Session 58 – Azerbaijan

Recommendations to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

Prepared by Child Helpline International and Reliable Future NGO – May 2011

Background

Azerbaijan’s child helpline is operated by Reliable Future NGO, started in February 2010 and currently covers the capital Baku and several main cities. 1226 calls have been received by Azerbaijan Child Helpline Service since its official opening in February 2010. The majority of callers addressed the child helpline in relation to psychological and emotional distress and problems. The facts of child abuse and violence against children in the streets, schools and at home constitute important part of all appeals to the child helpline. The analysis of the calls shows that children mostly face violence and abused at home. Experts in child rights or social workers (mainly from among NGOs providing these services and rarely from among state agencies) have been rarely possible and welcomed in cases of child abuse or violence against children that occur within the families. Parents and children themselves are very reluctant to have anybody else involved and the only reason why they called child helpline is the anonymity and confidentiality protection by child helpline service.

Based on this Child Helpline International and Reliable Future NGO make the following recommendations:

Allocate the 116-111 phone number to Azerbaijan Child Helpline Service or to provide child helpline service with 3-4 digit easy to remember phone number instead if the above European number is technically difficult to allocate. Access to the child helpline should be free of costs.

Allocate appropriate funding to the child helpline to ensure that the child helpline will be available nationally and all hours of the day, every day.

International NGOs and the national government should cooperate with the child helpline organisation to provide technical support and training to the Child Helpline Service, which has successfully proved to be an important tool in ensuring the protection and promotion of child rights.

Include the child helpline the national plan of action to combat violence against children.

The government should recognise the child helpline as a source of information for policy development and improvement of legislation on children’s issues.

More close partnership should be built with Ombudsman Institution and State Committee on Family, Women and Children’s Problems, which can benefit from the data provided by Child Helpline to analyse, formulate and develop the state policies and state programs targeting the children.

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