



EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN,

Head of Delegation

Workshop on "Effective Management and Leadership for women with disabilities"

Astana, 8-9 August 2011

The EU Project "Strengthening the leadership and managerial capacities of grass root organisations of women with disabilities, their networks and dialogue with government authorities to increase impact on disability and gender policies"

Speech

by Mr Hubert PETIT

Acting Head of the EU Delegation

Dear Mr Serik Ahmetov – Vice-Minister of Labour and Social Protection,

Dear Ms. Kaltayeva - Chairwoman of the Association of Women with disabilities "Shyrak",

Dear Mr. Buxton - Head of the INTRAC Programme in Central Asia,

Dear participants to the workshop,

On behalf of the EU I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to say a few words on the occasion of the EU-funded Project final event. The EU explicitly recognises disadvantages facing disabled people and, in particular, discrimination in looking for a job.

The EU perceives disability as the result of a dynamic interaction between a person and his or her environment, which may lead to discrimination and stigmatisation. It is therefore the environment that should be adapted to each individual, including people with disabilities.

The support to disabled people (especially women) in EU partner countries is one significant aspect of EU external actions. It is aimed at promoting an inclusive society and more specifically at improving access to social services, increasing participation in the policy-making process.

Those actions are financed under the EU thematic programme "*Non State Actors and Local Authorities in Development*". Funds allocated to Kazakhstan by the EU are quite significant: 2.6 million EUR since 2007.

This demonstrates that the EU has a long-term perspective in Kazakhstan when it comes to supporting vulnerable population and strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations.

We are convinced that only a support that is provided over several years can build trust which is needed to make our assistance sustainable.

1. On behalf of the EU let me express my gratitude to the Project for achieving concrete results, in particular the establishment of a Network of Leaders and NGOs of women with disabilities, at national and regional level in Central Asia.
2. We all know that women with disabilities are facing a "double" discrimination, disability and gender, and they are not enough represented at local decision-making level. An important contribution from the EU Project is the development of a political leadership programme for training women with disabilities to be effective political leaders who could promote effective gender disability policies.

Let me finally welcome the conclusion of this EU-funded Project and wish to the Association "Shyrak" and its partner organisations full success in extending geographically their activities within the Network of Leaders and NGOs of women with disabilities!

I am convinced that the results achieved under the EU-funded Project will be sustainable. I wish you a very successful workshop on effective leadership and management. Thank you for your attention.