



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

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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and with reference to the Note Verbale Ref: TESPRDD/DESIB/ESCR/KH of 16 August 2022, has the honor to transmit herewith the information by the relevant authorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan in relation to the Human Rights Council resolution 49/25 of 1 April 2022.

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



Geneva, 2 December 2022

Enclosure: 5 pages

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

## **Ensuring equal, timely, universal access to vaccines in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic**

The COVID-19 global health emergency and its socio-economic impact has disrupted nearly all aspects of life for all groups of the society. The crisis has posed considerable risks for vulnerable groups of the population, their physical and mental health. To avoid exacerbating inequalities and to involve all age groups in building societal resilience, the Government of Azerbaijan implemented various targeted interventions to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across the country.

The Government of Azerbaijan ensured that healthcare facilities provide information, counseling, diagnostics, treatment, and care services (such as telemedicine, mobile clinics, outpatient services) that fulfil the needs of different age groups.

Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers on the approval of the "Temporary Rules for the organization of the education and training process in the educational facilities operating in the Republic of Azerbaijan during the special quarantine regime were developed and implemented for the prevention of COVID-19 spread in educational facilities. Schools stayed open most of the time during the pandemic in 2020, with brief lockdowns in times of high viral transmission and increased burden of the disease.

Every effort was made to ensure the continuity of services (such as immunization schedules and essential prevention and treatment services for those in need) for different age groups, irrespective of their sex, marital status, level of education, financial status, or other characteristics across the country. The Government of Azerbaijan ensured that the COVID-19 response plans are sensitive to adolescent and youth-specific healthcare needs, including sexual and reproductive health, mental health and psychosocial support. From the start of COVID-19, one of the defining messages has been that older persons are more affected by the pandemic.

On 30 January 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Action Plan on Prevention of the Spread of the New Coronavirus Disease in the Republic of Azerbaijan. On 27 February 2020, Task Force under the Cabinet of Ministers was established. The first case of the COVID-19 infection in the country was identified on 28 February 2020.

Azerbaijan remains one of the relatively less-affected countries by the rapidly spreading virus. The country's official institutions have been applying necessary measures to reduce exposure to and transmission of the novel coronavirus. The COVID-19-related requirements and methodical instructions determined by the decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as other state bodies (institutions) have been applied in workplaces and services. People are encouraged to practice social distancing and obliged to wear face masks indoors.

On 19 March 2020, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan signed the Executive Order on measures to protect public health in Azerbaijan and strengthen the counter measures against the coronavirus infection. According to the Decree, the Special Coronavirus Response Fund was established to provide financial assistance to the response measures across the country. The Presidential Executive Order dated 19 March 2020 regulates a number of measures to reduce the negative impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the economy of Azerbaijan, macroeconomic stability, employment, and entrepreneurship. The Action Plan aimed at implementing the Presidential Order includes large-scale, effective, and efficient measures.

During the pandemic period, more than 50 laboratories, around 10,000 beds, and more than 40 hospitals were organized in the fight against the coronavirus. Today, over 20 state-owned hospitals serve the patients with COVID-19 across the country.

According to the Executive Order signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 7 April 2020, modular hospitals for the COVID-19 patients have been constructed within six months as a part of additional measures.

The local production of face masks was launched in Azerbaijan as the next step to fight the global coronavirus pandemic. Along with medical masks, disposable protective clothing, disinfectants, sanitizers, etc. have also been produced locally.

In its global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and by expressing its solidarity with the states affected by the virus, the Government of Azerbaijan donated 5 million USD to World Health Organization (WHO). Additional 5 million USD were donated by Azerbaijan in its capacity of the current Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to WHO, to support the most affected NAM countries.

Azerbaijan was one of the first countries to join and support COVAX, an international initiative, with the participation of WHO, aimed at equal access of all countries to vaccines.

Since January 18, 2021, the vaccination campaign against the COVID-19 infection has been launched in Azerbaijan, and this campaign has successfully continued since. Various types of vaccines have been available across the country, including CoronaVac, AstraZeneca, Sputnik V, Pfizer. Within the vaccination campaign's framework, mobile brigades were created to organize the vaccination process for vulnerable population groups (i.e. patients with dialysis, war veterans, people with limited mobility, etc.), who otherwise for various reasons could not come to the vaccination centers. As a result of the taken measures, the coronavirus epidemic in the country has been under control. 69% of the whole population was covered with the 1st dose; 62% with the 2nd dose; and 53% with the booster dose.

