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Baku has hosted the opening of the international event 'United Nations/Azerbaijan Workshop on the International Space Weather Initiative: The Sun, Space Weather and Geosphere' on October 31.

The event is organized by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) and Baku State University (BSU); in partnership and with the support of the International Committee (ICG) on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) and the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the conference, BSU Rector Elchin Babayev noted that in recent years, Azerbaijan has paid special attention to space research and the development of the space industry as well as information and communication technologies. This sphere has become one of the leading areas of the country's economy. In 2018, President Ilham Aliyev approved the "State Program for the development of remote sensing of the Earth for 2019-2022". Currently, "Azercosmos"-managed satellites "Azerspace-1", "Azerspace-2", and "Azersky" provide high-quality and reliable telecommunication services as well as services and solutions for Earth observation. Today, "Azercosmos", the first and only satellite operator in the Caucasus, provides telecommunications and exploration satellite services. The rector noted that relevant research and training projects are underway at the Aerospace and Atmospheric Research Laboratory of the BSU Centre of Excellence for Research, Development and Innovation, as well as at the Department of Astrophysics of the Faculty of Physics.

The Minister of Science and Education Emin Amrullayev, who was present at the event, noted the importance of the conference and that it would serve to enhance scientific ties between the countries in the future. The Minister noted that Azerbaijan has been developing rapidly in recent years, working to link institutions working as traditional research institutes, national academies with young universities. Noting that the slogan "Turning black gold into human capital" creates great opportunities for youth, the Minister said that more than 3,000 Azerbaijanis have already been educated at the world's leading universities through an educational program abroad. Currently, they are contributing to our country.

In their speeches at the event, Roald Sagdeev, Professor at the University of Maryland in the USA, distinguished scientist and academician in the field of space research, Indira Hajiyeva, Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports, Sameddin Asadov, Chairman of the Board of the Space Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan ("Azercosmos"), Luca Saint-Pierre from the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs, Sharafat Gadimova from the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems, Nat Gopalswami from NASA, Namig Jalilov, Director General of the Shamakhi Astrophysical Observatory said that the international event would contribute to research related to space exploration and would further expand scientific ties between the countries.

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It was also noted in the speeches that a wide range of documents related to Azerbaijan's activities in the space sector until 2030 were being prepared. Azerbaijan is now considered a reliable partner in the space industry. And next year, Baku will host the International Astronautical Congress.

The expected outcomes of the workshop include the collection, sharing, and delivery of space weather data with high accuracy and the development of recommendations to improve the accuracy and reliability of modeling, forecasting methods by promoting best practices.

The international event brings together researchers from 36 countries and 4 continents from around the world, with a significant number of scientists joining online.

The event runs until November 5.