

## **OSCE Office in Baku launches legal clinic for people with low income**

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BAKU, 30 June 2004 - Free legal help for citizens of Azerbaijan who cannot afford the services of qualified lawyers will be provided by a legal clinic launched this week by the OSCE Office in Baku.

The clinic is staffed by students selected from law faculties of several universities. Under the supervision of experienced lawyers and law lecturers they will help single parent and large families, pensioners, the unemployed, refugees and internally displaced people with legal consultations and legal paperwork.

"This project links theory and practice by raising the professional standards of would-be lawyers and enabling them to acquire practical skills," said Branislav Solovic, the OSCE Office's Human Dimension Officer. "Until now Azerbaijani students often received practical experience only after obtaining a law degree".

The project has been implemented in co-operation with the Azerbaijan Young Lawyers Union (AYLU).

"This clinic serves not only to empower the poor and to ensure equal access to quality legal assistance, but also to show students the importance of the legal profession in society," said Elmari Mamishov, the AYLUs Project Co-ordinator.