
The first forum of Azerbaijani student volunteers was held on December 14.

The Forum began with listening to the National Anthem of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Then, the video, entitled "Azerbaijani Volunteers: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" about volunteer activities among students, was shown.

The Forum, held with the support of the Ministry of Education, was attended by Fatma Abdullazadeh, head of the Department of Humanitarian Policy Issues of the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mikayil Jabbarov, Minister of Education, Azad Rahimov, Minister of Youth and Sports, MPs, rectors of higher education institutions, representatives of international organizations, NGOs, leaders of student volunteers and media representatives.

Welcoming the participants of the forum, Mikayil Jabbarov, Minister of Education, said that this event was of great historical importance.

The Minister of Education noted that obligations arising from youth policy founded by national leader Heydar Aliyev were one of the priorities for the activities of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliyev. Noting that the President highly appreciates volunteer activities of students in the international events held in Azerbaijan, Minister mentioned that the head of state paid special importance to these issues during a meeting with volunteers. As it was noted by Mr. President, "Volunteers once again showed that our country has a great potential and human capital... Indeed, our future is in safe hands".

Touching upon the special role of student volunteers in the process of holding the Baku 2015 First European Games at a high level, Minister of Education noted that the thoughts of Mehriban Aliyeva, First Lady of Azerbaijan, Chairperson of the First European Games Organizing Committee, generated enthusiasm in student volunteers.

The Minister also underlined that the reforms implemented in the field of higher education, the favorable environment created for students, provided new opportunities for learners. It is scheduled to further expand the innovative environment in higher education institutions in the near future within the framework of international projects.

Noting that it is necessary to respond adequately to new challenges, the Minister highly appreciated the creation of student-volunteer program "BIR" in order to make more effective use of power and knowledge of students and to successfully implement the strategic objectives.

Fatma Abdullazadeh, head of the Department of Humanitarian Policy Issues of the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Azerbaijan, gave recommendations to student volunteers and wished success to the forum. Noting that volunteers serve as an example for other young people by taking an active part in social and cultural life of our country and higher education institutions where they study, the head of the Department emphasized the importance of working hard to be ready for new challenges.

In their speeches, Azad Rahimov, Minister of Youth and Sports, Nato Alkazashvili, Deputy Resident Coordinator of the United Nations, and student volunteers spoke about the importance of the forum and noted that the volunteer movement had a positive impact on the expansion of activeness of citizens in the society.

After the speeches were delivered, the presentation of student-volunteer program "BIR" was held. During the presentation, the participants were informed in detail about the purpose, directions and opportunities of the program.

It should be noted that the program covers 10 higher education institutions in Baku, Sumgait and Ganja as a pilot project. Under the program, students will be involved in volunteer activities and relevant events, as well as the project, which includes 6 different directions (Learn, Teach, Live, Keep alive, Discover and Enjoy) according to "real student life" model, will be submitted to them. Young people can apply through www.facebook.com/birkonullu to join the program.

The event ended with the singing of Azerbaijan's famous retro song "Student" by the students.