



STATE STATISTICAL COMMITTEE OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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Mr. Stefan Schweinfest
Director
United Nations Statistics Division

Dear Mr. Schweinfest,

Please find enclosed the document prepared by the State Statistical Committee on "Refugee statistics" the discussion of which is considered 46th Session of UN Statistics Commission which will be held in 2015.

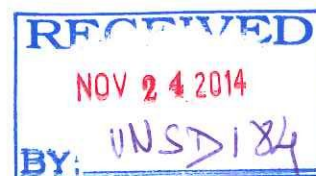
Thank you very much for the kind cooperation.

Attached: 6 pages.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

Hamid Baghirov
First Deputy Chairman



ORGANISATION OF STATISTICS ON REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

I. Introduction

1. As it is noted in the first principle of the “Fundamental principles of official statistics” the main duty of official statistics is to highlight timely and objectively the processes taken place in the society. Over the recent years sharp increasing of the number of refugees and IDPs in the world stipulates preparation and provision of information on such population group in migration and demography as well as other fields of statistics.
2. Existence of refugees and IDPs seriously impacts on change of demographic processes in the country. If appropriate measures are not taken the demographic processes taken place in the country especially increasing of migration could be accompanied with major challenges (hunger, demographic explosion, infectious diseases and etc.). There should be statistical information for management of these events, regulation of demographic processes and preparation of strategy on appropriate population group and its integral part - displaced migrants.
3. In some countries, including Azerbaijan international and internal migration is closely related with refugees and internally displaced persons. Therefore, organization of migration statistics depends on organization of statistics on refugees as well as persons moved to another place being forced to leave his/her permanent residence within the country. Number of persons faced with such cases in the Republic of Azerbaijan makes 1.2 million and that stipulates the preparation of social and economic and other statistical data on this group of population.

II. Definition of refugees and IDPs and international references

4. In accordance with the law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On status of refugees and internally displaced (persons displaced within the country) persons” the term “Refugee” shall apply to person who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. The term Internally Displaced Person (IDP) (person displaced within the country) shall apply to any person who has moved to

another place being forced to leave his/her permanent residence within the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan in connection with military aggression, natural or technological disaster.

5. There are refugees and internally displaced persons in the Republic of Azerbaijan as a result of Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. UN Security Council Resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 had been adopted regarding to this conflict. These resolutions demand immediate peaceful settlement of the conflict, complete and unconditional liberation of occupied territories and return of refugees and IDPs to their homes. At the same time the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution A/RES/48/114 on "Providing Emergency International Assistance to the refugees and IDPs in Azerbaijan" at its 85th plenary session in 1993 as a sign of its deep concern over the number of refugees and IDP and deterioration of humanitarian situation in Azerbaijan.

6. Azerbaijan is a party to the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and Convention on Reduction of Statelessness (1961). The high-level delegation from Azerbaijan participated at the ministerial meeting held on 7-8 December 2011 in Geneva dedicated to the 50th anniversary of UN Convention on Reduction of Statelessness (1961) and 60th anniversary of UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951). During the event Azerbaijan undertook voluntary obligations relating to the protection of refugees and IDPs, including campaign for preparation of international document on protection of rights of IDPs and amendment and revision of the legislation in order to improve the procedures on granting refugee status.

III. Legal and institutional basis for organization of statistics on refugees and IDPs

7. Core legal basis for organization of statistics in the country is the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on "Official statistics". In accordance with the law the information reflecting social-economic as well as public processes shall be prepared and made public by statistical authorities.

8. The system of official statistics shall be a single, centralised, country-wide system. Conduction of statistics in this field is realized by the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

9. Along with above mentioned, the following core documents related with refugees and IDPs provide legal basis for conduction of official statistics:

- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On status of refugees and internally displaced persons" (29.09.1992);

- The State program for the solution of the problems of refugees and IDPs (17.09.1998);

- The law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On social protection of internally displaced persons and persons equated to them" (21.05.1999);

- State Program for improving the living conditions and increasing employment of refugees and IDPs (01.07.2004);

- Amendments to State Program for improving the living conditions and increasing employment of refugees and IDPs (31.10.2007);

- "State Program on Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2008-2015" (15.09.2008);

- Amendments to State Program for improving the living conditions and increasing employment of refugees and IDPs (21.02.2011).

10. Generally, there was created complete legal basis corresponding to internal norms related with social problems of refugees, IDPs, persons willing to apply for the refugee status (asylum seekers), 95 decrees and orders were signed by the President, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted 357 directives and decrees, Milli Majlis (the National Parliament) accepted 33 laws.

IV. Organization of work with refugees and IDPs in official statistics

11. In order to get timely, qualitative and detailed statistical information on refugees and IDPs it is necessary to define data sources. Sources for obtaining of this statistical information could be divided into three parts: administrative data, population census and statistical observations.

12. Statistical information on refugees and IDPs is obtained by the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan since 1990. At present this statistical information is mainly obtained based on administrative data, i.e. based on quarterly official statistical reporting forms 1-refugee and IDP "Number of refugees and IDPs", 2-refugee and IDP "Number and composition of refugees and IDPs", 4-refugee and IDP "Dislocation and migration of refugees and IDPs", submitted by regional authorities and subsequently aggregated and made public.

