

**SCHOOL OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT 3<sup>rd</sup> GRADUATION EVENT SPEECH – 28**  
**NOVEMBER**

Distinguished guests, ladies & gentlemen,

It's my pleasure to be here today to congratulate this year's 80 graduates from the School of Project Management, which is supported by BP and our co-venturers.

I am especially pleased to witness the 3rd successful graduation from the School which we believe has already become a sustainable local capacity-building institution with international content.

This is exactly what we expected when we first initiated the project in 2011 and then two years later when we decided to extend our support for the School.

It is really rewarding to see that the educational projects and initiatives we support are successful and, most importantly, are sustainable, continually reaching their targets, growing and contributing to the country's growth.

This is an area that BP and its co-venturers have focused on throughout our presence in this country. This is also an area that will continue to be a major part of our commitment to the country - we remain committed to helping Azerbaijan in its capacity-building efforts.

Let's look at what makes this project a valuable asset for us as sponsors, for the implementing partners and, most importantly, for Azerbaijan.

I will start with Azerbaijan.

We clearly see a bright future for Azerbaijan's economy and we can also observe the country's firm intention to diversify its economy. To achieve this, there will be a continuous need for highly-skilled project managers who are able to deliver major projects to international standards.

For BP and its co-venturers, as I highlighted above, the project is part of our commitment to the country. We are confident that the considerable investments that we have made and continue to make in local people, and capacity -building in general, will continue to benefit our projects and those of the country for many decades.

We have been present here for 20 years building successful partnerships with the Government, SOCAR, communities, universities, schools and all other stakeholders. These are partnerships that we highly value and are proud to be part of.

For the implementing partners - the Khazar University and ESI International, this is a great opportunity to bring international project management standards to the country through their training programmes and curriculum. It is through these programmes that

the trainees get a direct access to international expertise and knowledge and build on their skills.

Thus, this is a project that is in the interest of all parties involved. Looking into the future, we need to continue to work together and also do our best to ensure that this and other similar educational initiatives continue to benefit the nation by training highly skilled professionals for the country.

Finally, I would like to cite some facts which speak for themselves: to date a total of about 300 project managers have been trained by the School , among them there are 55 graduates from BP. These people are representatives of almost all sectors – both private and public, from telecommunications, construction, insurance, banking, oil and gas sector to tourism and educational sectors.

This is a great contribution to the efforts that are aimed at establishing long term project management capability in the country.

On behalf of BP and our co-venturers, I would like to thank our implementing partners – the Khazar University and ESI International, for their excellent work in training so many people and also extend my congratulations to all graduates on their achievement. I believe it is an achievement of which all parties involved should be proud.

Thank you!