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The conference was attended by representatives of 20 countries, including from Germany, Russia, Georgia, Turkmenistan, as well as state and government officials, MPs, and representatives of international organizations. The issues, such as implementation of inclusion for disabled children, support for reforms carried out in this field and etc. were discussed at the conference.

Speaking at an event, Deputy Prime Minister Elchin Afandiyev noted that Azerbaijan, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary of independence, has achieved historical successes, which were reached by many countries during the decades, over a short period of time, and obtained great progress in the provision of social protection of population. Due to far-sighted policy of national leader Heydar Aliyev, Azerbaijan reached the path of socio-economic development and described itself as an independent subject of international law.

It was noted that, currently, there are 419,598 disabled children, including 59, 207 children with physical disabilities up to the age of 18 years in Azerbaijan. Today, successive measures are taken in the fields of their medical – social rehabilitation and integration into the society. Each year, more than eight thousand people receive help at the rehabilitation centers. On October 2008, our country ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People and Facultative Protocol and in 2009 they came into force. Moreover, our country established an active cooperation with the Committee for Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe. This is demonstrating the willingness of Azerbaijan to learn the latest international practice in this field and benefit from it. The Deputy Prime Minister highly praised the work of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in rendering attention and care to talented disabled people, supporting their creativity and providing their participation in mass cultural events.

Next, Executive Director of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Anar Alekberov delivered a message from President of the Foundation, First Lady of Azerbaijan, UNESCO and UNESCO goodwill ambassador, MP Mehriban Aliyeva.

According to the message there are many reasons for exclusion of disabled people from society. The restriction of contact with people, creativity and sport deprivation, inability to use their skills, to receive a quality education and health care are major obstacles to their integration into the society. It is not enough to approach to the problems of disabled people just from a medical point of view. The problems faced by them today should be considered as a social factor. Because of the health and physical development of these people, specifies their development as an individual, and their future social position. The First Lady of Azerbaijan underlined that we should help disabled people to integrate into the society, to feel themselves as valued and equal citizens of the country and able to benefit from all areas of the life.

From this point of view, Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva highly praised the conduction of this conference, which made possible to discuss problems, exchange successes, views and experiences on the protection of disabled people.

Next, there was demonstrated a film of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation devoted to the activity of disabled children.

Speaking at the event, representative for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Azerbaijan Mark Hereward highlighted important works done by the government of Azerbaijan and the Heydar Aliyev Foundation to ensure the rights of disabled people. He noted that the other structures of the UN have analyzed works done by the Government of Azerbaijan and the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in this field. The document, which will be developed after this analyze, could be the basis for the future cooperation. However, there are still plenty of works to be done in this area. According to him, they are cooperating with Government of Azerbaijan and the Heydar Aliyev Foundation to no child left behind.

Next, a video message of Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conductor Sir Simon Rattle was presented to the attendees.

Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Population Fuzuli Alekberov gave a presentation entitled "The rights of disabled people: effort of the Azerbaijani government to fulfill international commitments." According to him, President Ilham Aliyev successfully continues the policy for the

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strengthening of social protection of population launched by great leader Heydar Aliyev. By the support of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation a number of boarding schools were overhauled and refurbished. Moreover, important steps were taken to develop the abilities of disabled children.

Speaking at the conference UNICEF Senior Adviser on Children with Disabilities Rosangela Ber Berman-Bieler highlighted that it is the duty of every citizen to assist disabled people. She highly praised works done to integrate disabled people into the society in Azerbaijan.

Education Minister Misir Mardanov gave a presentation entitled "Inclusive education in Azerbaijan and policy of deinstitutionalization." According to him, one of the main priorities of the education policy of Azerbaijan is to create equal opportunities for disabled people to receive a quality education. Noting the Ministry is implemented State Programme for organization of inclusive education for disabled children in Azerbaijan, he underlined purposeful works done by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation to organize the education of children with disabilities, orphans, as well as children deprived of parental care.

Delivering a speech on the theme of "Situation of disabled people in Azerbaijan: basic information and advice received within the latest study" UNICEF expert on disability issues Chantelle McCabe highlighted the importance of avoiding discrimination against disabled people in any society. She also highly praised the attention and care provided by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation for disabled children.

Speaking on the rights of disabled children in Azerbaijan chairperson of State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs Hijran Huseynova noted the great attention provided in the country for this area. According to her, along with the state policy, special contributions of First Lady of Azerbaijan, President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, UNESCO and ISESCO goodwill ambassador, MP Mehriban Aliyeva were made to this field as well. Noting conduction of the number of major events for disabled children within the Year of the Child 2009 proclaimed by the order of the President Ilham Aliyev, she highlighted the study of new child system and experience of developed countries to adopt standards in this field.

She noted that the Committee is planning to hold II Child Forum on November of the current year.

Next, the conference is continued its work at sessions on different themes.

The first session was chaired by the Deputy Chairperson of Milli Majlis (Parliament) Bahar Muradova. Talking about disability issues B. Muradova noted that the parliament will continue its cooperation with international organizations in this direction.

Expert of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Ilgar Mustafayev in its presentation entitled "Activity of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation on the development of an infrastructure for disabled people" noted that the Foundation from the first day of its establishment implements humanitarian projects, and takes major steps to promote our cultural heritage and provides the care for disabled children. Moreover, the Foundation has established data centers for blind and visually impaired children to use the internet resources.

Mr. Mustafayev noted that the President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva has made exceptional contributions to establish high principles of humanism in the society. Her humanitarian mission on disadvantaged groups encompasses disabled children as well.

Moreover, at the conference were made presentations on the themes of "The role of organizations working in the field of disability in accepting of people with disabilities in the society," "Facts about discrimination and stigma of disabled persons constitute a violation of human rights," "Inclusive education through an inclusive society," "Early detection and prevention of disability: international standards and effective experience," "Support for the participation of youth with disabilities in the social life," "UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People and its impact on

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persons with mental retardation," and, etc.