13. Complementary to administrative data the statistical information on refugees and IDPs is also obtained from population census. As opposed to previous censuses, 2009 census questionnaire included the question "Are you refugee or IDP". At the moment of census the refugees and IDPs were interviewed in the place of their actual residence.

14. Moreover, some statistical information on refugees and IDPs is obtained from "Household budget survey". Household budget surveys are conducted for the purpose to obtain economic-statistical information about living standards of different groups and strata of population. Because of the fact that refugees and IDPs are integral part of population, they also participate in the survey.

15. In connection with the execution of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 1 July 2004, № 298 on approval of the "State Program for improving the living conditions and increasing employment of refugees and IDPs", the State Statistical Committee aggregates quarterly and annual data on actual residence of refugees and IDPs based on reports from the regional authorities and presents it to the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Deals of Refugees and IDPs in accordance with Article 2.23 of the Plan of Actions confirmed by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 4 November 2004, № 232s. Here it is reflected data on the number of refugee and IDP families and family members with indication of the region and city they left, number by temporary place (region, city) of residence, as well as dislocation by regions and cities where IDPs temporarily reside.

16. According to official statistics 1.2 million or 13% of 9.5 million people of Azerbaijan population are refugees and IDPs. If one person of every 135 people is a refugee and IDP in the world, every eighth citizen of Azerbaijan is a refugee and IDP. Refugees and IDPs temporarily settled in 62 cities and districts, and more than 1600 settlements with high density.

17. In accordance with applied estimations the distribution of refugees by countries, number of families and family members, types and conditions of buildings where they settled, refugees who are under auspices of the representation of UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Azerbaijan and persons willing to apply for the refugee status (asylum seekers), sex-age and national structure, education, employment and other main indicators are covered. Moreover, all information on this group of population is prepared based on population living standards and household budget surveys.

V. Action taken for improving the living conditions and increasing employment of refugees and IDPs

18. During last period in the Republic of Azerbaijan 12 tent camps, 12 Finnish homes were liquidated, IDPs were provided with new apartments. At the expense of funds amounted in 2.1 milliard manats (2.7 milliard USD) allocated from the State Oil Fund and other sources the 83 modern settlements with 2.6 million square meters and having all social and technical infrastructure were built. In new settlements the 141 schools, 6 music schools, 52 kindergartens, 56 medical institutions, 45 cultural centers, 2 Olympic sport complexes were built, 648 km of roads, 815 km of water lines, 1412 km of overhead electric lines, 333 km of gas lines, 715 power transformers of different capacities have been installed. At the expense of investment provided in the state budget the construction of 559 houses for Ahiska Turks had been completed. Thus, during the year the living conditions of 42 thousand families or more than 190 thousand refugees and IDPs were improved. During last 10 years amount of compensation provided to IDPs for monthly meal expenses increased for 3.6 times, public facilities – for 4.5 times. Compensation for meal expenses is paid per IDP every month at the expense of funds amounted in 18.15 manats (23.14 USD) allocated from the state budget. On winter season 51 thousand IDP families are monthly provided with 40 liter of kerosene per family. Payment of average monthly wage is continued for up to 11 thousand IDPs who worked before in the state-funded enterprises and organizations and lost their jobs for reasons beyond their control and subsequently not provided with another job. On the eve of holidays the ministries, committees, companies, concerns, joint stock companies and other central organizations of the republic provide several assistances for IDPs. For the purpose of increasing employment of IDPs and for poverty reduction 161 thousand IDPs had been provided with permanent jobs in the state-funded organizations and other spheres, 200 thousands had been provided with temporary jobs, 5 thousands had been granted with refugee status, 4 thousands had been involved in occupational trainings, 16 thousand families had been provided with targeted social assistance during last 10 years. 2 thousand IDPs had taken privileged credits in amount of 40 million manats (51 million USD) through the National Fund for Entrepreneurship Support of the Ministry of Economy and Industry of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

19. For social protection of refugees and IDPs totally 5.1 milliard manats (6.5 milliard USD) were spent, of which 2.3 milliard manats (3 milliard USD) were from the state budget, 1.8 milliard manats (2.3 milliard USD) – State Oil Fund and 1.0 milliard manats (1.3 milliard USD) – international financial organizations and

UN institutions acting in the country, and international organizations. Generally, in 2013 amounts spent per IDP made 1100 manats (1400 USD) and that is 9 times more compared to 2003 and is the highest indicator compared to other conflict zones. As a result of implemented activities the poverty line decreased from 74 % to 15 % during last 10 years.

VI. Outcomes and challenges

20. World-wide unions have to increase their efforts to encourage returning of refugees and IDPs to their homes, resolutions of UN and other powerful organizations should be implemented.

21. Official statistical bodies should continuously provide conduction of statistics in this field and achieve bringing the current situation to the world notice at international events.

22. For organization of statistics on refugees and IDPs there have to be organized task forces at international level, international methodologies should be developed.