking water in the capital of the Republic has increased from 55% to 80%. If in 2005 the centralized water supply system provided 1.56 million people, now it has reached 2.366 million people.

Moreover, according to the instruction of the head of state, JSC "AZERCU" carries out works aimed at providing round-the-clock water supply of the population with drinking water. To date, 65% of the population of Azerbaijan receives water around the clock. In Baku, this indicator is 79.2%. At the same time, the task is to bring it to 95%.

The population that is economically disadvantaged and vulnerable is refugees, internally displaced persons.

Due to the military aggression of Armenia in the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh of the Azerbaijan Republic and the Department of Azerbaijanis from Armenia, about 1200000 refugees and IDPs live in the country for over 24 years.

The provision of refugees, internally displaced persons with adequate living conditions, the establishment of adequate sanitation, including provision of water and sanitation, is carried out within the framework of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, as well as within the requirements provided for by legislation and regulations Azerbaijan,

It should be noted that in 2015 5 new residential complexes were built for refugees and IDPs (Barda city for 588 families, Sabirabad for 234 and 206 families, in Gazakh district - 304, in Zagatala region for 135 families). In general, for the period 2011-2015 for the given category of population in the territory of 30 cities and regional centers of the republic at the expense of the

State Oil Fund and other financial sources, 94 modern settlements with high-rise buildings with a complete set of modern water supply and sewerage infrastructure were built. In new residential areas 960 km of water pipes, 89 km of sewage lines, 163 km of drainage systems were conducted.

The main regulatory documents in this area are:

- International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966;
- The Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the State Program for the Improvement of Housing Conditions and Increase Employment of Refugees and Forced Migrants" and its addendum of July 10, 2004, No. 298.

Annually, official resources are allocated from the State Budget and the budget of State Oil Fund to implement the activities of the State Programs relating to the socio-economic situation of refugees and internally displaced persons.

5. In order to meet the demand for drinking water in villages where the population of the Kura and Araz rivers water used for many years without any cleaning, first a thorough monitoring of the qualitative and quantitative indicators of water resources was carried out and subsequently, to provide the population with clean drinking water the most rational option The use of surface water sources after cleaning, flowing at a distance of approximately 1000 meters from settlements, was chosen.

To solve the problems of acceptability of self-provision of water supply and sanitation services, tangible progress has been achieved in providing modular water supply to the population of rural areas in accordance with the decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan of 20.07.2007 "On Some Measures to Improve the Provision of Population with Ecologically Clean Water". So, for the past period, for the population of the country living in the valley of the channel of the Kura and Araz rivers, 320 water treatment facilities of modular type have been installed in rural settlements of the republic, covering more than 530 thousand people. The number of generated distribution sources is 3102, with daily water supply of 20-60 liters per day for each resident. Also in rural settlements 300 artesian and sub-artesian wells were drilled for use by the population.

In the period from 2013 to 2015, in accordance with the orders of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan of 15.05.2013.№2894, from 29.01.2014 № 237, from 25.12.2014, 961 to meet the needs of the population in drinking water in 568 settlements in various regions of the country, 657 sub-artesian wells were drilled and put into operation, which provided more than 1 million of the population with water,

In Baku, in old buildings, water supply and sanitation were located in backyard areas, the level of public services of which did not comply with sanitary norms and rules. At present, in accordance with the "State Program for the socio-economic development of the city of Baku and its settlements in 2014-2016" to improve the standard of living, sanitary and hygienic conditions, the population moves to a comfortable housing. By the end of 2016, more than 60 thousand people were resettled. Old buildings are demolished and areas are improved.

For the implementation of the State Investment Program "For Sustainable Social and

Economic Development of Baku and its Towns for 2014-2016" is entrusted to The Cabinet of Ministers shall implement measures to implement the State Program in conjunction with the relevant central and local executive authorities. In the joint preparation of annual State investment programs, the Ministries of Economics and Finance take into account the implementation of these programs.

6.

- To provide drinking water to population in accordance with the World Health Organization and the European Union standards
- Bringing the current regulations in water and sanitation sector up to the level of the European Union standards
- A search for new alternative sources of drinking water
- Identification and implementation of real, effective adoptable programs to improve water and sanitation services to the population
- To increase budget for water and sanitation sector
- The involvement of foreign investors in this sector
- To prevent water losses in pipelines and installation of meters
- To set reasonable tariffs with safe water and sanitation taking into account the affordability of the population
- The introduction of new technologies in water and sanitation sector.

7. The obligations of water supply to state entities from non-state actors which are not legal and individuals entities are determined by the law on consumer rights, relevant articles of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the protection of human rights, the law on sanitary and epidemiological health, and are regulated by the international convention and standards of international organizations to which Azerbaijan is partner.