

**Inputs for OHCHR's Analytical Study on the Impacts of Climate Change on the Enjoyment of
the Right to Health (Human Rights Council Resolution 29/15)
Contribution by Azerbaijan**

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

- 1. Please, describe, in your view, the relationship between climate change and the enjoyment of the right to health and any human rights obligations to mitigate and adapt to climate change that can be derived therefrom.**

Climate change is a serious threat for humans to enjoy the right to health and access to essential means of life such as food and shelter. Negative impacts derived from floods, droughts, heat stresses and other disasters hindrance for human to use those basic rights and also for governments to provide suitable conditions to enjoy those rights.

Main principles of human rights to live in safety, in healthy conditions and environment are provided in the Constitution of Azerbaijan Republic. So as, by the related articles of the constitutions indicates that everyone has the right to live in safety and to live in healthy environment; everyone has the right to gain information about true ecological situation and to get compensation for damage done to his/her health and property because of violation of ecological requirements, as well the state guarantees the preservation of ecological balance.

It is obvious that climate change impacts impede the efforts of the state for provision of all necessary conditions for human to live in healthy conditions and environment. Azerbaijan has already suffered from natural disaster caused by climate change impact in 2010, when heavy floods affected 7 regions and for about 70.000 of population living along Kura river. By that time, the government has took all necessary actions to mitigate negative impacts of disaster and supported affected population by repairing destroyed infrastructure and constructing new ones. Necessary actions have been also taken to protect health of human living in affected regions.

- 2. Please share a summary of any relevant data on the impacts of climate change on the enjoyment of the right to health including its underlying determinants (education, water and sanitation, food, housing, etc.), disaggregated to the extent possible.**

As for all whole world, for Azerbaijan, climate change has potential impacts on human health and living conditions by increasing incidence of disease and causing disastrous hydro-meteorological events (high temperatures, heat stresses, floods etc.). In recent years, extremely hot weather during some days in summertime is observed in Azerbaijan. For example, from April through September of 2003-2006, due to a rise of temperature in Baku city of 1.5 C⁰ have resulted in an increase in the number of calls for first aid by 21.5%. Complaints related to blood, respiratory and neural diseases by that time were also increased by 34.1%, 22.8% and 19.9%, respectively.

Along with this, floods occurring due to climate change impact, leads to increase in the area of epidemic malaria zone. In future years, due to climate change, the boundaries of both

endemic and epidemic malaria will likely move to higher elevations, and the length of the epidemic season might extend, particularly in mountainous areas. Therefore, rise in temperature in Azerbaijan can have negative impacts, especially in mountainous areas.

On the other hand, climate change impact to health of human occurs in the increase of cases of infectious and parasitic diseases. While these diseases were in decline for a long period, there has been a recent resurgence due to rising in air temperatures, flooding of human settlements and destruction of a sewerage system.

Natural disaster caused by climate change impact in 2010 that resulted with heavy floods at 7 regions along Kura river negatively affected living conditions of local population. Due to timely and effective intervention by the government, all necessary preventive actions to mitigate negative impacts of disaster have been by repairing destroyed infrastructure and constructing new ones.

- 3. Please describe existing national commitments, legislation and policy frameworks related to climate change mitigation and adaptation including any specific measures intended to prevent the worst impacts of climate change on the right to health; to ensure access to information, transparency, participation, and other procedural rights of persons affected by climate actions; to promote, protect and fulfill all human rights particularly those closely linked to the underlying determinants of health such food, water and sanitation, housing, etc.; and to ensure that climate-related actions respect, promote, protect and fulfill human rights. Please share any relevant information on the implementation of existing commitments to address climate change and its impacts.**

Upon ratification of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1995 and the Kyoto Protocol of the Convention in 2000, the Republic of Azerbaijan has actively joined international efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of global climate change. As a non-Annex I country, Azerbaijan has undertaken the obligations such as preparation of inventory of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and emission removals, its regular updating, and the preparation of national communications and submission of this information to the Secretariat of the Convention, as well execution of public awareness activities. All these commitments are fulfilled in a systematic manner.

Despite the fact that Azerbaijan is not included to Annex I group under the convention and has not taken any quantitative obligations in accordance with Kyoto protocol, the country has already contributed and is continuing to contribute to the global emission reduction efforts. So as, a number of mitigation activities have been implemented in Azerbaijan such as suspension of using black oil for power stations by using gas instead, application of smart cards in electricity and gas consumption measuring devices, enhancing application of renewable energy sources and energy efficient technologies, expansion of forest territories, etc.

Azerbaijan has recently submitted its intended nationally determined contributions and, as developing country, taking into account national circumstances, future development perspectives and national interests, has taken target of the 35% reduction in the level of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990/base year as its contribution to the global climate change efforts.

Azerbaijan is also considered as highly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The country suffers from negative effects of climate change and the increasing number of extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, heat stress, and the sharp increase in temperature in early spring, etc. Thus, development of relevant adaptation measures for decreasing or minimizing the losses that may occur at national, local and community levels per sector emerges as prior issue for the country.

It is obvious that preparation of national strategy and national action plans on Adaptation in the country and their integration in national sectors are one of the most important issues. In this regards, a special chapter on climate change is included in “Actions Plan on improvement of ecological situation and efficient use of natural resources in the Republic of Azerbaijan (2015-2020)” is undergoing final inside-state procedures for approval and National Adaptation Plan (NAP) is intended to be prepared in this context.

- 4. Please describe any relevant national accountability and oversight mechanisms designed to ensure access to remedy for those who suffer human rights harms as a result of climate change. Please highlight any relevant jurisprudence on this subject and indicate what measures, regulatory or otherwise (i.e. impact assessment) are in place to prevent harms caused by third parties.**

The current social insurance system of Azerbaijan protects households and individuals from falling into poverty in case of old age, temporary disability or unemployment. All persons falling under above-mentioned category of population has access to use related rights of getting social support. There are not any special aspects of social support system derived as a result of climate change impact. Therefore, the government regularly provides necessary social support to population suffered from natural disasters, including disasters occur a result of climate change. For example, the government has provided up to 300 million USD for improving of social infrastructure and life conditions of local population suffered from heavy floods in 2010.

- 5. Please describe any concrete mitigation and adaptation measures being taken to address the impacts of climate change on the human right to health and good practices in this regards including those related to: international cooperation, local and community-based initiatives; development, application and diffusion of technologies, practices and processes that control, reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases; and the exchange of relevant scientific, technological, technical, socio-economic and legal information related to the climate change system and climate change and the economic and social consequences of various response strategies.**

Azerbaijan has identified human health as one of the vulnerable areas to climate change. Vulnerability assessment and process of identification of relevant adaptation measures is conducted within Second National Communication of Azerbaijan to UNFCCC. Identified adaptation measures include measures such as establishment of early warning system for prevention of the escalation of the diseases caused by climate change, enhancement of the emergency response capabilities of health service systems, improvement of measures against malaria and adoption of permanent surveillance and development of monitoring system for acute intestinal and other dangerous infections that are sensitive to climate change,

prevention and control programs, implementation of public awareness and capacity building and so on.

Regarding concrete mitigation and adaptation measures implemented in the country in context of human right to health, in fact, all implemented mitigation and adaptation measures directly or indirectly related to human right to health. In this regards, implemented mitigation measures such as afforestation works implemented at up to 100.000 ha of land, improvement of transport network, as well implemented adaptation measures such as improvement of water management system to better respond to flood events and construction of preventive dams could be considered as important actions to protect human rights to health in context of climate change.