

# **AZERBAIJANI BAR ASSOCIATION REPORT**

## **Bar Admission**

A number of actions have been taken in order to increase the number of lawyers and promote the rule of law. Numerous measures have been taken in connection with the admission to the Azerbaijani Bar Association. It should be noted that three written exams were conducted on computer-based form in 2019

As a result, within the last year the number of lawyers in Azerbaijan increased from 900 to 1708.

Furthermore, over the course of the past year, 19 new Bar offices have started to operate of which 10 are in the regions of the country, bringing the total the number of Bar offices to 89.

## **Access to Legal Aid**

On 26.12.2019 The Legal Aid and Training Center of the Bar Association was has opened its doors to our citizens. Within the framework of the measures taken, spectacular openings of attorney offices in Shirvan and Sumgayit were held.

The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan issued a Decree on February 22, 2018, in connection with the implementation of the recommendation on the provision of free legal services for low-income persons in need of legal advice to the Bar Association of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In order to ensure the accessibility of legal assistance in regions, a group of members of the Bar Association regularly visits different regions of the Republic and provides free legal advice and services to those who cannot afford such services otherwise. Such events were organized in most regions of the country.

## **Combating fraudulent advocacy**

There was also a wide combat against illegal "advocacy" cases. Simultaneously, a "hotline" established in the Board of the Bar Association is functioning in order to detect and prevent such cases.

## **Cooperation in local level**

Within the framework of cooperation with various local and international organizations, memorandums of cooperation were signed with the UN Office in Azerbaijan, the UN Commission on Refugees, the UN Population Fund, the UN Children's fund, the Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Small and Medium Business Development Agency and a number of other organizations.

## **Cooperating with international organizations**

The Board of the Bar Association paid special attention to the development of international relations and cooperation with international organizations, held many meetings, participated in various international events, and was the initiator and organizer of such events.

Throughout this period of time, cooperation with the United Nations, as well as its' specialized agencies, namely the International Organization for Migration, Human Rights, as well as, the Commissions on Children's Rights, the European Bar Association (CCBE), the International Commission of Lawyers (ICC), the German International Cooperation Society (GIZ), as well as, the Council of Europe and the European Union were established and strengthened.

Moreover, representatives of the Bar Association participated in a number of foreign visits and were attendees in various events.

## **International Relations**

Within the framework of international cooperation, the delegations of the Bar Association participated in various events held in various formats throughout visits to Belarus, Russia, Austria, Germany, France, Poland, Turkey, Georgia, Bulgaria, China, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. They discussed prospects of future cooperation with the Bar associations of these countries, as well as, with state bodies. Furthermore, they signed a number of agreements, including memorandum of understanding signed between Azerbaijan Bar Association and All China Lawyers' Association within the framework of Legal Year 2020 in Hong Kong, China.

In addition, requests have been made for the admission for organizational memberships of international law and bar associations including the IBA, UIA and LAWASIA.

### **2019- Important year for lawyers profession**

On the occasion 100th anniversary of Azerbaijan's advocacy, on 4<sup>th</sup> October an international conference on “Strong and Influential Advocacy Challenges of the Modern Era” was held at the Marriott Absheron Baku Hotel with the joint organization by the Bar Association of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the German International Cooperation Society. The event was attended by representatives of the Presidential Administration, Deputies of the Milli Majlis (Parliament), Chairmen and Judges of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and other Courts, Heads and representatives of the Prosecution and Justice bodies, as well as, Heads and Members of the Bar associations of more than 20 countries, representatives of the Council of Europe, the United Nations and others.

The main event of 2019 was at the end of year, when by the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated December 25, 2019, it was decided to celebrate December 28<sup>th</sup> as the professional holiday “Lawyer's Day” in the Republic of Azerbaijan.