

Gordon's remarks to the "Agricultural vocational education" event

Four Seasons Hotel, 22 September 2016

Ambassador Crofts, Minister Jabbarov,

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen!

I am pleased to be here to launch on behalf of all our co-venturers a project, which we believe is very timely for it will contribute to the country's extensive efforts to boost the agricultural sector among other non-oil areas.

The Azeri-Chirag-Deepwater Gunashli, Shah Deniz fields and the SCP and BTC pipelines that we operate here are world class oil and gas development projects that have to date significantly contributed to the country's economic growth. We believe these projects have the potential to continue to support the strong and stable economy in this country for many decades to come.

One of the ways to achieve this is to invest in education, training and development of talented people, community development and building new capabilities and capacities.

Since day one of our presence here we have committed ourselves to supporting these areas along with our business objectives.

We believe investment in people and in an education system which builds on past success, applies new techniques and methods, and channels capable people into business is good for the country and for us as we develop multi-billion dollar investment projects in Azerbaijan. We all are well aware that long-term sustainable success of the country, including the business sector, depends on the quality of education of its people.

I am proud to say that to date BP together with its co-venturers has initiated and supported a number of very successful educational and community development projects that have largely contributed to building capabilities in both oil and non-oil sectors.

We believe that the School of Project Management, support for IT skills and English language knowledge development in the communities, support for oil and gas related disciplines training at SOCAR's Gobustan Regional Training Centre, the establishment of new departments, donation of world class laboratories, sharing our knowledge and expertise with local universities, and some other very important educational projects that BP and its co-venturers are supporting are our direct investment in the development of talented people for Azerbaijan's future.

The project that we are embarking today is designed as a joint effort with the Ministry of Education and aims to take first steps towards modernising the vocational education and training system for the agricultural sector. This partnership with the Ministry of Education will allow us to streamline the project's objectives and align them with the country's agricultural development priorities. BP and its co-venturers are pleased to have this opportunity to join this educational project and I would like to thank the Ministry of Education and Minister Jabbarov personally, as well as our implementing partner - the British Council for this partnership opportunity.

We expect high quality results from this project and believe that it will boost the creation of a new methodology, new disciplines and trends in the agricultural vocational education across the country.

Thank you!