Azerbaijan shares its vaccine reserves with other countries. Thus, during the acute period of the pandemic, a total of 270,000 doses of the vaccines against COVID-19 were donated to Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the countries of the African region.

Under the 26 July 2021 amendment made to the Decision of the Azerbaijani Cabinet of Ministers "On the extension of the special quarantine regime and adoption of measures to remove some restrictions" ("Amendments"), COVID-19 vaccination requirements were introduced for the first time across the country. The Amendments, requiring vaccine passports for entry into certain indoor public premises, such as hotels, restaurants, fitness centers, also prescribe vaccination at workplaces. Violation of the aforementioned by employers would result in administrative measures. In accordance with the Amendments, starting from 1 September 2021, it is required that at least 80% of the public office employees and those of the specified companies must be vaccinated with the first dose. From 1 October 2021, they must be vaccinated with the second dose. Otherwise, these individuals should acquire an immune certificate which is issued to persons infected with/recovered from COVID-19.

Community spread of COVID-19 occurs in Azerbaijan, and the COVID-19 infections are registered in all regions of the country. According to the decision of the Azerbaijan's Cabinet of Ministers, the special quarantine regime will remain in place until 1 January 2023.

From 1 May 2022, wearing face masks is no longer required. Most public transportation, including the Baku Metro, reopened on 31 May for daily operations, and resumed for weekend

operations starting from 1 October 2021. As of 10 June 2021, beaches, sport and health centers, places of religious worship, malls, and shopping centers are reopened, subject to the COVID-related restrictions.

On 2 September 2021, the Cabinet of Ministers announced that foreigners may use their COVID-19 passport (or a document confirming full vaccination against COVID-19 or immunity to COVID-19) issued abroad to enter restaurants, hotels, large shopping centers, and other facilities that require a COVID-19 passport. The information contained in the COVID Certificate of foreign citizens is registered via the e-TABIB System and is recognized across the Republic of Azerbaijan.

On 5 March 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers announced the elimination of limits on hours and numbers of attendees at restaurants, cultural facilities, such as movie theaters, children's entertainment facilities, religious places of worship, and areas at the airport for seeing off and picking up passengers. Proof of vaccination is still required for those at the age of 18 and over at indoor facilities, such as malls and restaurants.

The Republic of Azerbaijan bears the responsibility to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights and fundamental freedoms across the country, and in particular on the areas of the human rights implications and the impact on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health of affordable, timely, equitable and universal access and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

The Republic of Azerbaijan ensures the respect, protection, and fulfillment of all human rights while combating COVID-19 and the country's response measures to the pandemic are in respect and full compliance with the country's obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Azerbaijan undertakes all necessary steps to prevent, treat and control epidemic, endemic, occupational and other diseases, including the COVID-19 pandemic, and creates the conditions that assure medical services and medical attention for all, and ensures affordable, timely, equitable, and universal access and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

Within the Republic of Azerbaijan, all people have access - without any barriers or discrimination - to nationally determined sets of needed preventive, curative, and rehabilitative essential health care services, as well as essential, safe, affordable, effective, and quality medicines and vaccines, with special emphasis on the vulnerable and marginalized population, including affordable, timely, equitable and universal access and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

On 23 March 2022, within the framework of the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council, Azerbaijan initiated the adoption of the resolution entitled "Ensuring equal, timely, universal access to vaccines at affordable prices for all countries in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic".



Since the beginning of the pandemic Azerbaijan was among the first countries actively engaged in mobilizing national and global efforts to address the pandemic and its negative consequences.

On 30 January 2020 the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan issued the Action Plan to prevent the spread of coronavirus in the country. The Government established the Task Force under the Cabinet of Ministers on 27 February 2020, consisting of senior officials to coordinate the response measures by the Government. On 19 March 2020 the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan signed the Executive Order on measures to protect public health in Azerbaijan and strengthen the counter measures against the coronavirus infection. Around 2 billion US dollars have been allocated for these purposes.

Over 20 state-owned hospitals were commissioned to serve COVID-19 patients in Azerbaijan. 11 modular hospitals were constructed within six months providing additional 4,100 hospital beds. Later seven additional modular hospitals were constructed. The local production of face masks was launched as well as medical masks, disposable protective clothing, disinfectants, sanitizers, etc. were also produced locally.

Large scale vaccination campaign started in January 2022 in Azerbaijan. As of September 1, 2022, a total of 13,861,686

vaccine doses have been administered in the country (about 68.7% of the population).

