

BAKU 2015 GAMES ACADEMY EVENT – 16 DECEMBER

Your excellencies, Minister Rahimov, distinguished guests, ladies & gentlemen,

It's my pleasure to be here today at this event representing BP – the company which has decided to be the exclusive Official Partner of the Games Academy.

We believe the Games Academy is a great initiative. And let me tell you why we think so:

- This is because it looks to the future beyond the Baku 2015 Games. BP has always supported youth development and educational programmes. We have a great track-record in this area which we are very proud of. The Games Academy, in essence, is also an educational programme. It aims to identify and develop professional talent across Azerbaijan and Europe. This is exactly what we aim for when we select the programmes we support.
- We also think this initiative is great because the young people to be trained here are expected to create a lasting legacy in Azerbaijan. A legacy that qualitatively will meet international standards. This will be the legacy of professional event management. We hope that this will help the country demonstrate that it can host major international events
- And thirdly, this is a great initiative because it provides a huge opportunity for talented young people from Azerbaijan and across Europe to embrace the benefit from the biggest sport event of next year. Because these young people will be directly involved in the organisation and other activities of the Games.

I am sure the training modules, which the participants in the Games Academy have already completed, have been extremely useful. BP will continue to support further trainings within this one- year programme as participants build their skills and knowledge in preparation for the upcoming great event.

I am also confident that for the majority of the 188 graduates from across Azerbaijan and European countries, the Games Academy will serve as a bridge to their long-term career. It will help them select areas where they will take up challenges and deliver major projects using the skills they learned here.

Finally, I would like to share my thoughts about the inaugural European Games. Just three weeks ago, we all witnessed the spectacular event at the Maiden Tower which marked the start of 200 days countdown to the Games. This means that the excitement has already started.

As one of the official partners of the Games, BP is proud to be associated with the first biggest sport event of Europe. As Azerbaijan's long-term and reliable partner, we have taken this fantastic opportunity to continue our support to Azerbaijan's youth and sport. This journey started with the London 2012 Games and will continue into the future, of which today's Games Academy participants will be a big part.

Thank you!