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The Department of Literature and Culture named after Nizami Ganjavi was opened at the University of Upper Alsace in Mulhouse, France.

At the ceremony, Christian Ziegler Gangloff, Rector of the University of Upper Alsace, spoke about friendly relations between Mulhouse and various Azerbaijani towns, as well as existing relationships between the University, headed by him, and universities in Ganja.

Greta Komur, Dean of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities at the University of Upper Alsace, noted that she was proud of the opening of the Department of Literature and Culture named after great Azerbaijani poet and thinker Nizami Ganjavi at the Faculty headed by him. Greta Komur noted that the main objective of the Faculty is to study the impact of works of Nizami Ganjavi on Eastern and European culture and to explore the interactions between the cultures of Europe and Azerbaijan. She also touched upon the relations between the two countries in the field of literature.

Speaking at the event, Jean-Marie Bockel, member of the French Senate, President of Mulhouse Alsace Agglomeration, said that he is a friend of Azerbaijan and the occupation of our historical territories by neighboring country is unacceptable.

Mikayil Jabbarov, Minister of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, expressed satisfaction with his participation in the opening ceremony of the Department named after Nizami Ganjavi, who made invaluable contributions to the world literature, culture, education and science. He expressed his gratitude to Mehriban Aliyeva, Azerbaijan's first lady, president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, head of the Azerbaijani-French inter-parliamentary friendship group, Christian Ziegler Gangloff, Rector of the University of Upper Alsace, Mulhouse's city administration, Elchin Amirbayov, Azerbaijani Ambassador to France, for their active support in the realization of the project.

Touching upon deep historical roots of the Azerbaijani-French relations, the Minister underlined that major efforts were made in order to provide support for friendly relations, formed throughout history between the two nations, by the heads of the two countries, and to further develop these relations.

The Minister also noted that education plays a key role in establishing relationships based on mutual understanding and respect among the countries and nations in the twenty-first century. He emphasized that President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev attaches special importance to the development of education in the country. He noted that the future, development and success of every country and every nation depend on the human factor and well-educated and knowledgeable youth.

The Minister mentioned that the principle of "turning black gold into the human capital", put forward by the head of state, and in this context, the initiative of allocating state scholarships for the education of educated and skilled youth of Azerbaijan in leading universities of foreign countries reflected the importance of education in the country.

Noting that one of the factors that are of particular importance in the development of education is the sharing of good practices with foreign countries and the implementation of joint initiatives on the basis of mutual benefit, the Minister said that the partnership between Azerbaijan and France was considered exemplary in this regard. Pointing out that the Baku French Lyceum has already begun to operate, the Minister mentioned that the preparatory work on the project on establishment of the French-Azerbaijani University was carried out at the initiative of the heads of both countries and this project was expected to function successfully starting from the next academic year.

M. Jabbarov, Minister of Education, expressed confidence that the newly opened Department would allow French youth and researchers to closely familiarize themselves with Azerbaijan and to study our literature, history and cultural heritage.

**Shahla Agalarova**

**Special correspondent  
of AZERTAC**

**Mulhouse**