**In its global efforts to fight COVID-19 pandemic and expressing its solidarity with states affected by the virus Azerbaijan within its chairmanships to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Organization of Turkic States has implemented its support through a number of successful undertakings:**

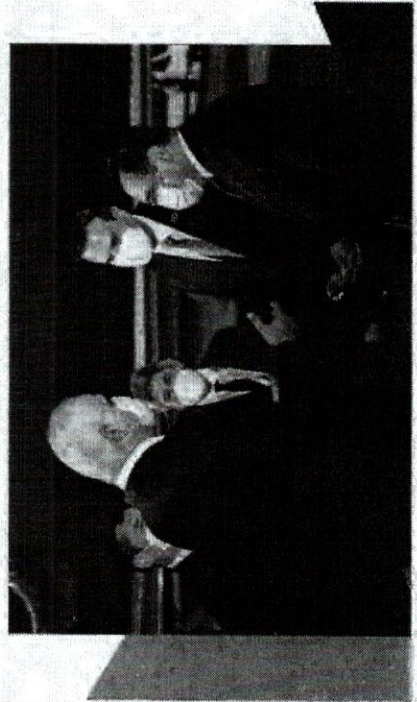
1. Setting the international agenda to fight the "COVID-19" in developing and least developed countries, especially in NAM and OIC member-states;

2. Providing financial support to international organizations;

3. Delivering medical items and equipment as well as financial support to foreign governments on a bilateral and multilateral basis.

**A number of international high-level events took place at the initiative of H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan:**

- The Extraordinary Online Summit of the Turkic Council on 10 April 2020 on "Cooperation and solidarity in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic";



**"We are in the process of donating around 1 million doses of vaccines to 14 NAM Member States."**

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E. Ilham Aliyev at the UNGA debate on Galvanizing Momentum for Universal Vaccination  
February 25, 2022

- Online Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement Contact Group under the motto "United against COVID-19" on May 4, 2020;

- Special Session of the UN General Assembly in response to COVID-19 pandemic at the Level of Heads of State and Government on December 4, 2020

The overlapping purpose of the events was to bring to the attention of the international community the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the world, identify common strategy to respond both collectively and individually, and mobilize global efforts.

On many platforms the Republic of Azerbaijan stressed the need of ensuring the access of the poorest countries to the necessary quantity of vaccines in order to be able to combat COVID-19, noting the importance of joining the efforts of donor countries and international organizations in this regard. In December 2021 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on "Ensuring equal, affordable, timely and universal access to vaccines against COVID-19" proposed by the Republic of Azerbaijan as a Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, in order to make vaccines accessible for all countries affected by the pandemic with equality principle.

As a sign of solidarity and cooperation the Government of Azerbaijan has allocated USD 10 million to World Health Organization among several other international organizations to support global efforts in fighting the spread of the infection in different parts of the world, especially in developing and least developed countries.

Azerbaijan recognized the vital importance to maintain the continued functioning of the healthcare system and strengthening the primary healthcare in all relevant aspects necessary for an effective public health response to the pandemic. Measures in this regard would include, inter alia, ensuring the continuation of uninterrupted vaccination programs with a view to achieving universal health coverage.

The Republic of Azerbaijan through its national donor institution, Azerbaijan International Development Agency (AIDA), has provided financial, humanitarian and medical aid to over 20 countries, some of which have received the aid from Azerbaijan several times. The Government of Azerbaijan has donated 270 thousand doses of vaccines (USD 3.255.500 in total) to five states.

During the pandemic Azerbaijan has spent nearly USD 30 million to support global efforts in fighting the spread of the pandemic and eliminating its consequences in the world. It is highly expected that

the volume of aid and beneficiaries will grow further. Such a practice, which included three-fold approach to fighting COVID-19 pandemic, namely setting international agenda, providing aid both bilaterally and multilaterally, was innovative within the framework of Non-Aligned Movement in a sense that it encompassed a comprehensive approach that had visible and tangible targets as well as result-oriented actions.

The efforts by Azerbaijan against COVID-19 have been recognized and welcomed in a number of international events as well as international organizations' reports. During the meeting between H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of World Health Organisation held on June 16, 2022, the Director-General conveyed congratulations on the successful fight against COVID-19, the activities the country had carried out in this area at the national, regional and international levels, and also expressed his gratitude for the voluntary financial contribution and support Azerbaijan provided to the World Health Organization during the pandemic.

The international support by the Government of Azerbaijan regarding the fight against COVID-19 pandemic corresponded to the SDGs 3, 4, 10, 11, 16 and 17 directly and indirectly.

