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A delegation led by Deputy Minister of Education Firudin Gurbanov is paying an official visit to the French capital of Paris to attend a ministerial conference of the European Higher Education Area.

The delegation includes deputy head of the Department of Science, Higher and Vocational Education of the ministry Shahin Bayramov, head of the Foreign Relations section Turah Ahmadov, rector of Azerbaijan State University of Economics Adalat Muradov and third year SABAH Group student at Baku State University Nigar Huseynova.

Opening the two-day event, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation of the French Republic Frederique Vidal highlighted the accomplishments made in the European Higher Education Area since the adoption of Sorbonne Joint Declaration of 1998.

Participants in the opening ceremony included Prime Minister of the French Republic Edouard Philippe, Secretary General of UNESCO Audrey Azoulay, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Tibor Navracsics, as well as education executives from 48 countries, and representatives of specialized regional and international organizations.

The conference participants outlined common values in the field of education for the next 10 years, defined possible challenges and discussed the ways of strengthening mutual dialogue.

Addressing the event, Deputy Minister of Education Firudin Gurbanov highlighted the successful results of education reforms conducted in Azerbaijan since the country joined the Bologna Process in 2005. He emphasized the implementation of the dual diploma program, citing Azerbaijan-France University as an example. Firudin Gurbanov drew the audience's attention to the topic of human capital that Azerbaijan declared as its slogan as it bids to host EXPO-2025, and called on countries to support Azerbaijan's candidacy.

The ministerial meeting saw the presentation of a report on the observance of commitments by Bologna Process member countries. Achievements made by member countries were hailed, and participants stressed the necessity of taking measures to address the existing challenges.

During the visit the delegation also attended an event marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic co-organized in Paris by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and Azerbaijan's Embassy to France.