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Education Minister Misir Mardanov expressed a warm welcome to the guests and his pleasure at seeing them at the Ministry. Talking about numerous projects that are being implemented by the British Council in the country, the Minister underlined results achieved within these projects. He noted the importance of English language training course for teachers carried out at 7 pilot schools of Baku and underscored that this initiative will run at 20 schools for the next academic year. Having underlined a great interest in learning English language in Azerbaijan, the Minister added that the British Council is one of the international organizations with whom the Ministry has close relations.

Moreover, Mr Mardanov gave information on the Executive Order of the President Ilham Aliyev to prepare National Education Development Strategy of Azerbaijan (in 2011-2021) and noted that according to the Order a new education development strategy will be prepared within a short period of time. He noted the advisability of the use of capacity of international organizations operating in the country, particularly British Council, to prepare this document. The Minister also talked about steps taken in the field of education of Azerbaijan in recent years and implemented innovations.

Furthermore, Mr Mardanov has talked about expansion of ties between the Ministry of Education and British Council. He put forward ideas to establish a school in Azerbaijan, where a study will be conducted only in English or in both languages, monitor the situation concerning teaching of English language, and prepare jointly English language textbooks and teaching materials for general-education schools.

British Council Regional Director Michael Bird thanked the Minister for the warm welcome and given information. He expressed their satisfaction with the effective cooperation existed between the Ministry of Education and British Council. Mr. Bird noted he is a British Council Regional Director for 16 countries and Azerbaijan has a special place among these countries. Having underlined the importance results of joint projects, the guest expressed readiness for further development of this cooperation. The guest also asked about priority areas of the education system of Azerbaijan.

According to Mr. Mardanov, the educational priority areas of Azerbaijan include the increase of the authority of teachers and development of qualifications for them, management of education, preparation of textbooks, curriculum and, etc.

At the meeting, the sides have exchanged views on expansion of ties between British and Azerbaijani universities, establishment of cooperation in the secondary and vocational education field, study of Azerbaijani students in the UK, learning English at schools and organization of exchange of teachers and students.