

## **Consultation with Observers in the framework of CEPA 20<sup>th</sup> Session**

***Remark on the topic of “Recognize the quality of institutions, institutional reform and governance as a strategic plan”***

***by State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SAPSSI)***

*Distinguished Committee Members*

*Honorable Panelists*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

Good morning. Let me first express our gratitude for the opportunity to share our thoughts and vision on this noteworthy topic.

The strong and fundamental institutions as well as the well-prepared programs to reform them stand behind the best practices of public service delivery and good governance.

However, before talking about the institutions, maybe we should firstly focus on one question: What is the essential impact of institutional reform approach on reaching the goals in the public administration sector?

Primarily, one of the advantages of this approach is that institutional reform is not centered around the changes made by specific persons or focused on these persons' activities, rather it comprises more significant and well-grounded changes centered around the main activities, values as well as the goals of that organization. Furthermore, institutional reform is a holistic approach and looks at the big picture while making changes without taking only the small issues or details into account. Notwithstanding the fact that this approach is not detail based, it helps the decision-makers see even the small malfunctions and challenges within and outside their targeted horizon and thus, leads to stronger public administration. Therefore, by adopting such kind of perspectives, governments may reach better solutions and smarter results.

As mentioned above, institutional reforms lead to well-grounded institutions, and improving the quality of institutions through reforms is a vital component of fostering the

development of public administration in Azerbaijan. In 2012, "ASAN Service" model was established as an irreplaceable part of those reforms. As a model of "one-stop-shop" concept, "ASAN" represents an innovative approach by providing services in an integrated and uniform manner. The establishment of "ASAN Service" has helped to reduce extra expenses and loss of time for many citizens, upgrade the level of professionalism and increase transparency as well as the application of innovative solutions in the delivery of public services. It should be noted that "ASAN Service" centers were established upon the principles of transparency, efficiency, effectiveness and inclusivity. It should be also noted that State Agency (SAPSSI) has been the winner of prestigious UN Public Service Award for "ASAN Service" model in 2015. Moreover, for the remarkable achievements in the field of digitalization, SAPSSI has been awarded with UN Special Award for promoting digital transformation in the public sector during UN Public Service Forum Baku 2019.

As is evident, in this day and age, modern solutions and tech advancements take over. We think that improving the delivery of digital services through reforms should also be prioritized along with the focus on conventional methods to deliver them. The attention to improve both offline and online services should be distributed equally and they should develop in parallel.

Ultimately, our second suggestion is about the digital literacy of the population. As the digitalization speedily improve, people and their knowledge to utilize the new services are neglected sometimes. At the end of the day, citizens are the ones for whom all these new advancements are designed, and they are the ones who will use them. Therefore, citizen participation while designing the services is necessary and more important than that, increasing their literacy is the fundamental goal.

Thanks for your attention.